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EDSELS TAKE OVER THE WITCH CITY IN AUGUST

The Edsel Owners Club National Meet to be Held at the Hawthorne Hotel in Salem, MA

There was never a more Titanic-like introduction of a new line of cars than the 1958-1960 Edsel. The styling, the size, the price, the gadgetry, the name, and most of all the timing of its roll-out made the Edsel one of the most sales-resistant cars ever produced. A celebration of these lovable losers comes to Salem, Massachusetts on August 4-7, 2010, as Edsels and owners from around the world converge at the 42nd Annual Edsel Owners Club Nationals, held at the historic Hawthorne Hotel on Washington Square.

The Edsel was Ford Motor Company's ill-fated attempt to retain Ford car owners. The gap between Ford and Mercury lines was wide, and the Edsel was designed to fill the void. But by the time the first 1958 model came out, the country had entered a recession and the automotive market had moved on to smaller, more economical cars. The big, powerful Edsels languished on the showroom floor. This, coupled with its unique "horse collar" grille – a styling cue that pundits referred to as "an Oldsmobile sucking a lemon" – make the Edsel into colossal sales failure.

Owners of these cars are a passionate lot. They embrace the Edsel's unique reputation, and once each year, members of the Edsel Owners Club gather from North America and beyond, to share stories, advice and parts. This year marks the first time the annual convention is being held in New England, and the local chapter of the club has packed the agenda with events.

Radio personality Crusin' Bruce Palmer will be providing the '50's era music on the show car lot on Saturday, August 7, and local Musical Director Eric Anderson has assembled a cast to perform "The Edsel Show", a re-creation of a 1957 broadcast that featured Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Louis Armstrong and Rosemarie Clooney. A banquet will be held at the Hawthorne Hotel as well, with guest speaker Jim Arnold – the original designer of many of the parts that grace the '59 Edsel.

The Edsel Owners Club was founded in 1968 by Edsel Henry Ford (no relation). Mr. Ford is flying in from California to also be in attendance at this convention. This will be a fascinating opportunity for unique insights into the history of the car and to join in the celebration with the Edsel's adoring followers.

History has not been kind to this pinnacle of big Detroit iron. But here in Salem, one man's catastrophic marketing failure is another man's passion.

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If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Peter LaChapelle, please call New England Edsel Club secretary Bob Ellsworth at 781-727-2372 or e-mail Bob at admin@edsel.com