

Forney

MUSEUM OF TRANSPORTATION

Newsletter April 2024

“Moving Forward”

Hurrah for the Red, White & Buick!

Our Buick exhibit is coming to a close at the end of the month, but before they're gone don't miss your chance to see 74 years of history in a single location. This 1912 Buick Model 35 Touring Car, with its kerosene side lamps, folding split windshield, Prestolite brand carbide headlamps and 33" wood-spoked wheels is a refined example of early Brass Era automotive design. As a measure of its antiquity, this Buick has right-hand drive!



The 1986 Buick Regal 'Grand National' was one of the hottest performance cars of the



1980s. Buick rated the Grand National at 235 hp, but General Motors vastly underrated it. Exact horsepower is unknown, but estimates place it well over 300 hp! This all-black, entirely original Grand National is on display courtesy of Steve Bennet of Denver and can be seen alongside the 1912 Model 35 at the Forney Museum as part of our exhibit, "Hurrah for the Red, White & Buick!"



And Speaking of Buick

Featured in our exhibit is this 1963 Buick Wildcat Convertible Coupe. Introduced in 1962 as a subseries of the Buick Invicta, the Wildcat took its name from a line of concept cars produced by Buick in the 1950s, and promised sports car performance in a full-sized car. With a 401 cubic inch OHV V8, capable of 325 horsepower, the Wildcat packed a surprising amount of muscle behind the Buick logo. 6,021 Wildcat convertibles were built during the 1963 model year.



A large aluminum trim panel ran along the front fenders and onto the doors, as seen here, accentuating the suggestion of speed in the lines of this vehicle.

Equipped with front bucket seats, and a center console that contained shift lever, tachometer and a storage compartment, the Wildcat featured design principles found in many modern cars. Produced in sport coupe, convertible and 4-door options in



1963, this convertible would have cost \$3,961 – that’s equivalent to \$39,442 today!



Buick built 489,541 Wildcats from 1962 until 1971, when it was replaced by the Buick Centurion. Although Buick has used the Wildcat name in the years since for various concept cars, 1971 marked the end of the Wildcat, and the close of a chapter for the Buick brand. This Wildcat can be seen at the Forney Museum as part of the “Hurrah for the Red, White & Buick” exhibit until April 29th, 2024. Don’t miss out!

This Month in Transportation History

April 18, 1775 - The “Midnight Ride” of Paul Revere and William Dawes occurred as the two men rode out of Boston about 10 p.m. to warn patriots at Lexington and Concord of the approaching British.

April 26, 1838 - Construction begins on a lighthouse at Europa Point, the southernmost tip of the British Crown Colony of Gibraltar. Completed in 1841, it was the first lighthouse at the Atlantic Ocean’s entrance to the Mediterranean. Prior to completion sailors navigating the point had only the lights from a 15th Century Roman Catholic shrine.

April 3, 1860 - The Pony Express service began as the first rider departed St. Joseph, Missouri. For \$5 an ounce, letters were delivered 2,000 miles to California within ten days. The famed Pony Express riders each rode from 75 to 100 miles before handing the letters off to the next rider. A total of 190 way stations were located about 15 miles apart. The service lasted less than two years, ending upon the completion of the overland telegraph.

April 27, 1865 - On the Mississippi River, the worst steamship disaster in U.S. history occurred as an explosion aboard the *Sultana* killed nearly 2,000 passengers, mostly Union soldiers who had been prisoners of war and were returning home.

April 15, 1912 - In the icy waters off Newfoundland, the luxury liner *Titanic* with 2,224 persons on board sank at 2:27 a.m. after striking an iceberg just before midnight. Over 1,500 persons drowned while 700 were rescued by the liner *Carpathia* which arrived about two hours after *Titanic* went down.

April 21, 1918 - During World War I, the Red Baron (Manfred von Richtofen) was shot down and killed during the Battle of the Somme. He was credited with 80 kills in less than two years, flying a red Fokker triplane. British pilots recovered his body and buried him with full military honors.

April 12, 1961 - Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space. He traveled aboard the Soviet spacecraft *Vostok I* to an altitude of 187 miles (301 kilometers) above the earth and

completed a single orbit in a flight lasting 108 minutes. Twenty-three days later, Alan Shepard became the first American in space.

April 17, 1964 – Ford introduces the Mustang at the New York World’s Fair. The first Mustang ever sold to the public was actually purchased three days before on April 14, at a Ford dealership in St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. The “Sky Light Blue” convertible survives today, still owned by the original owner, Gail Wise!

April 1, 1967 - The U.S. Department of Transportation is founded, with a mission of supporting the national transportation program. When he signed the Act, President Lyndon Johnson had said, “Transportation has truly emerged as a significant part of our national life. As a basic force in our society, its progress must be accelerated so that the quality of our life can be improved.”

April 11, 1970 - Apollo 13 was launched from Cape Kennedy at 2:13 p.m. Fifty-six hours into the flight an oxygen tank exploded in the service module. Astronaut John L. Swigert saw a warning light that accompanied the bang and said, "Houston, we've had a problem here." Swigert, James A. Lovell and Fred W. Haise then transferred into the lunar module, using it as a "lifeboat" and began a perilous return trip to Earth, splashing down safely on April 17th.

April 12, 1981 - The first space shuttle flight occurred with the launching of *Columbia* with astronauts John Young and Robert Crippen aboard. *Columbia* spent 54 hours in space, making 36 orbits, then landed at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

April 21, 2015 – A still standing land-speed record for rail vehicles was set in Japan, when a seven-car L0 Series train reached a speed of 375 MPH. The “Maglev” train achieved this feat on a test track in Tsuru, Yamanashi Prefecture. The train sustained that speed for about 10 seconds, travelling over a mile in that time.

Forney Speaker Series

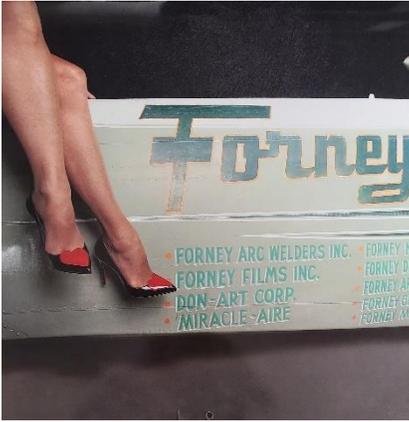
Saturday, April 13th, at 2 PM, the Forney Museum is proud to be hosting Mat Anderson, to discuss the history of the Quick-Way Company and the invention of the truck-mounted power shovel.

Luke Smith, who founded the Quick-Way Company, first got the idea for mounting a shovel on a truck after working with slow crawler-mounted shovels near Durango. Developing the idea over the years, he founded Quick-Way to build his new invention in 1929, opening shop in Denver, Colorado. The ease and speed that the Quick-Way Shovel Truck brought to construction marked a boom time for American development.



Join us April 13th, at 2 PM, to hear Mat share this incredible story. The presentation is included with admission, and makes for a great opportunity to learn more about the lesser known sides of history.

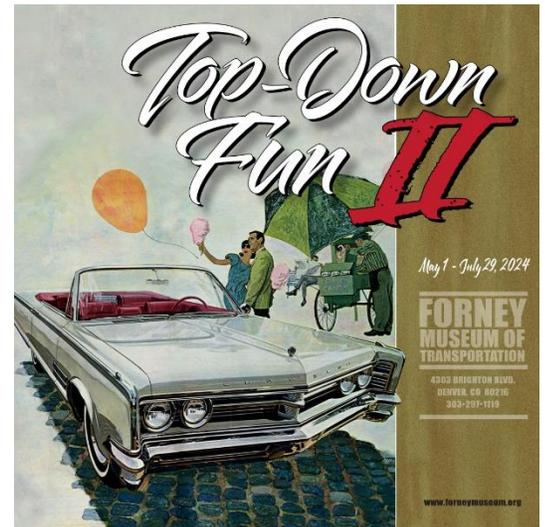
Forney Museum Calendar



The Forney Museum is proud to announce the release of a 2025-26 Pinup Calendar. Only \$20, all proceeds go to benefit the Museum. Can be purchased in the Museum Gift Shop or online at forneymuseum.org. Fun, flirty and for a great cause, get your calendar today and help out the Forney Museum! Special thanks to all the wonderful models who helped make the calendar possible. Can't wait until next year!

The Cars of Summer

As the weather warms and the season turns to spring, it is the perfect time to start thinking about summer. The Forney Museum will be hosting our "Top Down Fun II" exhibit from May 2nd through July 29th. With the top down to feel the breeze, come hit the road with us as we celebrate the cars of summer!



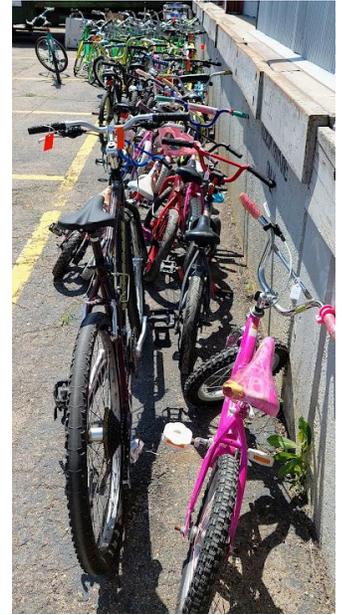
4th Annual Forney Bike Giveaway



We are happy to announce the Forney Museum's 4th Annual Globeville-Elyria-Swansea Neighborhood Bike Giveaway! On June 8th, 12 pm at Swansea Elementary School, 4650 Columbine St. In collaboration with our RiNo and neighborhood partners, these bikes are given away to area families in need. The bikes are distributed on a first come, first serve basis unless you register early.

Last year's event was a huge success for everyone involved, with over 65 bikes finding new homes. Taking place in the park behind the school, we had vendors, volunteers and partners on hand to ensure everything went smoothly. Most importantly, everyone went home happy with their new wheels!

We are putting out the call for any bicycles in good condition, especially children's bikes, tricycles or scooters you might like to donate to the museum. We will fix and clean them up to give out as part of the Bike Giveaway. If you have an old bike that you have been thinking of getting rid of, help us give it a second life. Any inquiries can be sent to our Education Coordinator, Jennifer at education@forneymuseum.org.



Forney Vehicle Spotlight

1907 Maxwell-Briscoe Model RS Tourabout

Benjamin Briscoe, a prosperous sheet metal manufacturer in Detroit, was anxious to get into the automobile business. Originally investing in David D. Buick's car, he met Jonathan Maxwell in 1903, who had experience as an engineer at Olds and Northern. Briscoe sold his investments in Buick and formed a new partnership with Maxwell. With investments from J.P. Morgan, the two launched the Maxwell-Briscoe Motor Company with production in Tarrytown, New York. Beginning with Maxwell's two-cylinder design, the company produced only 10



vehicles in 1904, before producing 823 the next year.

A four-cylinder model was introduced into the Maxwell line in 1906, and production of both the two- and four-cylinder models continued through 1912. A particularly popular model was the "Dr. Maxwell" runabout, designed and promoted especially for physicians. 3,785 vehicles were built in 1907, including this Model RS Tourabout 2-seater.

As the company continued to grow they became known for the promotional efforts of sales manager Cadwallader Kelsey, whose publicity stunts – including chases with police, driving up steps of buildings, teeterboard riding, etc. – he had filmed for use in nickelodeon theatres.

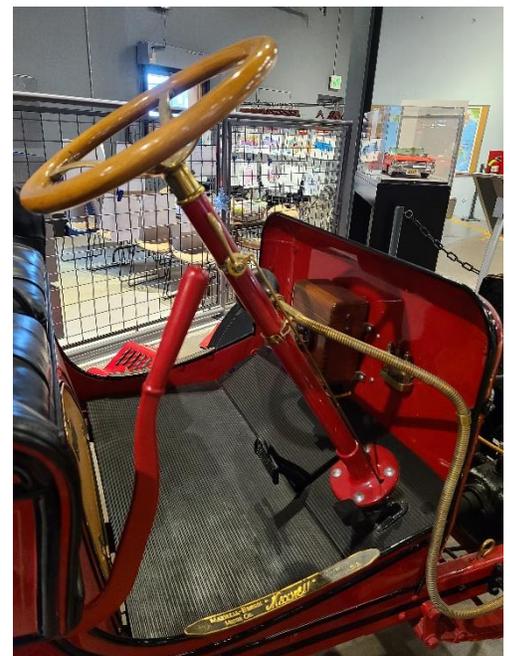
In 1909 he persuaded Alice Huyler Ramsey, an early advocate of women drivers, to drive cross country with three other women from Hell’s Gate in New York to the Golden Gate Park of San Francisco, to great fanfare in the press.



This 1907 Maxwell has a 127 cubic inch, horizontally-opposed two-cylinder water-cooled engine (with mechanically operated inlet valves) with a honeycomb radiator with thermosiphon cooling. Generating about 14 horsepower this vehicle would have produced a maximum top speed of 20 miles per hour. The transmission is hand-lever-operated planetary gearset with two forward speeds and one reverse.

With a shaft-driven rear-wheel drive, the Maxwell also featured brakes that were pedal-operated external contracting brakes on the rear wheels, where a band is compressed down onto a steel drum on the inside of the wheel by the pressure of a spring. The Maxwell had a pedal-actuated parking brake. Starting was by a hand crank on the front of the car.

Other features included kerosene-burning brass headlamps, a brass bulb horn with a bugscreen, and a “Turtle Back” style trunk. The Maxwell, which had a hood that unlatched and lifted off in two pieces, also featured external spark plug access to make repairs and



maintenance simpler. A carriage-style leaf-spring suspension and 23-inch wood-spoked wheels complete the vehicle.

This vehicle was car number 3,511 out of 3,785 built in 1907, and after the 1907 model year Maxwell's fortunes, and production, continued to increase. In 1910 the company sold 20,500 cars, and were considered one of the top three automobile manufacturers in the United States along with Ford and General Motors, so in 1910 Benjamin Briscoe



launched United States Motor Company. Combining Maxwell-Briscoe and Columbia — and eventually Stoddard-Dayton and Brush — in an attempt to emulate the General Motors model. The plan did not work and by 1912 U.S. Motor had collapsed, leaving Maxwell as the only survivor.



Struggling in the early 1920s, Maxwell brought in Walter P. Chrysler to help turn things around. By 1924 Chrysler had become president of the now-styled Maxwell-Chalmers. In 1925 he founded Chrysler Corporation, and the last Maxwells for 1926 saw the restyling of the car as the new four-cylinder Chrysler. The Maxwell brand, now defunct, is still owned by Chrysler under the Stellantis Corporation. This 1907 Maxwell can be seen on display at the Forney Museum of Transportation.

Volunteer of the Month

Our Volunteer of the Month is Lori Melamedas!

Lori was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, lived and worked in Brooklyn, NY for 15 years before moving to Parker, Colorado in 1994. Working for over 40 years in healthcare, Lori is now a Pharmacy Admissions Specialist, but has also served



as a vocational instructor training medical assistants, pharmacy specialists and certified CPR instruction.

Lori's first car was a 1968 Dodge Dart slant V6 for \$300. She says her dad helped her keep that car running for over 10 years, where she learned her love of cars, especially



muscle cars! Her love of cars brought her to the Forney Museum in 2008 with a car club and she was hooked. Volunteering with the Museum when she could over the years, Lori is now a regular volunteer for events and car shows as well as working as a docent, answering questions and helping our guests get the most out of their trip to the Museum.

When asked what keeps bringing her back she said, "I thoroughly enjoy being at the Forney Museum as a volunteer because of the strong commitment the Forney Family, museum director and staff, as well as all of the other volunteers, have toward preserving the history of transportation." It is dedication like that that keeps us going. Thank you, Lori, for everything that you do for us!

The Museum needs YOU!

Anyone interested in volunteering or donating please reach out to us at the museum or email volunteer@forneymuseum.org

Forney Memberships

Become a Forney Museum Member TODAY! With many options available for as little as \$50, the right membership for you can be purchased in the museum gift shop or online at forneymuseum.org. Memberships are good for one year and also make great gifts!

Shop Needs

We are putting out the call for several items that are needed here at the museum. If you see anything in this section that you think you would be able to donate to the museum to help us with our operations please reach out to our Assistant Director, Dan at asstdirector@forneymuseum.org, or call the museum at (303) 297-1113.

- 1) Rags for use in the auto shop.
- 2) A floor-scrubber for the museum's concrete exhibit floor.
- 3) Enclosed trailer (20-foot or longer) to transport Forney Museum vehicles safely & securely
- 4) Modern tire changing machine
- 5) Modern wheel balancing machine

Thank you!

Calling for Cars

We still need a few more convertibles to display in our upcoming "Top Down Fun II" exhibit. If you have a classic convertible built before 1980, and would like to participate, email director@forneymuseum.org to submit your vehicle for consideration. Thank you!