



Newsletter August 2025

"Moving Forward"



Who wants to win a new Corvette?

As part of a new fundraising campaign, the Forney Museum is holding a sweepstakes drawing for one lucky person to win a 2026 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray! This is an exciting opportunity that we are thrilled to offer, and



the money raised goes to support the Museum. So scan the QR Code to go to the sweepstakes website, or visit the web address www.forneysweeps.org and donate today! All entries must be made by May 31st, 2026, so don't miss out and enter today!



Artifact Refurbishment

Recently restored and added to our extensive bicycle display is this pair of 1947 Schwinn Continentals in both men's and women's models. Representing the post-war era of cycling, the Continental was marketed as a high-quality, stylish touring bike built for comfort and long-distance riding. A wide, padded saddle ensured comfort, and full fenders protected riders from mud and road debris.





Featuring bright, vibrant colors, and with many models sporting custom pinstriping and whitewall tires, the 1947 Continental had no shortage of style and flair. The distinctive chrome-plated handlebars and rims were a hallmark of Schwinn craftsmanship. It is easy to see why these gorgeous bikes were so well positioned to take advantage of the post-war cycling boom, appealing to both recreational cyclists as well as those seeking a quality bike for more efficient transportation. This unusual pairing of 1947 Schwinn Continental bicycles can be seen on display as part of the

Forney Museum Collection.

“Wagons, Ho!” - The American Station Wagon

A station wagon is defined by the shape of its roof and back end, and an iconic element of that design are all the unique tailgates that manufacturer’s developed.

From a pickup-truck-like downward-folding gate, to a



wide-swinging door and even clamshell designs which have doors that lower beneath the cargo deck and rear glass which slides up into the roof! The experimentation and diversity in tailgate style is on display in this exhibit.

Come see the 1970 Oldsmobile Vista Cruiser, seen above right, on display courtesy of Glen Roat;

or check out the 1964 Studebaker

Daytona Wagonaire with its unique sliding roof panel, at right, or the 1972 Pontiac

Catalina Safari, shown to the left, with the retractable clamshell, which are both on display thanks to Will and Lori Sander.



What better way to celebrate the station wagons of our youth than to pack everyone in the car and take a road trip down to the Forney Museum between now and September 7th to experience the history of these amazing ‘people haulers’ in our current exhibit, “Wagons Ho!”

This Month in Transportation History

August 29, 1792 - In one of the world’s worst maritime disasters, about 900 people drowned on the 100-gun British ship of the line *Royal George*, as it took on supplies off Portsmouth, England. The ship had been purposefully rolled to enable repairs below the waterline, but the roll became unstable and heeled the ship too far over, allowing water to flood into open gun ports. The ship sank within minutes. Of the roughly 1,200 people aboard a total of 255 were rescued.

August 9, 1831 - The first standard steam engine train run regularly in the United States began in New York. The DeWitt Clinton, a small 4-wheeled steam engine which was among the first American steam engines, made the inaugural trip between Albany and Schenectady – roughly 16 miles – pulling three coach-bodied cars. The Mohawk and Hudson Railroad, operators of the new line, would eventually become part of the New York Central Railroad system in 1853.

August 4, 1902 - The Greenwich Foot Tunnel was opened to the public in London, England. Built to replace an expensive, and often erratic, ferry service across the Thames River, the 1,215-foot Greenwich Tunnel – open only to pedestrians – remains in use to this day.

August 5, 1914 - The world’s first electric traffic lights were turned on at 5 PM at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and East 105th Street in Cleveland, Ohio. The traffic lights consisted of four pairs of red and green lights as stop and go indicators on the street corner poles and operated manually from a roadside control booth. Ultimately it was a different streetlight design from Cleveland, developed by Garrett Morgan in 1923, and consisting of stop, an interim warning and go signals that would become the ubiquitous red-yellow-green traffic lights that are used worldwide today.

August 14, 1919 - The U.S. Post Office completed the first official delivery of mail via airplane to a ship at sea. As the seaplane piloted by Cyrus Zimmerman approached the White Star Lines steamship *RMS Adriatic*, he dropped to a speed of 45 miles per hour and an altitude less than 50 feet above the ship’s mast tops where a special weighted cable, attached to the mailbag, was released from the plane, wrapping around a cable on the ship to pull the bag free from a special compartment on the airplane.

August 7, 1927 - The Peace Bridge, an international bridge connecting Buffalo, New York in the United States with Fort Erie, Ontario in Canada. The 5,800-foot-long bridge, spanning the Niagara River about 12 miles upstream from Niagara Falls near the east end of Lake Erie, was built as a supplement to the International Railway Bridge – finished in 1873 – to accommodate the pedestrian and vehicular traffic between the two countries.

August 24, 2014 - Metroway, a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line serving Arlington County and the city of Alexandria, Virginia, first went into service. Operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Metroway was the first BRT line in the Washington, D.C. metro area, as well as the first in

the state of Virginia. With a total of 17 stations, the 6.8-mile line runs from Pentagon City in Arlington to Alexandria.

Forney Speaker Series

On **Sunday, August 31st at 2PM**, the Forney Museum will be screening the documentary “Ticket to the Future: the Evolution of Travel.”

This fascinating documentary discusses the development of current transportation methods, and examines some of the possibilities for the transportation of the future. This will be held in the center of our exhibit hall, surrounded by all the artifacts of transportation history, providing a unique viewing experience for attendees.



Free with admission, these presentations offer a fantastic opportunity to learn about the lesser known sides of history. So come join us Sunday, August 31st at 2 PM, for “Ticket to the Future: the Evolution of Travel.” We’ll see you there!

(Due to a scheduling conflict our originally announced presentation on the history of steam engine locomotives, hosted by our Collections Manager, Carl Enger, has been postponed. Watch our website or read this newsletter for when it will be rescheduled, as this presentation promises to provide a unique opportunity to gain insight into the engineering and impact of these amazing machines that helped to build America.)

Make sure you don’t miss the rest of our ongoing monthly series:

September 28th we will be hosting David Fisher, the Executive Director of the University of Denver’s Transportation Institute, as he gives his presentation “Transportation Dynamics.” This will be a look at the forces that shape how we move, a fascinating exploration of motion, mechanics and innovation.

We look forward to seeing you then!

Community Rewards Program

The Forney Museum has now joined the King Soopers/City Market Community Rewards Program. For those unfamiliar with this program, it allows King Soopers or City Market loyalty reward members to link certain non-profits and charities to their loyalty card. For every purchase made with that card, King Soopers/City Market will donate a percentage of the amount to the linked organizations. What this means is that you can now support the Museum simply by purchasing groceries, at no cost to you! In fact,



with the deals available to loyalty reward members, you can save money at the checkout and raise money for the Museum at the same time.

If you would like to take part in the Community Rewards Program, simply visit www.kingsoopers.com or www.citymarket.com and log in as a member. From there you can search for the Forney Museum of Transportation and enroll. This is a fantastic opportunity, and we are thankful to King Soopers/City Market for their generosity and outreach to the local community.

Forney Vehicle Spotlight

1959 Volkswagen Type 1 Sedan "Beetle"

Although Volkswagen has a history that begins with Nazi Germany just before WWII, the history of the Type 1 – which would later be known as the “Beetle” – goes as far back as at least 1925 with the design work of Austro-Hungarian engineer Béla Barényi. His design for a car very similar to what became the Beetle was shared directly with the German automotive designer Ferdinand Porsche. In the years that followed, Porsche would exert the power of his name, reputation and position in the Nazi party to assert dominance on claims of



priority. When the decision, from Adolf Hitler himself, was announced in 1934 to produce cars for every citizen of Germany – “The People’s Car” – what would become Volkswagen began to coalesce, and the design that would become the Type 1 was already taking shape.

With promises like “save five Marks a week and get your car,” hopes were high for the nascent company.

Instead World War II intervened, and no Volkswagens were delivered to the public until after the end of the war in 1945.

Following the war, the town that had been built around the manufacturing plant was renamed Wolfsburg and production resumed in December 1945. Although initially slated for demolition by Allied Forces, with manufacturing equipment to be transported to Britain, disinterest from



the British automotive industry meant that the fate of the plant remained undecided.



British military officer, Major Ivan Hirst, is credited with reopening the plant, which had been captured and then abandoned by the Americans. Hirst persuaded the British military to order 20,000 cars, and operations were officially off and running.

Production focused on the previously designed Type 1, and the design remained remarkably similar with only minor changes for almost 65 years. This is part of why the Volkswagen Beetle design became so iconic,

and instantly recognizable, but it would be 1968 before the Beetle name was officially adopted. Over its lifespan, the Beetle would undergo some 78,000 minor updates in design, from minor changes like color or lighting, to major changes like engines, or technological upgrades.

A new manager, Heinrich Nordhoff, came in 1948 and production doubled in his first year. His keen industrial mind drove expansion of the company, and the number of employees grew from about 6,000 in 1945 to almost 57,000 in 1957. And at one point it is estimated that Volkswagen and associated manufacturers accounted for half of all cars produced in West Germany.



Although many models would be introduced over the decades, this story of growth and dominance is driven by the Beetle. The design is built around an air-cooled four-cylinder boxer engine, located in the rear to provide better rear-wheel drive traction, all within an arched-style two-door body. A flat front windshield, and storage in a compartment up front, helped give the car its famous lines, and all was mounted on a chassis that used torsion bars to provide independent suspension at all wheels and a swing axle in the rear. Light alloys featured prominently in the construction of engine, transmission and cylinder heads, keeping car weight down and engine efficiency high.



This 1959 model still prominently featured the “New for 1957” features including a larger windshield and a larger and more rectangular rear window. The front turn-

signal indicators were relocated to the top of the fenders – just in time for new turn signal requirements being legislated in countries such as the United States. The frame was reinforced for added strength, and an anti-sway bar added for greater stability. Minor improvements in the suspension and engine could be felt, and even a new type gas-pedal and the updated styling of the dashboard contributed to the more modern feel of the late 1950s Type 1.

Some of the features of this 1959 Type 1 include a redesigned push-button AM radio, with the speaker grille facing the driver from behind the steering wheel. A wicker under-dash package shelf complements the glove-box and compartments behind the front seats



provide lots of interior storage. All-vinyl upholstery, two plexiglass sun visors, and chrome bumpers and bumper over-riders, along with classic streamlining, provided a modern exterior. Even touches like door-handle scratch guards were intended to bring the venerable design up to date with contemporary sensibilities. The vehicle is finished in the original “Fjord Blue” color with white interior accents.

A large instrument dial is located behind the steering wheel – with odometer, speedometer, and warning lights for oil pressure, generator and cooling system, turn indicators and high-beam indicator – but interestingly, this vehicle has no gas gauge, which is a feature that Volkswagen wouldn’t introduce to the Beetle until 1962. Instead, when the main tank ran dry, the driver could turn a lever under the dash to open a 1.3 gallon reserve tank. With a rated range of about 32 miles per gallon, hopefully a gas station could be reached before that final reserve was depleted!

The engine of the 1959 Type 1 was a 73 cubic inch, horizontally opposed, overhead valve 4-cylinder. With the



Solex 1-barrel downdraft carburetor, the engine was rated for 36 horsepower. A Beetle

hallmark, the engine is air-cooled by a fan, automatically controlled by a thermostat. A four-speed floor shifted manual transmission transferred the engine power directly to the rear wheels through a spiral bevel gear and bevel differential gears to the swing axle shafts. All this power would have generated an estimated top speed of about 70 miles per hour. All-wheel hydraulic brakes helped keep it all under control, along with the new stiffer body.



On a 94.5 inch wheelbase, the 1959 Type 1 was 60 inches wide and 60 inches in height, lending to its distinctive Beetle shape. Weighing in at just 1,600 pounds, the Beetle was the little car that could! These cars sold for \$1,545 base in 1959, which would be about \$17,000 in 2025.

The 1960s were kind to the company, and in 1972 the world production record held for over 50 years by the Ford Model T was broken with the total completion to date of 15,007,034 Beetles worldwide. The record-breaking car was donated to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. However, by the mid-70s competitors, particularly from Asia, began to eat away at the Beetle's market share, and by 1978 the last Beetle sedan to be produced in Europe rolled off the assembly line. The Volkswagen Golf (Rabbit in the U.S.) was widely viewed as the successor for the Beetle, and so the company turned their attention elsewhere. However, production of the original type sedans continued at the Puebla, Mexico factory until July 2003.



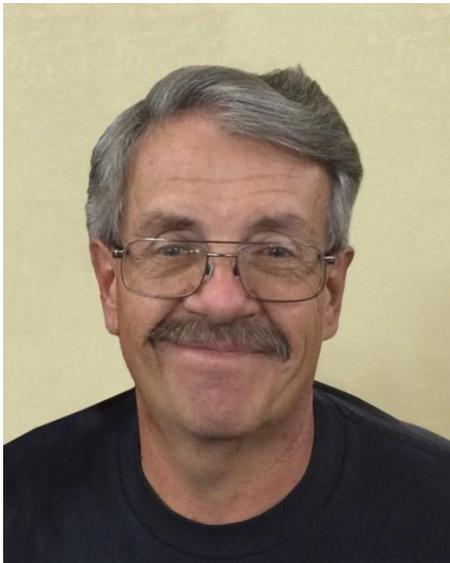
The production span of 65 years holds the record for longevity, and a total production of over 21.5 million is the most of any automobile. As a footnote, the story could have ended there, but in 1997 VW introduced the "New Beetle," a modern take on the original Type 1. Its production ended in July 2019 with nearly 1.8 million built.



This 1959 Volkswagen Type 1 "Beetle" was generously donated to the Forney Museum by Michael Murphy of Dublin, Ohio, and can be seen on display as part of the Forney Museum Collection.

In Memoriam

The Museum recently lost a valued friend, key contributor and longtime volunteer on July 20th. Rick Holdaway will be missed by everyone at the Forney Museum, and we would like to share his obituary here to recognize his passing.



Rick was born in Denver, Colorado on March 13, 1948. He grew up splitting his time between Denver and Eagle, Colorado. After a childhood spent attending thirteen different public schools, he graduated from Denver's North High School. He missed the commencement ceremony to work his shift at a gas station.

He met Dana, his future wife of 55 years, at a Halloween dance in 1964, after his original date cancelled on him. They raised three very normal children on a steady diet of vintage cars, Estes model rockets, Dr. Demento radio programs, and stopping at every single historical roadside marker they encountered on road trips. Thanks

to him, their grandchildren know how to use a clutch, and that bears are not piñatas.

He served in the Marine Corps from 1966 to 1972, where he competed on the Marine Corps Pistol Team.

He was working at the Lakeside Montgomery Wards paint counter when he heard that a place called IBM was hiring. He worked at the IBM plant in Boulder for 38-1/2 years, fixing everything. Several of his fixes turned into IBM patents. He wore blue uniform shirts with his name on them for years, but eventually everyone knew him, and he decided to just wear his regular plaid shirts to work.

After retiring, he turned his time to repairing and restoring Model T Fords, and volunteering at the Forney Museum of Transportation, often alongside his grandchildren when their schedules allowed.

Rick loved vintage cars and motorcycles. He loved touring in his Model T's, 4-wheeling old Jeeps in Moab, and driving his 60s Mustangs as nature intended. He only lost his license once, for doing a measly 140 mph in a 40 mph zone, after which the officer asked, "Why'd you stop? I couldn't have caught you." He responded, "Can I have a do over?"

Rick was a Scout leader, 24 Hours of Le Mans racer, photographer, longtime blood donor, certified scuba diver, volunteer fire fighter, ski patroller, and a member of the Ancient and Honorable Order of Squirrels. According to one waitress in Iowa, he is the inventor of chili cheese fries. He had a personal recipe for chocolate cake, his love of which was only slightly diminished by the mid-life revelation that he was allergic to chocolate.

He couldn't go anywhere in Colorado without running into someone he knew.

He is predeceased by his parents, Reed Holdaway and Hylah Hernandez, and his sister Janet. He is survived by his wife, son Aaron (Don), daughter Janna (Tom), son Brett (Amanda), two grandchildren, his sisters Carly, Nita, Michelle, and Dorene, and his brothers Mark and Pat.

Services will be held August 11 at 10:00am, at 7080 Independence St., Arvada, CO.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Forney Museum of Transportation, 4303 Brighton Blvd, Denver 80216 or at www.forneymuseum.org.

Volunteer Birthdays

8/5 - Chris Hildenbrand

8/18 - Dan Hays

8/5 - Bernie Ruffenach

8/23 - Ron Wenger

8/14 - John Macfarlane

8/31 - Calvin Faller

8/17 - Jay Hokanson

The Museum needs YOU!

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

Memberships

Become a Forney Museum Member TODAY! We have memberships in many different levels to fit your particular needs, with options available for as low 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 make great gifts, so help support the Forney by buying a membership today!

General Museum 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) Diesel pickup in running, serviceable condition

- 2) Enclosed trailer (20-foot or longer) to transport Forney Museum vehicles safely & securely
- 3) Modern tire changing machine in working order
- 4) Modern wheel balancing machine in working order
- 5) Late model minivan in serviceable condition

Thank you to everyone who has already donated!

The Forney Newsletter team is:

Editor-in-Chief, Christof Kheim

Publishing Editor, James Hansen

Graphics and Design Assistance, Damion Cope

Research Assistance provided by: James Hansen, Jennifer Holm, Damion Cope, Dan Hays

Special Thanks to all of our readers!