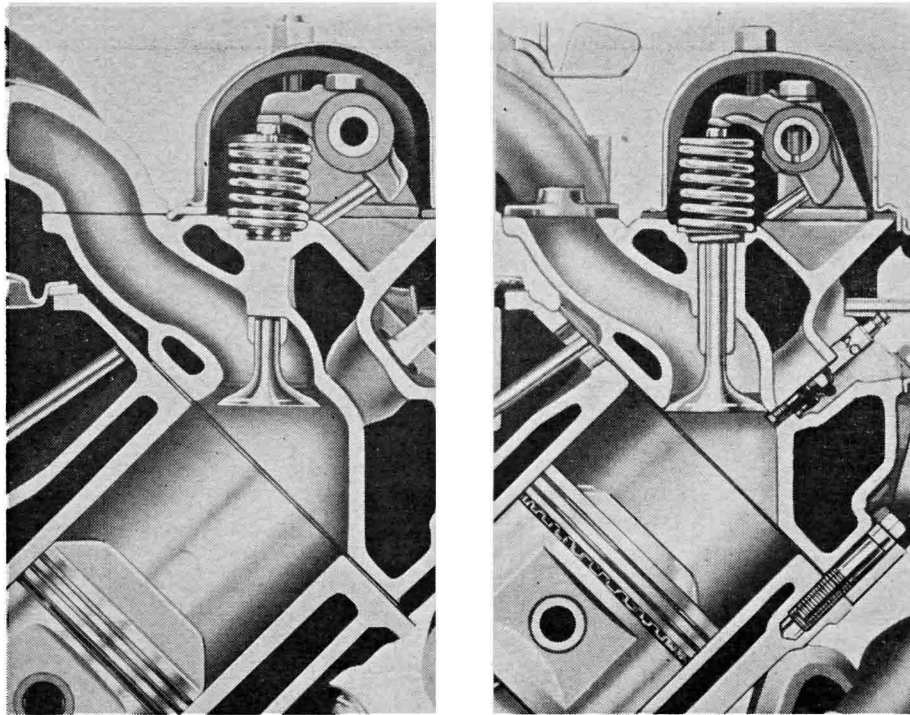
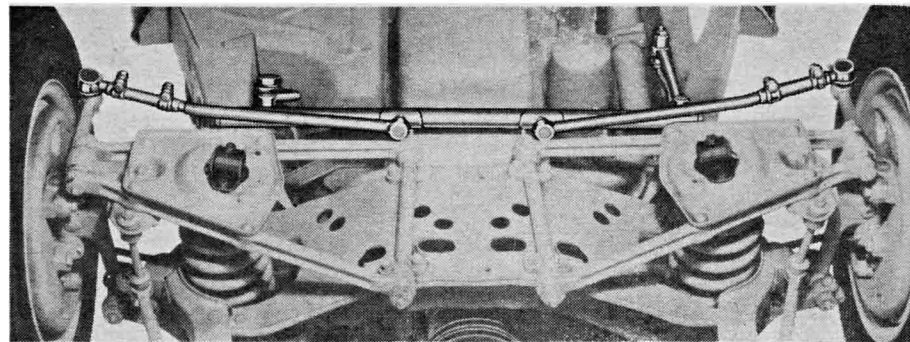


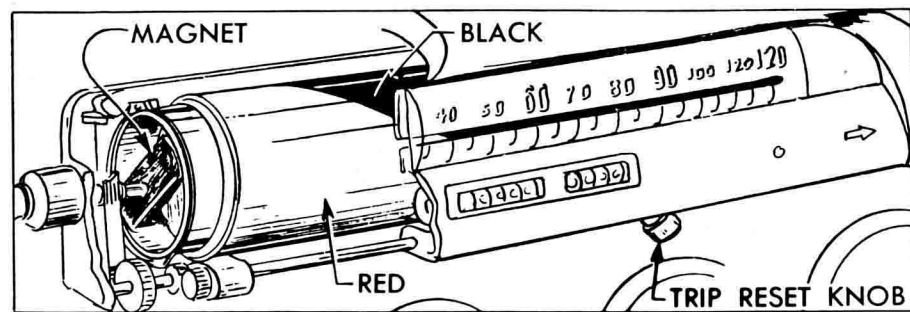
# BOMBSHELLS



Comparison with last year's combustion chamber (left) shows '54 engine has new design. Piston dome is .444 inches lower, giving chamber greater volume-to-air ratio



Buick's parallelogram-type steering linkage, featured on all new models, is designed to give better directional stability and eliminate "wheel fight" on rough roads



Secret of "Redliner" speedometer is red-and-black drum (above), which turns up red line across panel, eliminating needle. Buick's instrument panel (right, above), modeled after "Wildcat" panel, is double-roll type, with all instruments in front of driver for maximum readability. "Redliner" speedometer is shown in detail at right

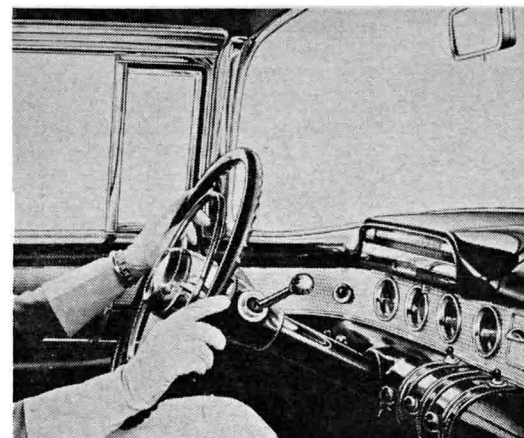
Twenty-eight

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Most interesting, of course, is the revival of the Century, last produced in 1942. Install a Roadmaster engine (now upped to 200 horsepower) in the comparatively light Special chassis, step on the gas, and you'll move! That's what you get at a price falling somewhere between the Special and Super. Back in 1936, when this combination was first offered the public, it was named the Century because it would do an honest 100 mph. This year we suspect that living up to its name will be a part-throttle snap with time out for a pit stop.

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(Continued on page 56)

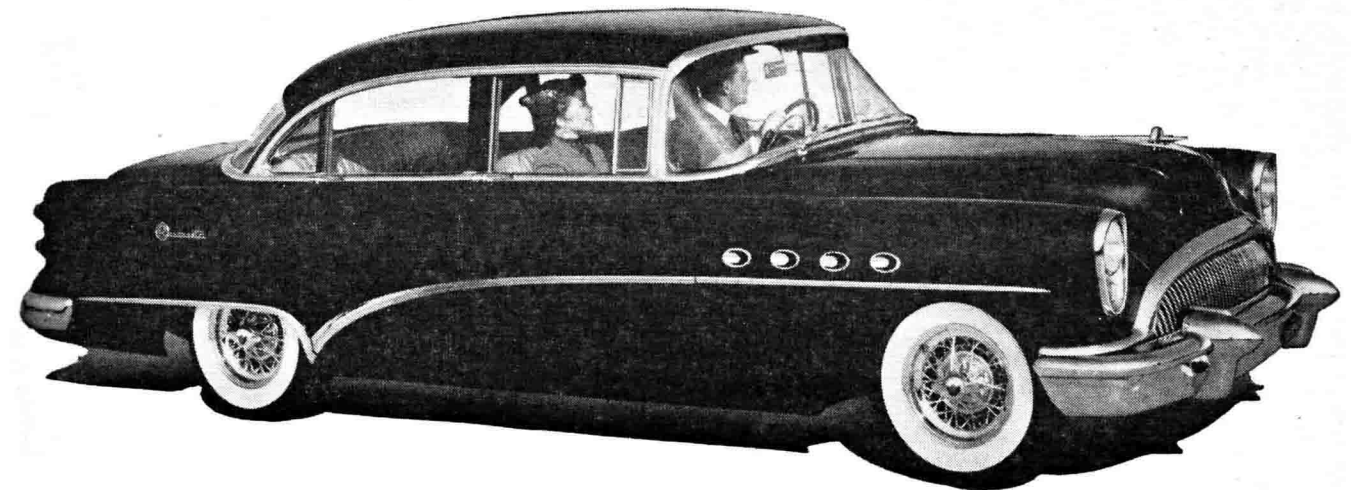


Motor Trend

# from FLINT

By Don MacDonald

**Buick's new Century is a highly potent piece of ordnance designed strictly for civilian consumption. Smaller in caliber but just as beautiful, with its Skylark styling, is the Special V-8**



## Driving Impressions

IF YOU AGREE with us that power under the hood spells safety when used with intelligence, then you'll feel as relaxed as I did behind the wheel of the Century. I've driven no other American production car so far this year with such outstanding all-around performance.

Matched against a '53 Roadmaster (no slowpoke itself), the Century pulled 48 feet ahead in the first 10 seconds from a standing start. It was nudging an honest 60 mph at this point. To do this with a Dynaflow, you have to start out in LOW and then drop into DRIVE at 40 mph. Acceleration at cruising speeds is equally good. You can tromp down and consistently move this sedan from 50 to 80 mph in the neighborhood of 13 seconds. That's what the stopwatch said, and it checks closely with Proving Ground figures.

Buick has always aimed at providing the best possible cushion for American bottoms, and this year the ride is softer than ever. Engineers deliberately calibrated the new suspension to eliminate pitch under all but the most severe conditions. The result is an amazingly level ride. The front coils seem to travel to the limit of their deflection before any motion is transmitted to the body. You can bottom the suspension on a severe dip taken at speed, but all it amounts to is that the wheels hit the snubbers as they come up on the far side of the hole—the car itself doesn't slam down at the deepest point.

Buick's power steering goes to work

only when it's needed. You can park the big sedan with your little finger, but feel of the road is retained for normal driving. At the insistence of Bob Daley (Chief Buick Test Driver), who was with me throughout this trial, I tried something that you just don't do if your mental equipment is functioning normally. While traveling down a broad straightaway at 60 mph, I gave the wheel a vicious yank, enough to cause the car to drift, and then let go. Through some magic in this steering geometry, the car corrected itself without my touching it and *continued straight ahead*. If we had been in most other cars, they'd still be hunting for us in the bushes.

Buick's safety features are not limited to power and handling. The step-on parking brake is still the best in the business. It holds on a 27-per cent grade with the car headed in either direction, and you can release it without fumbling. Incidentally, the parking pawl of the twin-turbine Dynaflow is equally good at hill-holding. Low range spun the wheels on the concrete

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The Century has definite understeer characteristics (it will drift before the rear end breaks loose on tight turns taken at abnormal speeds). For the average driver who sometimes plows inadvertently into an unfamiliar turn faster than he should, a four-wheel drift is a subtly dangerous thing for it gives very little warning that things are about to get out of hand. However, Buick is not engineered for road racing. You have to be driving foolishly fast before the Century will drift.

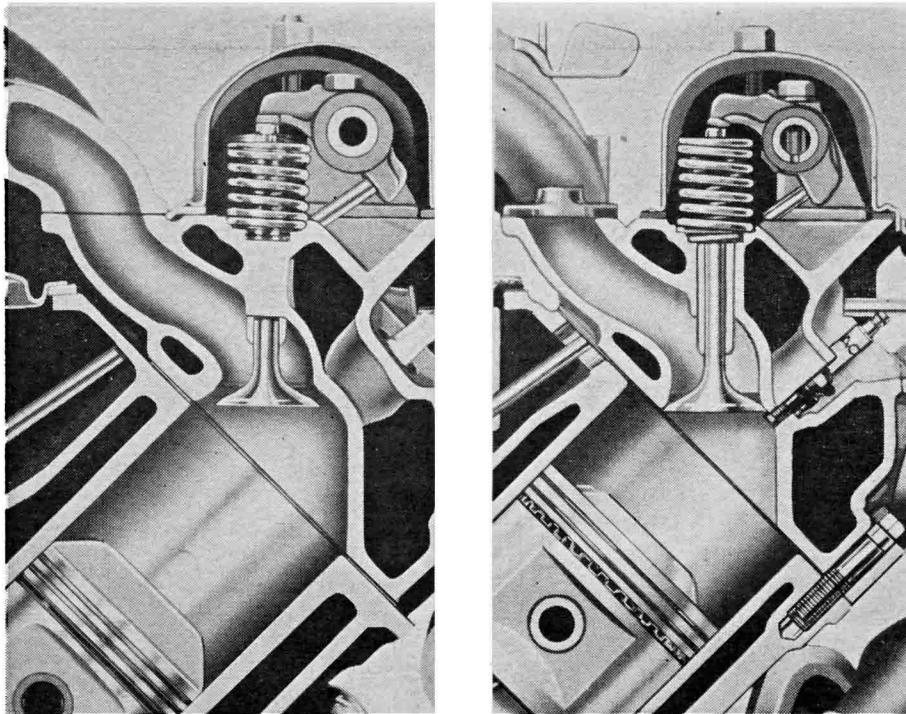
Forward vision is remarkably good, primarily due to the new wraparound windshield which moves the A posts back out of the blind spot. You can see both front fenders from the driver's seat, and the rear ones as well if you crane your neck. Instruments are legible, controls are accessible, and the firmly upholstered seats should be comfortable for long trips.



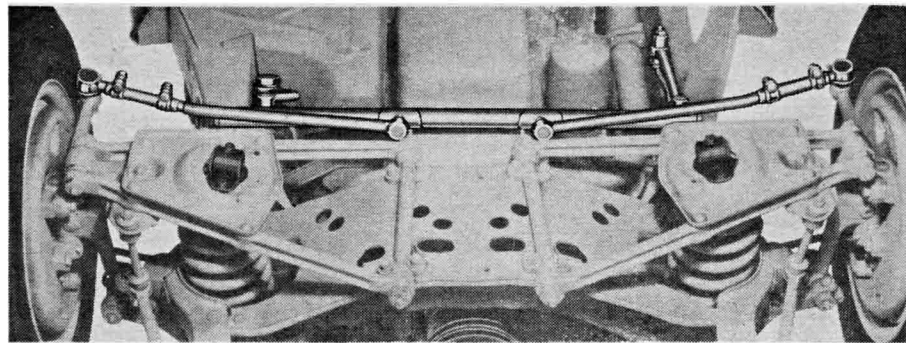
February 1954

Twenty-nine

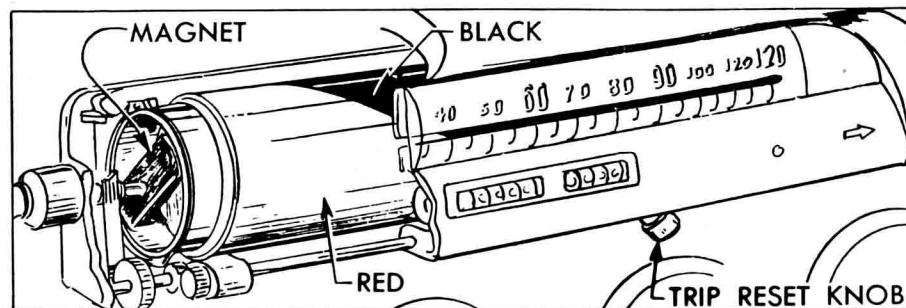
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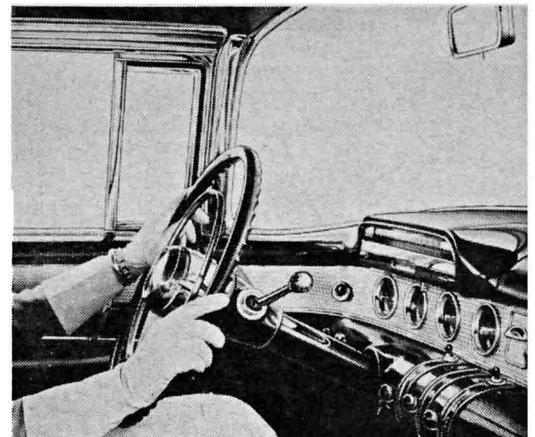
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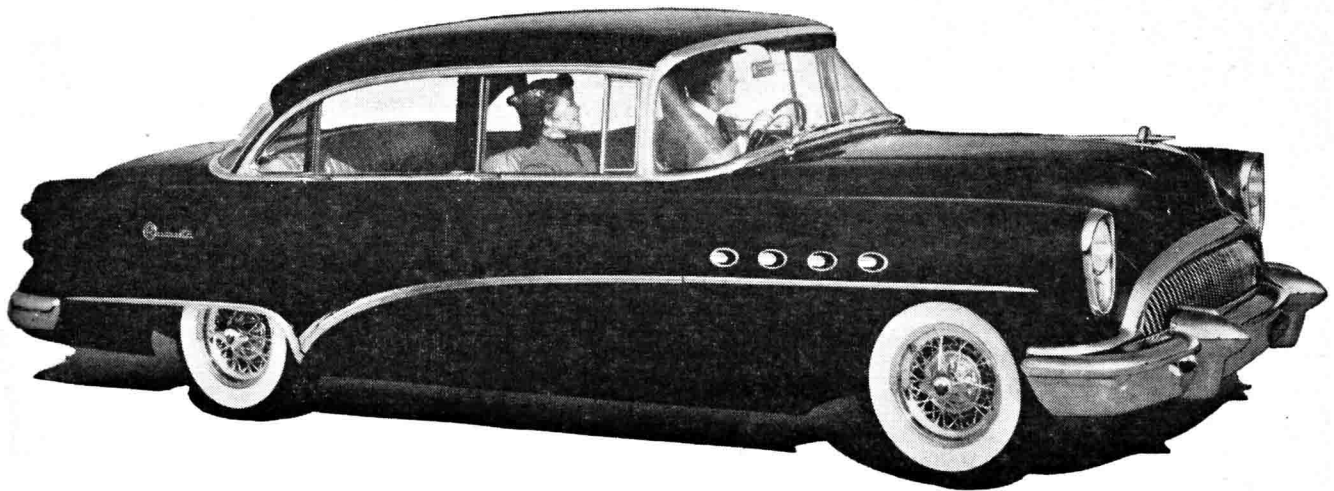
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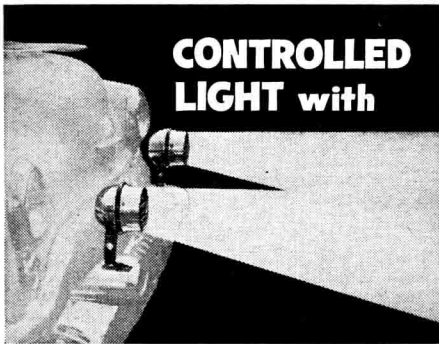
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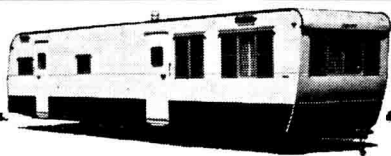
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## Bombshells from Flint

(Continued from page 28)

The horsepower increase on automatic transmission models comes from a higher compression ratio: Dynaflow-equipped cars have 8.5 to 1, the others 8.0 to 1.

Buick's new look is borrowed from no one. Whoever the Flint stylist was who used to lay chrome on with a trowel must no longer be on the payroll. The body panels are nudely clean, with trim for its own sake in just the right places. An exception which has become an institution are the portholes. They are retained this year because three ports are a social advance over none, and with four, you can turn up your nose at anyone. You may like the two-door models which feature full wheel cutouts.

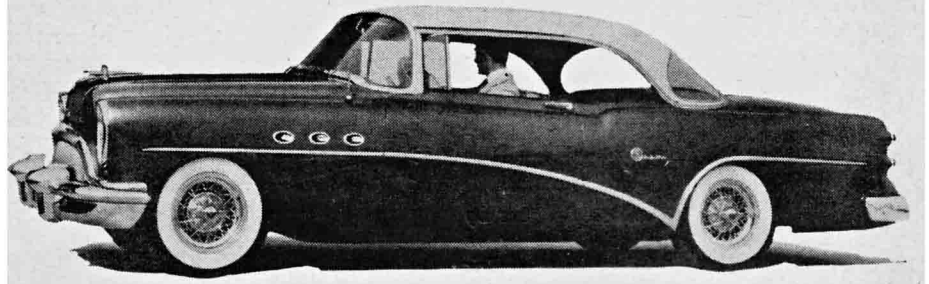
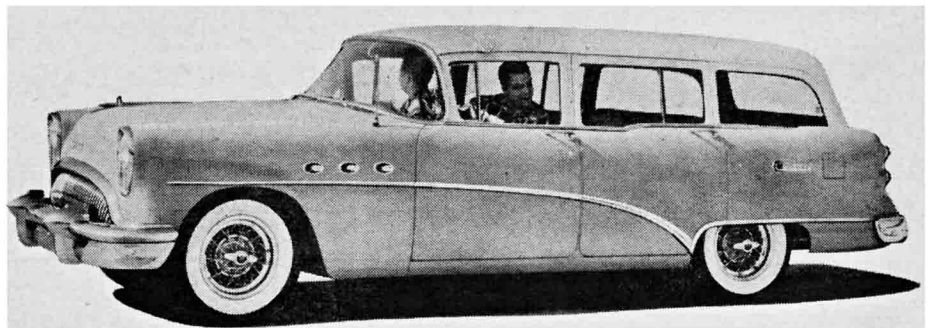
Newswise, it's hard to put the Special V-8 in second place to the revived Century. The new 264-cubic inch engine puts out 150 horsepower with Dynaflow and 143 with syncromesh, again because of varying compression ratios (8.1 to 1 and 7.2 to 1 respectively). All the body styles listed as available for the Century can be had on the Special, in addition to a two-door sedan and convertible. This last is a poor bachelor's Skylark with notched doors and come-hither interior.

Super and Roadmaster share the 127-inch chassis and the 322-cubic inch V-8 engine, but there's a difference in carburetion and therefore horsepower. The Dynaflow Super with a two-barrel carburetor puts out 182 at 8.5 to 1 compression ratio. The syncromesh version gives 177 horsepower at 8.0 to 1. Admittedly, these transmission-compression ratio combinations are complicated, but have patience, we're nearing the end. The four-barreled and ported Roadmaster, aimed at buyers who've already made their money shifting manually, offers only Dynaflow, an 8.5 to 1 compression ratio and 200 horsepower.

A real safety feature in all new Buicks is the space-helmet vision afforded by the wrap-around front and rear windows. The pedestrian bent on jaywalking to eternity will find himself hard-pressed to catch a Buick driver in a blind moment. Another outstanding safety first is virtually stall-proof power brakes. Previously, boost for this option was supplied solely by engine vacuum. Now, a relay switch automatically starts an electric pump whenever engine speed drops below 300 rpm. Above this speed, the unit automatically cuts out. We've driven many miles with previous low- and high-pedal power brakes, and they all suffer from a common hazard: If you stall your engine (and thus lose your source of vacuum) it takes two men and a boy to stop or hold the car with the manual reserve.

Interiors are plush or haremlike, depending on the number of portholes stuck in the front fender. Nylon, broadcloth, Cordaveen, and leather are color-combined with your choice of exterior Duco. The new instrument panels are better looking and more legible. A built-in sunshade over the windshield and "rain coves" surmounting the other glass areas are standard on Super and Roadmaster sedans. This was actually a drastic styling decision, for it crossed two very popular and lucrative accessories off the optional list. Four-way power front seats, electric windows and radio antennas, power steering (standard on Roadmasters) and air-conditioning with a part-time compressor are also optional.

Reading this, you may have gathered that we're enthusiastic about this new car in our consumer-minded sort of way. The two basic Buicks use the same raw body shells as Olds and Cadillac, so chances are we'll show some excitement over their '54 styling too. It's one answer to the pioneering Studebaker Starliners. They're mighty pretty and so are Ghia's customs, but Jim-Dandy American Design as only produced by General Motors looks like it'll hold its own in anybody's concours for '54. —Don MacDonald



New Buick lines give massiveness, sporty look to one of the company's new models, the Estate Wagon, shown above. Hardtop has Skylark's chrome trim, open wheel wells