

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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'AMERICA ON THE MOVE: 50s SPORTY CARS' POSTAGE STAMPS AND POSTAL CARDS ROLL OUT OF DETROIT

DETROIT — Millions of classic cars from the 1950s rolled out of the Motor City today, guaranteed to cross the country for just 37-cents. Available in five makes and models, the “America on the Move: 50s Sporty Cars” commemorative stamps hit the road following a first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony in Detroit today. These collectables — a '53 Chevrolet Corvette, '54 Kaiser Darrin, '52 Nash-Healey, '53 Studebaker Starliner, and a '55 Ford Thunderbird — are also available as stamped postal cards, and can be driven off the lot of Post Offices and Philatelic Centers nationwide beginning Aug. 21.

“Automobiles have always been a clever way of celebrating our American history and culture,” said Patrick Donahoe, Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Operating Officer, U.S. Postal Service, in dedicating the stamps at the Michigan State Fair. “These cars are a perfect reminder of the 1950s and America’s optimism that the nation’s future was looking bright.” The new stamps highlight the sporty look of American cars designed in the 1950s with sleek, aerodynamic lines and the innovative styling of the types of European sports cars American GIs favored upon their return from World War II.

Joining Donahoe in dedicating the stamps was Noland Adams (www.solidaxle.org), owner of the '53 Corvette that was the model for the stamp. Adams, an author of several Corvette restoration books, served as the Postal Service’s technical advisor for the Corvette stamp. “I know Corvette and other classic car enthusiasts will be thrilled to see America’s first sports cars immortalized on stamps,” Adams said, whose '53 — number 284 of 300 Corvettes produced in 1953 — was on display at the event. “The stamps will make for great collectables.”

The “America on the Move: 50s Sporty Cars” are available in a booklet of 20 stamps (five designs) for \$7.40 and as a booklet of 20 stamped postal cards (five designs) for \$9.75.

Carl Herman of Carlsbad, CA was the stamp designer. Art Fitzpatrick, who was once a car designer and a long-time advertising designer and illustrator for General Motors, was the stamp artist (see attached). Fitzpatrick was only 20 when he designed the Packard four-door convertible and hard-top sedans. While working for noted car designers and coach builders John Tjaarda (Briggs Body), Werner Gubitz (Packard), and “Dutch” Darrin, Fitzpatrick custom built cars for personalities such as Clark Gable, Errol Flynn and Al Jolson.

'53 Chevrolet Corvette

The fiberglass-bodied two-seater Corvette captured the public’s imagination with its sleek styling and sense of fun. Only 300 hand-built, white, with red interior and black convertible-top models were produced in 1953. A marked departure from other GM designs, its sporty appearance promised speed and high performance. In 1955, GM added a V-8 engine to raise the bar for the competition.



'54 Kaiser Darrin

The two-seater featured retractable doors that slid forward into the front fenders; a clever pointed, compact grille; long sloping lines; and a three-position Landau top. Nine months after it went into production, the last of 435 Kaiser Darrins rolled off the assembly line. It could not compete with the Corvette which boasted more horsepower and sold for slightly less. Dutch Darrin himself bought 100 of the left-over cars and refitted them with powerful Cadillac V-8 engines. They sold quickly, but the Kaiser era had passed.

'52 Nash-Healey

An elegant little sports car famous for its hybridized styling drew on the creative genius of three countries. The U.S. created the six-cylinder engine, England engineered the chassis, and Italy added the body before returning it to the U.S. With only 150 made, it priced itself out of the market. Sold exclusively in the U.S., the high-performing hybrid had a moment of glory when it came in first in its class and third overall in the 1952 LeMans sports car race in France.

'53 Studebaker Starliner

The Starliner was low-slung, long and wide, and light on the chrome to give it a sophisticated, European look. Some considered it "the first American sports car." It was proclaimed "a work of art" by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which selected the Starliner as the lone American representative for the 1953 exhibition, "Ten Automobiles."

'55 Ford Thunderbird

Ford introduced the flashy 1955 Thunderbird in 1954 and dubbed it "a sports car with luxury"—a contradiction in terms, since sports cars at that time were built for appearance and performance, not comfort. The Thunderbird featured a steel body, interchangeable hard and soft tops, an overhead valve V-8 engine, and roll-up windows, as well as a host of luxury options. Styling remained essentially the same until 1958 when Ford converted it to a four-seater.

There are five philatelic products available for the "America on the Move: 50s Sporty Cars" stamps issue:

- First-Day Cover (set of 5) \$3.75 (Item 673863)
- Stamped Postal Cards (Booklet of 20) \$9.75 (Item 673866)
- Digital Color Postmark First-Day Cover (Random single) \$1.50 (Item 673865)
- Digital Color Postmark First-Day Cover (set of 5) \$7.50 (Item 673868)
- Booklet of 20 stamps and random Digital Color Postmark single \$8.90 (Item 673899)

These products will be available while supplies last online at www.usps.com, and by telephone at 800 STAMP-24. To see the "America on the Move: 50s Sporty Cars" stamps and other images from the 2005 Commemorative Stamp Program, visit the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop and click on "Release Schedule" in the Collector's Corner.

Beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office are available at www.postalartgallery.com.

Current U.S. stamps and stationery, as well as a free catalog, are available by calling 1 800 STAMP-24. In addition, a selection of stamps and other philatelic items is available at the online Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. Custom-framed art prints of original stamp art are available at www.postalartgallery.com.

How to Order the First-Day-of-Issue Postmark

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office, by telephone at 800-STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Web site at www.usps.com/shop. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

POSTMASTER
AMERICA ON THE MOVE: 50s SPORTY CARS
1401 W FORT ST
DETROIT, MI 48233-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by September 19, 2005. How to Order First-Day Covers Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly USA Philatelic catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

INFORMATION FULFILLMENT
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US POSTAL SERVICE
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KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014

Since 1775, the Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to more than 142 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of \$69 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.