Smithsonian Display

**Fisher Body Craftsman’s Guild, 1930-1968**

From 1930 to the mid-1960s, millions of teenage boys fascinated with cars joined the Fisher Body Craftsman’s Guild. About 600,000 members enrolled each year in the 1950s, making the guild second in size only to the Boy Scouts as an organization for young men.

Sponsored by the Fisher Body Division of General Motors, the guild promoted the ideals of William A. Fisher, the division president. Fisher believed that hands-on, high-precision craft skills were essential to personal success in what he called “this machine civilization.”

The guild first asked members to build scale models of a Napoleonic coach, the Fisher trademark. In 1937, the challenge expanded to automobile designs. Models were judged for craftsmanship, advanced styling, and originality. Contestants competed in two age groups, and winners and finalists received cash scholarships. Several prize-winning models foretold style trends that later appeared in new cars. The annual guild competitions were a major public relations program for General Motors, and several winners went on to prominent design careers in the automotive industry.



