

Ford Times

58th Year

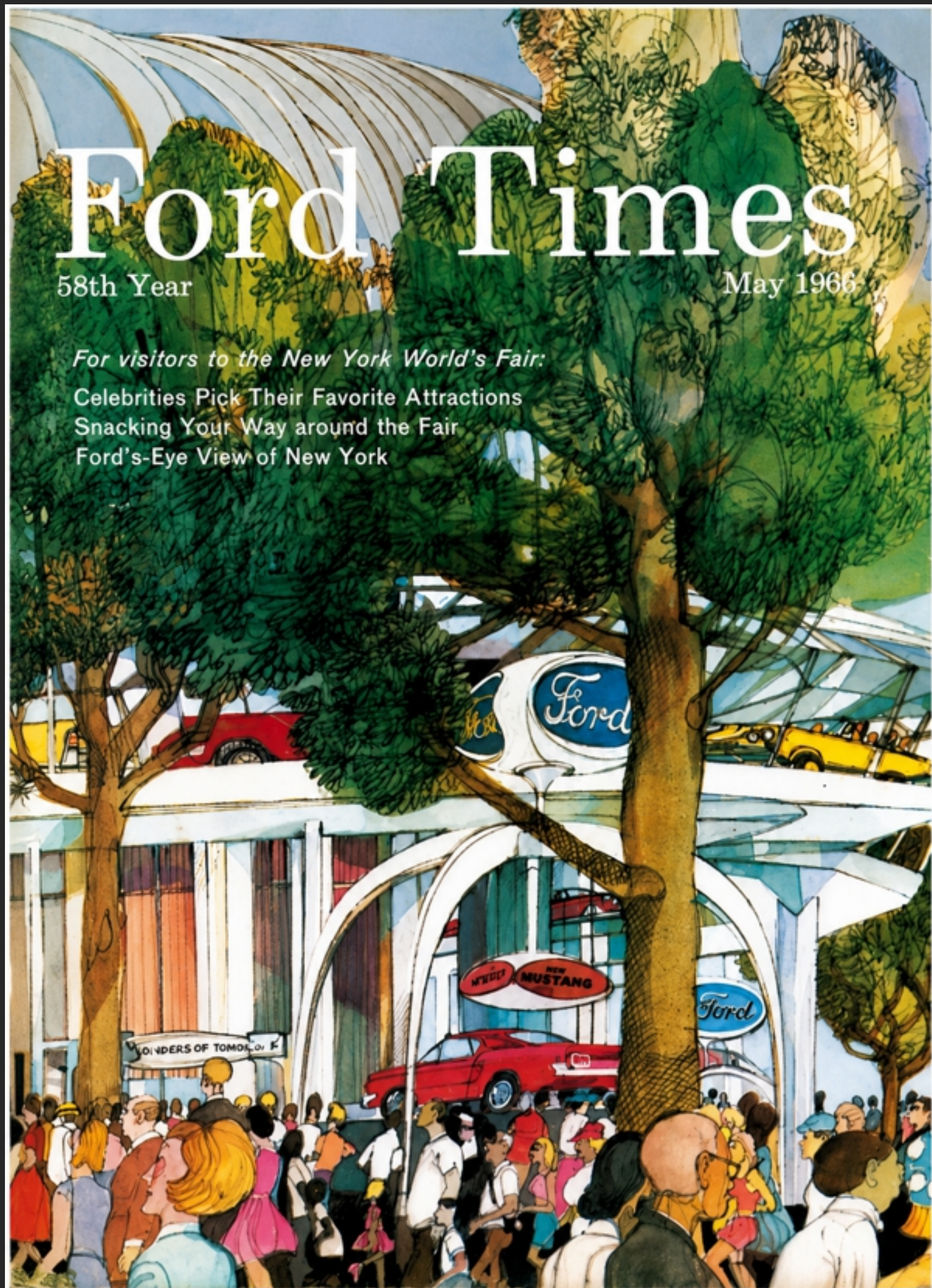
May 1966

For visitors to the New York World's Fair:

Celebrities Pick Their Favorite Attractions

Snacking Your Way around the Fair

Ford's-Eye View of New York



*Crowds of
Fairgoers pass to
and fro outside the
Ford pavilion with
its famous Magic
Skyway ride*



Hit Show for '65

The Magic Skyway ride and International Gardens once more offer their allure to thousands

by Jerry Sullivan
illustrations by Franklin McMahon

THE MAGIC WOVEN into the Ford pavilion at the New York World's Fair by Walt Disney and his "Imaginerrrs" cast its spell on many a Fairgoer, last year, and in its second season is due to enrapture many millions more. Imagine a "Magic Skyway" ride in modern convertibles to a land where prehistoric animals live anew in Eden-like surroundings and primitive men restage the great inventions of prehistory—a ride that concludes high in a space city of the future.

During the first summer of Flushing Meadow's rebirth, over 6,600,000 visitors entered the Ford pavilion beneath its soaring, curving columns, and those people who spoke up to pollsters listed it as one of the great hits of the Fair. The visitors came in such numbers and stepped so willingly into relentless lines to see the Ford-Disney show that the pavilion was filled to capac-

ity virtually the whole first summer. As a result, Ford has taken advantage of the wintertime lull to provide easier access so that it can handle even greater crowds more quickly. The second six-month season of the Fair finds Ford offering visitors a choice of two identical main entrances to its Magic Skyway ride—or a third "no waiting" entrance to its dream car show, art exhibition, and rest areas.

The cool comfort of the air-conditioned Ford pavilion, with its unique bucket seat lounge chairs for the Fair patron who's just looking for a comfortable place to sit down, was another factor in building Ford's reputation as a host.

That reputation was borne out by countless comments received from Fair visitors who lauded the look, the comfort and the entertainment they found at the pavilion. There were bouquets, too, for the

boys and girls in yellow—hosts and hostesses Ford recruited from college campuses across America and abroad—whose bright uniforms became a symbol of cheery hospitality.

The impact of the Ford pavilion has been felt in many ways. A New York radio disc jockey taped a series of “sounds heard at the Ford pavilion,” including the strange language of cavemen, the roar of battling dinosaurs to the accompaniment of crashing thunder, the squeals of youngsters caught up in the excitement of the rainbow-like “time tunnels,” and the music of many lands as heard in the exotic surroundings of Ford’s “International Gardens.”

The Wide World of Ford

These gardens, rising oasis-like with the first breath of coolness as visitors enter the Ford pavilion, are examples of Disney animation—and miniaturization—at their best. Disney and his WED Enterprises, Inc., received a commission from Ford Motor Company to interpret the “Wide World of Ford” by selecting and reproducing, in exact scale models, famous landmarks and characteristic village scenes from eleven nations. Here it is figuratively possible to whirl around the world in eighty seconds. Most visitors, however, take time to browse past Aztec temples of old Mexico, ruins of ancient Rome, castles on the Rhine, a quaint New England countryside, and the other delightful settings.

The Ford pavilion abounds in artistic wonders for the discerning eye. For example, one giant mural, largest at the Fair, depicts in abstract forms the great ideas and inventions of man from the dawn of civilization, as interpreted by artists of WED Enterprises. The mural is so large that people actually are transported right through it as they travel ascending “speedwalks” to the Skyway ride launching site.

The approaches to Ford’s Skyway are paved with smiles, for Disney’s “Imagineers” have been at work again. First come animated tableaux from the get-out-and-get-under days of the horseless carriage and the famous Tin Lizzie. Next, “magic mirrors” give the illusion of showing all fifteen million Model Ts ever made—not all black either.

A hall of caricatures tells the story of five decades of American entertainment, sports, politics and industrial progress. And a Disney-dreamed-up sequence that shows what goes into a car (with a battery for a heart, for example) leads the way to the world’s strangest orchestra. This automated ensemble, called the “Auto Parts Harmonic,” is made entirely of car parts, with a brake cable harp and a trumpet whose valves are the kind usually attached to a camshaft. These auto parts came with a two-year guarantee—that no one would be able to pass the “Auto Parts Harmonic” without getting at least a chuckle.

As a result, everyone who boards

A world in miniature greets the visitor inside the pavilion entrance





*Above right: Visitors board moving convertibles from a gliding sidewalk
Below right: For many spectators, the cavemen are the stars of the show*

the Magic Skyway is in a party mood, and getting aboard is part of the fun. Visitors step into their convertibles from a moving sidewalk which gives the slightly giddy impression that one is standing still while all the world is moving. For the next relaxing 12 minutes, Skyway riders settle back in a new Ford, Mustang, or other Ford-built car to watch the Disney wonders go by. A narrator's voice comes over the car radio, pointing out scenes they might miss simply because of their preoccupation with the unusual aspects of the automated ride itself.

Best free view of the Fair

The first winding portion of the ride, through transparent tunnels ringing the rotunda portion of the pavilion, offers the best panoramic view to be found on the Fairgrounds free-of-charge. Then comes darkness, followed by the rainbow hues of the first "time tunnel" and the other-worldly atmosphere of a primordial paradise where giant reptiles feed on lush vegetation.

The Disney-animated figures in

the Ford exhibit are all the more impressive because of their massive size and their lifelike quality—imparted by a revolutionary process called "Audio-Animatronics." Sounds uttered by these creatures are perfectly synchronized with their actions because the sound impulses—programmed on magnetic tape—control the actions.

Volcanic eruptions signal the end of the Age of Dinosaurs and the coming of the Stone Age, where cavemen, women and children—some of the Fair's most memorable figures—act out great moments like the invention of fire, speech, primitive tools and, eventually, the wheel.

Whirling wheels lead the way to the elevated space city and the debarkation area, and, just around the corner, to grottoes filled with futuristic creations by Ford stylists. Five "Adventures in Science" offer sixty examples of scientific projects currently under way at Ford and Philco Corporation.

In the final act of the Ford show, dream cars such as the Aurora, Allegro, Mustang II and Cougar II

People welcome a place to rest—in bucket seats



are part of a changing display that attracts clusters of people continually. The pavilion's great exit halls are lined with paintings from the FORD TIMES Collection of Fine Art—one from each of the fifty states.

Current model cars, too, are available for close examination in a setting made attractive by murals depicting the civic and community

activities of Ford Motor Company's dealers throughout the nation.

Then it's back to the world of the Fair for Ford pavilion visitors, but not before they pass once more beneath the transparent tunnels where other visitors are launched on their Magic Skyway ride—the ride whose haunting memory will linger long after. ■

Backstage at the Pavilion

The action in the wings can be exciting, too

IN A "LONG RUN" SHOW like the Ford Motor Company attraction at the New York World's Fair, sometimes the action in the wings is as exciting as the show itself.

Take the day, for example, when one of the 146 convertibles carrying Ford visitors on the Magic Skyway ride developed a slow leak in a tire. With no provision for "pit stops," Ford maintenance crews came up with a novel solution. Each time the car with the leaky tire entered the service area between debarkation and embarkation points, crewmen used a portable air pump to inflate the tire. Thirty-five times they serviced the car on the move—from mid-afternoon until closing time shortly after ten p.m.—and the show went on without interruption.

Ford engineers estimate the Magic Skyway convertibles, traveling a combined distance equal to 34

times around the world, absorbed the equivalent of 15 years' normal usage in six months last season. At the end their doors still closed with a solid click after 3,276,000 slams. Their seats still sprang back after more than 6,600,000 passengers. That's more people than the all-time record-holding Broadway musical, "My Fair Lady," played to in its entire run.

When an overheated transformer finally forced the show to shut down one evening, a new transformer was flown from Chicago to Newark Airport, delivered to the pavilion by helicopter and installed before opening time the next day.

On another occasion, while the show went on, crews worked just as determinedly to free the finger of a Ford host from a brass ring used to attach a safety chain to a wall. While giving directions to



Above: Convertibles on their way to pick up more passengers pass through a service area for a quick check-up and rub-down. Right: Night watchman takes a stroll through a primeval swamp





Captain Metcalf was in charge of all Pinkerton men on the safety stations

crowds of visitors, the host had slipped his finger inadvertently into the ring and . . . it stuck. Using chisel and hammer, brawny millwrights "operated" on the ring-bound finger as delicately as might a surgeon, and soon the finger was free and the host was back at his post undaunted.

Pinkerton watchmen who man safety stations all along the Magic Skyway ride grew fond of a sparrow that ventured into the pavilion and stayed for weeks. They contributed bread crumbs from their lunches and had the bird almost trained to eat out of their hands before it disappeared one day — apparently having found its way through a public exit.

Even more mysterious was the appearance of two tiny goldfish in one of the pavilion's reflecting pools. Maintenance men discovered them late one night as they were draining

and scrubbing the pool. They saved them from going down the drain and reinstalled them, with fish food, in a fountain area from which they later disappeared—perhaps into the pocket of the youthful prankster who had first brought them to the pavilion.

Pools throughout the pavilion proved a popular target for penny-pitchers. Night crews collected over \$2,800 in pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters donated by Fair visitors. Ford saved the entire amount for a charitable contribution.

Some of the prehistoric figures in scenes along the Magic Skyway lost their heads over the winter, as the complicated mechanisms that serve as brains controlling their movements were sent back to Walt Disney's WED Enterprises, Inc., at Glendale, California, for adjustments and minor repairs. All heads and all hands, however, are in place in time for the opening of the World's Fair on April 21. ■

Storage space provides for an extra pteranodon and new car literature

