

Welcome to the Motor Transport Museum!

MTM is proud to operate one of the few facilities nationwide dedicated to preserving the history and vehicles relating to the origin and development of the motor transport industry.

Although American automotive history dates back to around 1896, and a small number of motorized vehicles designed for commercial use were built around the turn of the century, it is generally accepted that the American motor transport industry actually began in 1903. That's the year the first commercial vehicle test trials were held in New York City.

Commercial motor transport was still in an initial development stage during the early part of the century, and the horse and wagon prevailed. But more and more progressive businesses began to convert to the use of trucks. As the war in Europe began in 1914, the American military and our allied nations began to recognize the value of the motor truck. This led to greatly increased production and more rapid advancement of truck design. A great manufacturing industry was born. By the end of the war in 1918, after it had revolutionized the way warfare was conducted, the motor truck had demonstrated beyond any doubt its immense transportation potential and dependability. There was no question that the motor truck would play a major role in daily commerce and in the development of our nation. But a limiting factor was still the poor condition of our roads.

Use of motor trucks continued to grow during the Roaring Twenties. By the end of the decade, motor truck development and the building of good inter-city and farm-to-market roads had made great strides. Advanced pneumatic tire design and engines capable of transporting heavy loads allowed the development of still larger and faster commercial vehicles. The size and basic design of many of the types of trucks and buses we are familiar with today had their origin in the early to mid 1930's, during the harsh economic decade of the Great Depression. The highway diesel truck, vital to today's motor transport, was developed during that era.

The mid to late thirties can be considered to be the "golden age" of motor truck design. Renown automotive and industrial stylists such as Count Alexis de Sakhnoffsky, Henry Dryfus and Raymond Lowey helped bring about unprecedented motor truck design, particularly in the mid to heavy-duty range. The basic design of many well-known makes, such as Autocar, Brockway, Diamond T, Federal, Mack, Reo, International and White, to name a few, developed during this period would be maintained with little change into the 1940's and 1950's. Then came World War II

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during which hundreds of thousands of American motor trucks played a major role in winning the wars in Europe and the Pacific.

Back home after the War, economic prosperity returned and the demand for new trucks became insatiable. Motor transport operators, farmers and businesses, unable to buy new trucks during the war, scurried to replace their worn-out vehicles. Attractive post-war styling of the late 1940's, followed by exciting new designs and the development of more powerful engines of the 1950's, accompanied even greater growth of the motor transport industry. Construction of the modern Interstate Highway System that we enjoy today began in the mid 1950's, and the advancement of even more powerful diesel highway haulers continued to bring prosperity to virtually all parts of our nation.

As you look around our facility, you will find trucks of almost all of these eras represented. Many of the 150-plus trucks present are accompanied by interesting historical perspectives and technical detail. Over the past year, vehicle donations have included a 1922 Seagrave fire truck, 1942 Kurtis Jeep, 1942 GMC deuce-and-a half military truck, and a very unusual 1949 MacDonald low-profile drayage truck. The Motor Transport Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation established in 1986. Donations to MTM are tax deductible.

In addition to the preservation and display of historically significant trucks and artifacts, much of the exciting history of the American motor transport industry has been captured in the pages of the Motor Transport Museum's journal, *Transport Pioneer*. Over 32 issues have been published, and many are still currently available. Be sure to browse through our display. We invite you to become an MTM member. Also be sure to inquire about the community of Campo's historical setting, and in particular the historic feldspar processing mill in which the Motor Transport Museum facility is located. While in the area, visits to the Stone Store Museum and the San Diego Railroad Museum are a must.

Special thanks are in order to the many fine individuals who provide their membership support, and to the dedicated volunteers who donate a great deal of their time to pursue Motor Transport Museum objectives and facilitate day-to-day operations. MTM is also greatly appreciative of the many others who have donated vehicles, financial resources, manpower and technical support. The very helpful assistance of the National Civilian Conservation Corps, the Border California Museum Association and the County of San Diego is also very gratefully acknowledged.