Newsletter September 2025

"Moving Forward"

Closed for Construction

The Museum will be closed for construction this month, beginning Monday, September 8th. When we reopen it will be with a revamped front of house and gift shop. We hope to reopen by October 4th, and all further announcements regarding the finalized timetable for reopening will be posted on our website, forneymuseum.org. Please check the website before coming in, and we look forward to seeing everyone in October, just in time for our next exhibit "70 Years of Thunderbird!"

Who wants to win a new Corvette?

As part of our 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!

Forney Museum of Transportation Day

By proclamation of the Governor of Colorado, Jared Polis, September 1st, 2025 was declared Forney Museum of Transportation Day. The full text of the proclamation is presented here. Thank you to everybody who joined us on Forney Museum of Transportation Day!

State of Colorado

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Forney Museum of Transportation, founded in 1955, has been a vital cultural and educational institution in Colorado, dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich history of transportation through its diverse collection of artifacts and exhibits; and

WHEREAS, the Forney Museum has played a key role in educating and inspiring generations of visitors, offering a comprehensive look at the evolution of transportation, from early steam locomotives to historic automobiles, aircraft, and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the Forney Museum continues to serve as a valuable resource for the community, offering dynamic educational programs, hands-on learning experiences, and exhibitions that foster a greater understanding of transportation's impact on society, technology, and culture; and

WHEREAS, over the past 70 years, the Forney Museum has made significant strides in increasing accessibility and inclusion, ensuring that visitors of all backgrounds and abilities can experience the museum's diverse offerings; and

WHEREAS, the Forney Museum's commitment to preserving the legacy of transportation and its contributions to the cultural and educational fabric of our state has enriched the lives of residents and visitors alike, creating lasting memories and fostering a deeper appreciation for the history that shaped our nation; and

WHEREAS, as the Forney Museum celebrates its 70th Anniversary, we honor its enduring dedication to preserving the past, educating the public, and inspiring future generations of transportation enthusiasts, educators, and innovators;

THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby proclaim September 1st, 2025, as

FORNEY MUSEUM OF TRANSPORTATION DAY

in the State of Colorado.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this first day of September, 2025

Jared Polis
Governor

New Arrival

The Museum is proud to announce the newest addition to our collection, the "Rocky Mountain Highboy." A custom-built racer designed for the Bonneville Salt Flats, the Highboy is based on a 1929 Ford Model A Roadster body plan. Designated number 2909; the 29 is for a 1929 Model A, and the 09 is for the year the racer was completed in 2009.

This car competed in the D/BGR class at Bonneville: the class is so designated for Displacement (a 305 Chevy) Blown (457 blower), Gas-powered, Roadster. Built and raced by Butch Salter, the "High Boy" achieved a speed of 193 miles per hour at Bonneville in 2014 and a top recorded speed of 185 miles per hour at the high-altitude flying mile at Front Range Airport! Builder and donor Butch Salter has set a number of land speed records over the years, including driving 225 miles per hour in 2002, and was inducted into the Colorado Motorsports Hall of Fame in 2019. He can be seen here alongside our Collections Manager, Carl Enger, demonstrating all the steps to open the hood to reach the engine. As can be expected of such a high-performance machine, it is a little complicated!

So many thanks to Colorado's legendary Butch Salter for donating this amazing car to the Museum. You can see the "Rocky Mountain Highboy" for yourself on display at the Forney Museum of Transportation.

"Wagons, Ho!" – The American Station Wagon

The time has come to say goodbye to all of the wonderful station wagons that graced our exhibit floor for the last three months. Since June 4th, we had two dozen classic station wagons in our exhibit, spanning from a 1928 Chevrolet National AB Depot

Hack through a 1987 Mercury Colony Park—as seen above, on display thanks to the generosity of Chris Hildenbrand and Jim Lane of Wheat Ridge, Colorado—these represented six decades of the classic American family automotive experience.

Another standout of the exhibit was this 1952 Crosley Station Wagon, at left, on display courtesy of the Orphanage Classic Car and Art Gallery in Yuma, Colorado. Measuring only 145 inches in total length, and weighing just 1,200 pounds, this miniature station wagon provided modest performance, but incredible fuel efficiency. The after-market propeller on the grille center is the kind of quirky personality that makes this miniature wagon unique.

The exhibit also featured this 1947 Ford Country Squire, at right, on display thanks to Jim Nielsen of Denver, Colorado, with the gorgeous "Glade Green" factory color. The handcrafted maple and mahogany bodywork was produced entirely in-house at Ford, and still looks amazing!

With the end of the "Wagons Ho!" exhibit, we say a fond farewell to all the wagons, and prepare to say hello to Thunderbirds in our next exhibit, honoring the 70th anniversary of the introduction of the Thunderbird, beginning in October.

This Month in Transportation History

September 28, 1066 - The Norman conquest of England began as Duke William of Normandy landed at Pevensey, Sussex. A contemporary source put the size of the Norman invasion fleet at 726 ships, although this may be an exaggerated figure and other sources are fragmentary. Roughly 10,000 men—and up to 3,000 horses!—of a mixed Norman, Flemish, Breton and French invasion force were carried from Calais to Sussex in what may have been one of the largest seaborne invasions in history to that point.

September 28, 1542 - California was discovered by Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo upon his arrival at San Diego Bay. Sailing from Navidad, New Spain (Mexico) on June 27, the three ships of Cabrillo's fleet—*San Salvador*, *La Victoria* and *San Miguel*—sailed north, anchoring in what is now San Diego Bay and naming it San Miguel and claiming it for Spain. The expedition would continue north possibly as far as the Columbia River, when winter storms forced them back.

September 21, 1856 - The Illinois Central Railroad became the world's longest railroad at that time with the official completion of over 705 miles of track. The Illinois Central connected Cairo, Illinois at

the southern tip of the state, to the rail hub of Centralia—which had been named for the railroad, and would be incorporated as a city in 1859—and from Centralia the main line connected with Galena, Illinois in the northwest, and a branch line connecting to the city of Chicago. The Illinois Central Railroad would prove pivotal to the growth and development of the state of Illinois in the 19th Century.

September 17, 1908 - The first fatality involving powered flight occurred as a biplane piloted by Orville Wright fell from a height of 75 feet, killing Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, his 26-year-old passenger. A crowd of nearly 2,000 spectators at Fort Myer, Virginia, observed the crash of the plane which was being tested for possible military use. Wright himself was also seriously injured.

September 11, 1935 - Ground was broken on the first section of the Appalachian Scenic Highway, now known as the Blue Ridge Parkway. This first section was a 12.5 mile stretch in the vicinity of North Carolina's Cumberland Knob Peak. When construction was finally finished 52 years to the day that ground was first broken, the Blue Ridge Parkway measured 469 miles through the Appalachian Range: from the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina to the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia.

September 30, 1955 - Actor James Dean was killed in a car crash in California at age 24. An amateur auto racer, Dean was driving his new 1955 Porsche 550 Spyder to Salinas, California to take part in the Salinas Road Race event the next day. Although he made just three major films, *Rebel Without a Cause, East of Eden* and *Giant,* he remains one of the most influential actors. In 1955 and 1956 he became the only actor to receive more than one posthumous nomination for an Academy Award.

September 14, 1993 - The two-millionth Ski-Doo snowmobile was manufactured in the city of Valcourt, Quebec, Canada, almost 34 years after being introduced by inventor Joseph-Armand Bombardier. Widely considered to be the first modern snowmobile, the Ski-Doo was originally to be sold as the Ski-Dog, but a typo in promotional materials listed the new machine as "Ski-Doo" and the name stuck—even serving as a popular generic term in Canada for all snowmobiles.

Forney Speaker Series

Due to our facility renovations, the Forney Museum Speaker Series for September has been postponed. We are hoping to have the originally planned talk by David Fisher, the Executive Director of the University of Denver's Transportation Institute, and his presentation, "Transportation Dynamics," in January 2026. This fascinating talk will provide a look at the forces that shape how we move, an exploration of motion, mechanics and innovation.

Free with admission, these presentations offer a fantastic opportunity to learn about the lesser known sides of history. So stay tuned to our website forneymuseum.org or this column, for the rescheduled date of "Transportation Dynamics." We'll see you there!

Forney Vehicle Spotlight

1927 Ford Model TT 1-ton Truck

Introduced in 1908, the Ford Model T was the car that changed everything for Ford and for the entire automotive industry. Considered the first mass produced, affordable car, Henry Ford's insistence on efficiency and innovations in industrial production eventually saw the Model T sell for as low as $260 in 1925. That is equivalent to about $4,600 today! By 1914 more Model T's were produced by Ford than all other cars by all other automakers combined, and by the time Ford produced the 10 millionth Model T, half of all cars in the entire world were Fords.

At the time the Model T was introduced, automotive infrastructure was quite different. Few roads were paved, and along with electrification, were rarely found outside of cities and larger towns. The primary occupation of most rural Americans was agriculture, and thus the Model T was designed almost as much to be a tractor or stationary engine as a car. With a reputation for ruggedness and rough-terrain capability, the platform soon could be seen sporting a huge variety of custom or home-made bodies and machinery for purposes other than automobiling. This versatility had as much to do with the Model T's success as the low price point.

When the United States joined the Allies in World War I, Ford dedicated itself to the war effort. The Model T was used by the Allies in many diverse roles, such as staff cars, liaison vehicles, light patrol cars, light vans, light cargo trucks and even ambulances. While the diversity of roles amply proved the versatility of the T, it also helped define the limits of what the chassis could do.

Ford took a cue from its customers and began to experiment with the Model T chassis to produce a heavy duty model more suitable for trucks. In 1917 the results of these experiments were revealed as Ford introduced the

Fordson tractor and the Ford Model TT truck. All powered by the same Ford Model T engine, the chassis and design for both new models diverged from the venerable Model T passenger cars.

In the *World Encyclopedia of Military Vehicles*, author Pat Ware writes, "During World War I, the Model T was ... standardized in the 'light' class. The first truck, using a long-wheelbase chassis designated Model TT, was launched in 1917. Although Ford ... was a pacifist, he was ... happy to supply the US Army with more than 12,000 of these vehicles... There was no civilian production of the Model TTs between 1917 and 1918." Ford must have liked what he saw because after the war was over, the Model TT reached the civilian market.

Originally sold as only a chassis, with the buyer providing a body, the Model TT had a longer wheelbase than the Model T with a heavier frame and redesigned rear axle. Rated at a short ton, or about 1,800 pounds, the TT was a significantly heavier-duty platform than the original T.

By 1924 Ford was selling the larger TT with a factory produced body, but the tradition of customization still thrived and the TT could be found in a variety of body styles, some common styles being pickup trucks, panel trucks, stake trucks, enclosed box trucks, depot hacks and more. With so much to offer, it is no surprise that the Model TT Truck was a success.

Besides just the 125 inch wheelbase, a Model TT is easily distinguished by the cylindrical housing over the rear axle differential. The rear axle of the TT features a crown wheel and a worm drive located at the end of the drive shaft, where the T used a crown wheel and pinion.

The TT was very durable for its time, and as rugged as the Model T it derived from, but due to that legacy it was also seen as somewhat slow, and handicapped by the Model T's planetary transmission—which was already coming to be seen as outdated or unwieldy. The recommended top speed of a TT truck was only 15 miles per hour, although with special aftermarket gearing they could reach about 22

miles per hour. Due to these issues accessory catalogs often offered options to provide the TT more power.

The problems with the Ford planetary transmission were the same that plagued the Model T, however, and in the spirit of customization that was a hallmark of the Model T platform there were several available options to replace the transmission or to add auxiliary gearing to either front and back axles or both. The TT's rear differential was one partial solution, but many customers were looking for something more modern and powerful, particularly at the end of the Model T's production run.

A rear-drive vehicle, the planetary transmission was known at the time as a three-speed—a two-speed in modern usage, as one of the three speeds was reverse! Unlike vehicles today, the vehicle was controlled via three floor pedals and a lever on the door side of the driver. Despite the floor pedal layout appearing similar to a modern manual transmission, there is no gas pedal, with the throttle being controlled by a lever mounted to the steering column.

The left hand pedal is used to engage the transmission, similar to, and often referred to, as a clutch pedal. With the lever in the middle position or fully forward and the pedal pressed down, the car enters low gear. When the pedal is held in an intermediate position the car is in neutral, regardless of positioning of the lever. When the left pedal is eased all the way up and the lever is fully forward the car enters high gear, if the lever is in any other position the pedal can only reach neutral. While so unlike transmissions found in the vehicles of today, this feature allowed the car to be held in neutral while the driver crank started the engine by hand. The arrangement also meant that a driver could cruise without needing to press any pedals, controlling speed by the throttle alone!

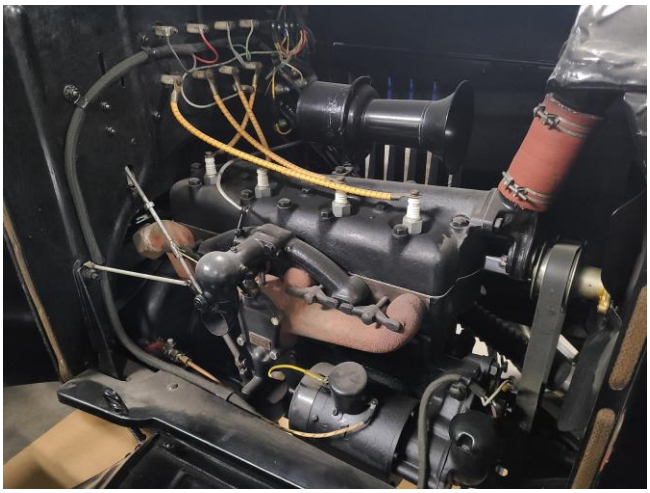
The pedal in the center, commonly called the reverse pedal, does just that. With the vehicle in neutral, pressing that pedal down engages the reverse gear, again with speed controlled by

hand rather than by foot. Interestingly the reverse gear functions in much the same way as the reverse gears of other transmissions, but the operation was very different.

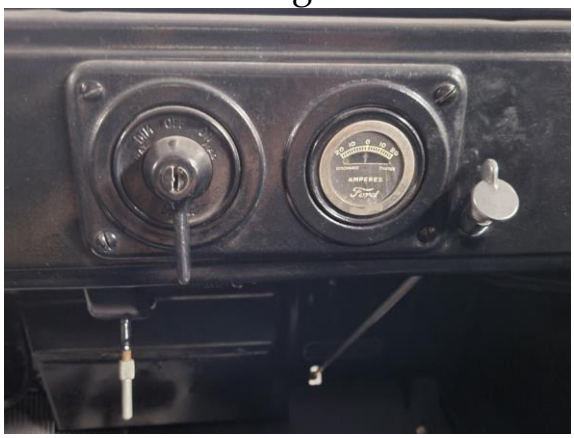
Similarly, the right-most pedal is often marked 'B' for 'Brake,' but is very different from how we think of a brake pedal today. The brake pedal actually controls a transmission brake, applying a band around a drum in the transmission and stopping the wheels from turning—the Model T platform had no brakes on the wheels! The floor lever again comes into play here as pulling all the way back on it engaged band brakes on the rear wheel hubs to serve as a parking brake, and could be used as an emergency brake.

While decidedly different to modern sensibilities, the Ford planetary transmission worked well and proved durable. Although, over time the drive bands could slip, and the vehicle could become prone to creep—a hazard while trying to crank start a car! The wet clutch could also cause this problem in cold weather, when thickened oil would prevent the clutch discs from slipping freely. All these reasons and more are why many Model TT trucks would sport special or auxiliary gearing and transmissions.

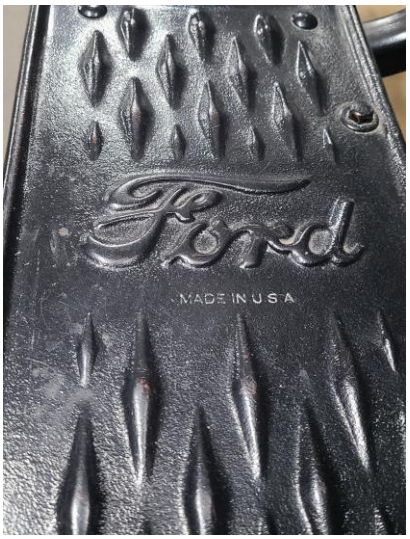
The engine of this 1927 Model TT is the same Ford 177 cubic inch inline four-cylinder as the Model T, providing about 20 horsepower. All four cylinders were cast into one engine block, an uncommon practice that lent itself to mass production, demonstrating Ford's focus on efficiency in manufacturing. The bore and stroke was 3¾ inches x 4 inches, providing a compression ratio low by today's standards but typical of the era, that was forgiving of crude low-octane fuel and minimized cranking effort at starting. Designed as a gasoline engine, the simple and robust components allowed the engine to run with modification on benzene, kerosene and even ethanol, although Prohibition would make ethanol unfeasible as a fuel for most Americans.



There was a single carburetor, a side-draft single-venturi design, with choke and throttle controlled manually—the throttle mounted to the steering column as shown above. The engine was cooled without a water pump, but by a simple thermosyphon system, common for the era. The system was susceptible to overheating if worked heavily, but generally served well for most users.



The ignition system was another oddity, using a flywheel-mounted magneto to produce a spark for combustion. Ignition timing was adjusted manually by a spark advance lever on the steering column. This requires a certain amount of skill and experience, and is particularly crucial for starting any Model T, and seems unwieldy to the modern driver. But this magneto was the first component assembled on an assembly line, and the method was copied to other Ford production segments. Even the Fordson tractors of the 1920s feature the same ignition system.



The Model T engine was continuously produced from 1908 until 1941, making it one of the longest lived engines in series production, although production for civilian cars and trucks ended in 1927, with the end of production of the Model T and the introduction of the Ford Model A—the TT truck was replaced by the 1½-ton Model AA truck. The Model T platform was so transformative for the company, that Ford felt the successor should be released as the first model, "Model A," of the new era.

This 1927 Model TT can be seen on display as part of the Forney Museum Collection.

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 https://www.kingsoopers.com/account/communityrewards 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.

In Memoriam

On August 6th we lost another valuable volunteer of nearly 12 years, Jim Bahrenburg, after a valiant 5 year fight with cancer. Jim helped spearhead the refurbishment of the Museum's 1929 Chevrolet Landau Sedan in 2013 in coordination with the Mile High Region of the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America. Jim was also a very generous supporter of the Museum, establishing what we call *The Bahrenburg Tire* Fund—donating over $40,000 through the years so that the many cars in the collection in need of tires could have new rubber. Jim was a stalwart during many years of staffing our rental events and most recently adopted our 1949 Cadillac Series 62 sedan, fully funding its mechanical resurrection after it sat idle the past 53 years! The car was completed only weeks ago and made Jim very proud to see a car he'd long admired in the Museum's collection back on the streets. Jim and his often unfiltered honesty and "candid" nature will be missed. We will reprint his obituary here in recognition of his passing.

> James 'Jim' Louis Bahrenburg of Wheat Ridge, Colorado died August 6th, 2025 at the age of 86 due to complications from cancer.
>
> Mr. Bahrenburg was born June 9th, 1939 in Canton, Ohio to Alene S. & Dr. James H. Bahrenburg.
>
> In Canton he attended Belle Stone and Mason Schools and was a 1957 graduate of Lehman High School.
>
> James attended Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania and graduated in 1961 from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.
>
> He moved to Boulder, Colorado to attend graduate school at the University of Colorado, due in part to its proximity to Yellowstone Park, where he worked many summers.

In 1962 he began teaching Spanish and French in Jefferson County Colorado schools, retiring from Pomona High School in 1993.

At the time of his passing, he was an active member of the Buick Club of America, Mile High Chapter; Vintage Chevrolet Club of America, Mile High Region; Cadillac-LaSalle Club, Rocky Mountain Region and was a Son of the American Revolution through his paternal grandmother.

He served on the board of directors of these clubs in various capacities throughout his years as a member.

Jim was also an active volunteer of nearly 12 years at the Forney Museum of Transportation in Denver and was a generous supporter of the Museum and its mission, personally spearheading the refurbishment of the Museum's 1929 Chevrolet Landau and 1949 Cadillac Series 62.

He was also known as a saviour of elderly dogs, being particularly fond of West Highland Terriers, and over the past several decades rescued dozens of senior dogs from shelters across the Denver Metropolitan Area, providing a loving home to each needy dog.

Mr. Bahrenburg is survived by brother-in-law Dick Conger of Tennessee, a niece, Linda Fragale of Virginia, a nephew, Scott Conger of Wyoming, one cousin, some few close Colorado friends and his Schnauzer 'Pepper' & Poodle 'Mattie'. He is to be buried with his parents in North Lawn Cemetery in Canton, Ohio. At his request, no services are planned.

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

Volunteer Birthdays

9/13 – Don Vogel

9/13 – Dylan Hart

9/16 – Greg Kyle

9/17 – Michael Cross

9/18 – Nicole Bleau

9/19 – John Tuthill

9/19 – Ray Petros

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!