

Forney

MUSEUM OF TRANSPORTATION

Newsletter August 2024

"Moving Forward"

Big Boy Days

Big Boy Days are returning to the Forney Museum! Saturday, August 3rd and Sunday, August 4th the museum will be having a weekend of celebration of all things trains. The Train Collector's Association (TCA) will be here with many of their model train layouts, vendors selling model trains and rail memorabilia, the Moffat Modelers Club will have their HUGE 2,400 square-foot N-scale train layout open, as well as tours of the museum's rail cars. And of course, Big Boy #4005! Come see this famous engine, and celebrate Big Boy and all things rail with us.

With special pricing for the weekend, and so much to see and do, you won't want to miss this! So come join us Saturday, August 3rd and Sunday, August 4th for Big Boy Days at the Forney Museum of Transportation!



Forney
Museum of Transportation

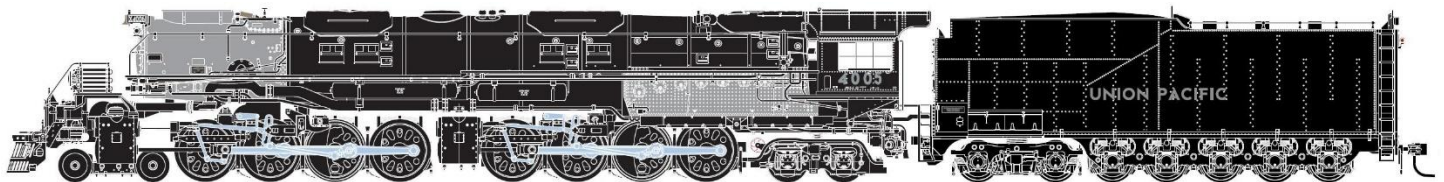
BIG BOY DAYS RETURNS!

ALL SIZES OF TRAIN LAYOUTS TO ENJOY!
MANY VENDORS SELLING MODEL TRAIN LAYOUT
MERCHANDISE!

ADMISSION PRICES:	SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2024
	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
ADULTS (13+) \$13.00	SUNDAY, AUGUST 4, 2024
KIDS (3-12) \$5.00	9:00 AM to 4:00 PM



4303 Brighton Blvd.
Denver, CO 80216
Forneymuseum.org



This Month in Transportation History

August 3, 1492 - Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain, with three ships, *Nina*, *Pinta* and *Santa Maria*. Seeking a westerly route to the Far East, he instead landed on October 12th in the Bahamas, thinking it was an outlying Japanese island.

August 5, 1583 - The first British colony in North America was founded by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, a British navigator and explorer. He sighted the Newfoundland coast and took possession of the area around St. John's harbor in the name of the Queen. He was later lost at sea in a storm off the Azores on his return trip to England.

August 27, 1838 - The Eastern Railroad, one of the earliest railroads in New England, began operations with a 13-mile line connecting East Boston with Salem via the town of Lynn. At the time of its debut the line consisted of three locomotives and 16 passenger cars, and sections of the main line are still used today by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority on the Newburyport/Rockport Line.

August 25, 1860 - The Victoria Bridge in Canada was inaugurated by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. Connecting Montreal with the city of Saint-Lambert, the Victoria Bridge was the first bridge to span the St. Lawrence River, and at the time of completion was the longest bridge in the world. The bridge, carrying rail and motor vehicle traffic, is still in use to this day.

August 18, 1899 - Erasmus S. Midgett, a surfman in the United States Life Saving Service (today part of the U.S. Coast Guard) single-handedly rescued 10 men from a sinking ship off the coast of North Carolina. The three-masted cargo ship *Priscilla*, en route from Baltimore to Rio de Janeiro, had been caught by a hurricane and wrecked 25 feet from shore. Coming across the wreck around 4:30 AM, Midgett realized he didn't have time to ride for help, and set about rescuing the survivors by himself. Midgett was awarded the Gold Life-Saving Medal for his actions.

August 23, 1904 - Harry D. Weed of Canstota, New York was issued U.S. Patent Number 768,495 for his "Grip-Tread for Pneumatic Tires" to help make driving safer in weather and adverse conditions. He explained that his invention, tire chains, "provide a flexible and collapsible grip or tread composed entirely of chains linked together and applied to the sides and periphery of the tire and held in place solely by the inflation of the tire, and which is reversible."

August 29, 1911 - Hilda Hewlett became the first British woman to earn a pilot's license. Hewlett, at the age of 47, received certificate number 122 from the Royal Aero Club. One of the first women in England to drive an automobile, and an avid bicyclist, Hewlett discovered a passion for flying in 1909. Adopting the pseudonym Grace Bird, she learned to fly in France, before returning to found the first flying school in England at Brooklands Aerodrome.

August 19, 1929 - The ZMC-2, built for the U.S. Navy, made its first flight in Detroit, Michigan. Nicknamed the "Tin Bubble," although actually being made of aluminum, the ZMC-2 is the only successfully-operated all-metal airship ever built. After a total 752 flights, spanning 2,265 hours, the airship was retired in 1939.

August 17, 1978 - The first transatlantic balloon trip was completed by three Americans; Max Anderson, Ben Abruzzo, and Larry Newman, all from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Starting from Maine on August 11th, they traveled in *Double Eagle II* over 3,000 miles in 137 hours, landing about 60 miles west of Paris.

Forney Vehicle Spotlight

1971 Buick Riviera "Boat-Tail" 2-Door Sport Coupe

Buick first used the Riviera name in 1949, with the Buick Roadmaster Riviera Hardtop. Along with the Cadillac Coupe de Ville and the Oldsmobile 98 Holiday, this was the first mass production of a hardtop, pillarless roof design, and the Riviera name continued to be used by Buick to designate this as a body style, and not a model name, through the 1950s.



By the late 1950s, General Motors was looking to design a personal luxury car to



compete with the Ford Thunderbird which had exploded in popularity. An experimental Cadillac model, dubbed "LaSalle" and with styling influenced by GM styling chief Bill Mitchell, was designed, but Cadillac passed on the design, and the project was assigned to the Buick division. Originally dubbed the Buick LaSalle, the car was introduced as the Buick Riviera for the 1963 model year.

Total sales of the first generation Riviera reached 112,244, and indeed gave the Thunderbird its first real competition in the American personal luxury car market. Although considered an icon of styling and design, Buick redesigned the model in 1966 and the second-generation Riviera, ending in 1970, proved to be even more successful than the first, with 227,669 units sold across the five years of its run. The 1970 model, with design elements of the 1968 "Silver Arrow II" concept car, featured exposed headlamps, a full bumper that wrapped around and over the grille, skirted rear wheels, and a new 455 cubic inch engine that was the largest engine Buick had offered to that date. Despite their success, GM felt it was time to update the design.



In 1971 a radical redesign of the Riviera was done, with sweeping “boat-tail” styling. Designed under the direction of Bill Mitchell, and evoking the pointed rear-end designs of sporty two-seat roadsters built in the 1920s, it paired the vee-shaped body with a fastback rear window – inspired by the 1963 Corvette Stingray – on the Riviera platform. Originally intended for the smaller GM A-body, GM management decided that the new Riviera would use the bigger GM B-body with a 122-inch wheelbase. This provided a distinct departure from the Riviera’s sister models under GM, the Cadillac Eldorado and Oldsmobile Toronado.



This generation also saw a more faithful representation of the classic Buick “sweepspear” design, more faithful to the 1950s Buicks of the side molding and beltline. Large wheelhouses were wide open, after a year of skirted fenders, suggesting a more sporty air. Along with the rest of Buick’s offerings for 1971, the Riviera featured “Full-Flo” forced-air ventilation, with louvers in the deck lid. Now considered a failed design, Buick discontinued the “Full-Flo” system after 1971.

Along with the sweeping shaped dash, that evoked the same boat-tail design as the body of the car, the Riviera came standard with many features. Padded, contoured cloth and vinyl seats, and deep pile carpeting kept the interior feeling luxurious and soft. Heater/defroster, air conditioning, power windows, electric clock, smoking set and AM/FM radio put the driver at ease while behind the wheel, alongside safety features like head restraints, a new seatbelt system, and power front disc brakes. Other standard features included an inside hood release, variable ratio power steering and dual exhaust. All these features combined the Riviera’s personal luxury style with a vehicle that owed some small inspiration to the muscle cars of the 1960s, at a price point of \$6,603 as equipped – which is equivalent to about \$51,000 today.





The 1971 Riviera came equipped with the Buick 455 cubic inch, 255 horsepower OHV V8 engine with a four-barrel carburetor. The cast iron block had a bore and stroke of 4.31 x 3.9 inches and a compression ratio of 8.5:1 and produced 510 lb-ft of torque at 2,800 RPM, which is more than any muscle car engine. Built from 1970 until 1976, this engine was an improvement on the earlier Buick 400 and Buick 430 engines and was originally rated

at 350 horsepower, but in an effort to comply with new federal emissions standards the cylinder compression ratio was reduced, giving the engine a new claimed power of 255 hp. Performance remained relatively strong, with a 0-60 MPH time of 8.1 seconds, but the sporty image of the Riviera had begun to fade. Tightening emissions controls meant that the claimed power of the Buick 455 continued to drop incrementally every year until they discontinued production in 1976.



The Buick 455 was one of the first "thin-wall casting" engine blocks at GM, and due to this the engine weighs significantly less than other engines of comparable size, over 150 pounds less than the Chevrolet 454. The 1971 Riviera came equipped with a TurboHydramatic-400 3 speed automatic Transmission. This model also saw the introduction of Buick's new MaxTrac traction control system, and all-weather traction control rear axles. These new features helped to make this model one of Buick's more innovative redesigns.



Despite all the new design features, and belying its status as a collector car now, sales for the 1971 model only reached 33,810 units, the lowest to date. 1972 saw some changes to the appearance, but the new changes also failed to gain traction with the public and sales stayed stagnant in 1972, 1973 and beyond. 1974 saw a new generation of Riviera, losing the "boat-tail" for good, along with

much of the distinctive styling that distinguished the Buick offering from its GM stablemates, but sales continued to stay low through several more redesigns, before finally recovering in the 1980s. Ultimately, a total of 1,127,261 Rivieras were produced by Buick from 1963 until the final model year of 1999.

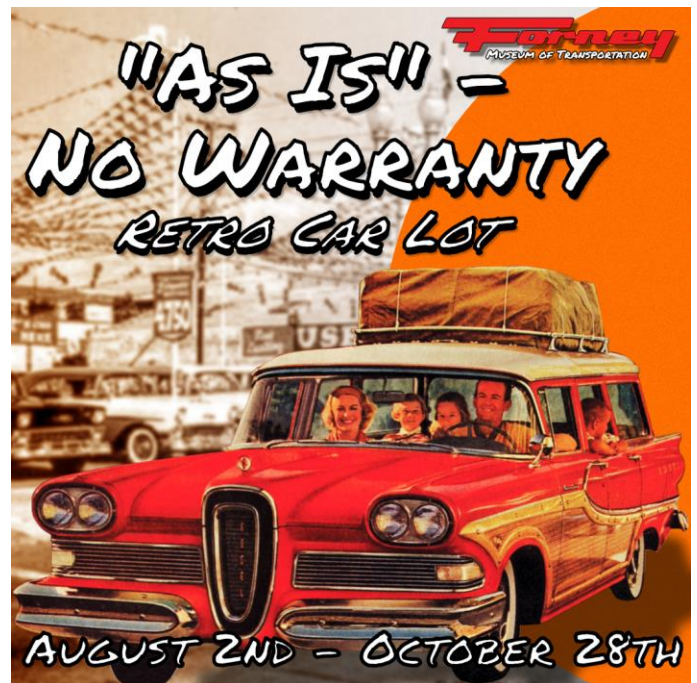
This 1971 Buick Riviera is in original, unrestored condition with only 32,000 miles on the odometer. Generously donated to the Forney Museum from the estate of the second owner, William Berden, in 2017, this vehicle can be seen on display as part of the Forney Museum Collection.



The New Exhibit is Here

Celebrating the used car lots and dealerships of yesteryear, come see the Forney Museum's new exhibit, "As Is – No Warranty: Retro Car Lot." With cars ranging from a 1923 Peugeot Quadriletta Roadster through a 1986 Plymouth Reliant, and featuring standouts like the 1958 Edsel Villager or the 1975 Datsun 200Z, there are so many amazing designs on display.

Running from August 2nd until October 28th, don't miss this chance to see "As Is – No Warranty: Retro Car Lot" at the Forney Museum!



Volunteer Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8/5 - Chris Hildenbrand | 8/20 - Steve Craddock |
| 8/5 - Bernard Ruffenach | 8/23 - Ron Wenger |
| 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

Forney Museum Calendar



The Forney Museum is proud to announce the release of a 2025-26 Pinup Calendar. Only \$20, calendars can be purchased in the Museum Gift Shop or online at forneymuseum.org, and all proceeds go to benefit the Museum. 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!

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!

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

Thank you to everyone who has already donated!