

MOTOR TRANSPORT MUSEUM NEWS

Volume X No. 2

31949 Highway 94, Campo, CA 91906

Summer 2008

Spring Update

This spring, the MTM volunteers continued work on housekeeping chores and the restoration of the 1924 Cadillac stage. New software, printers and scanners were acquired for MTM's library through grant funds. More donated items have been sold bringing us funds for our operational needs.

MTM held its annual open house with great success, meeting new friends, gaining new members, and just "shooting the breeze" with others.

1942 "Kurtis" Jeep by *Ed Dilginis*

/the Transport Pioneer (Vol. 8, No.3)



One of the most famous vehicles to come out of World War II, and whose successor is still very much with us today, is the "Jeep". It originated as a result of the U.S Army's desire for a lightweight, highly mobile, all terrain vehicle capable of carrying ¼ ton payloads.

The Quartermaster Corps evaluated two wheel drive vehicles built by American Bantam in 1939, but these were found lacking in power and cross country mobility.

In mid June 1940, the Army requested submittal of prototypes of a very light weight (4x4) by the end of July. American Bantam was the only manufacturer able to comply within that very short time frame.

A 45 H.P. Continental engine powered its vehicle. Although much heavier than the army desired, 70 more were ordered for extended field testing.

Although America had not yet been trust into World War II, the potential was looming on the horizon, and the Army was anxious to be prepared.

Willys-Overland, another vehicle manufacturer, as well as Ford Motor Company, had expressed an interest in designing such a vehicle, but both were unable to comply within the time allowed.

Possibly because American Bantam was struggling financially and deemed unable to build large quantities of vehicles in timely fashion, the Army furnished copies of Bantam's blueprints to Willys and Ford. Willys delivered its "Quad" and Ford its "Pygmy" prototypes by November 1940. Both were remarkably similar to Bantam's original design.

After additional testing of vehicles built by these three manufacturers, the Army standardized on the Willys design, powered by that company's proven four-cylinder engine. In July 1941, the Army contracted with Willys to be the standard supplier of this versatile vehicle, and Ford to be the secondary supplier.

It has been said that "war is hell" and American Bantam, who should probably be recognized as being the inventor of the

Jeep, was eliminated as a supplier altogether and given wartime contracts to build trailers instead.

Production figures vary, but over the course of the War, it is believed that Willys-Overland built around 359,000 of its Model GP.MB Jeep, while Ford built around 280,000 of its very similar Model GP.

In its final form, the four wheel drive Jeep was powered by the Willys four cylinder 54 h.p, 134 cu. In. flathead engine, using a three speed transmission and a two speed transfer case.

Its total weight was 2,440 lbs., with as total length just under 11 feet. It rode on a 90-inch wheelbase, with 6:00 x 16 tires and had 8-¾ inch of ground clearance. It carried 15 gallons of fuel and could run 65 mph.

How did the name "Jeep" come into being? Well, it was probably the result of several sources. Joseph Frazer, then president of Willys Overland, claims to have originated it by slurring the letter designation "GP", a model identification that may have evolved from the Army's original request for a "General Purpose " vehicle.

Others say it may have been based upon a Popeye cartoon character introduced in 1936 named "Eugene the Jeep". The Army informally referred to it by several names, however the term "Jeep" became the most wide spread after being publicized by a Washington, D.C. reporter who rode in one.

After a dispute over having taken credit for the Jeep's design in its WW II advertising, the Federal Trade Commission held hearings over the 1943 to 1945 period, which established that Willys-Overland did not "invent" the Jeep. Much of the credit was given to American Bantam. However, Willys-Overland copyrighted the name "Jeep" in 1946, and it is now a registered trademark of the Chrysler Corporation.

Well, sometimes things are not always as they seem, and we must admit that this one-of-a-kind "Jeep" is somewhat of an imposter. But there is good reason.

During the War, Hollywood studios were in need of a Jeep, and at the time, none could be released for civilian use. This led to the creation of this unusual vehicle, known as the "Kurtis Jeep", which was built by Frank Kurtis for use in the movies.

Frank Kurtis was a specialty auto- mobile designer and builder. His first cars were hot rods built in the 1930's, and he built many Midget auto racers and Indianapolis 500 winners.

This Jeep replica was built on a Chrysler products chassis, using a Model A Ford engine and transmission. It is only of two-wheel drive, but this is obvious only upon closer inspection.

(1942 "Kurtis" Jeep continued)

The body was fabricated out of sheet metal, and the floors were made of wood. This vehicle was later purchased by Bill Barker of Barker's Prop Cars in Torrance, CA, and was donated to the Motor Transport Museum in 1996.



MTM's 1942 Kurtis Jeep replica, awaiting installation of its windshield, features an early WWII Ford GP-style grille.

Although it had not been used for many years, MTM member Charles McMahon of San Diego, CA "adopted" this vehicle and took it home for some tender loving care. It now runs and operates much like the production Jeep it was designed to represent.

- FEATURE ARTICLE WRITERS NEEDED -

Contact John Thomas or Carl Calvert at: 619 478 – 2492

2008 Open House and Photos

The MTM Open House and Annual Membership meeting was held on Saturday April 26th. Weather was cool and breezy and attendance was about 80 people. Bryan Butler on fiddle, Norm Blackwood and Van Decker on guitar provided Country Bluegrass and jazz music. Special thanks to Norm's historically insightful poetry.



Carl Calvert welcomes visitors to the Open House

This year Ed Carry was at the registration booth, greeting folks, signing in new members and passing out free raffle tickets. Door prizes of hats T-shirts, historic books and DVD videos were provided.

Tasty foods were prepared thanks to the help of Life member Bill Jellyman and Kevin Riedy who cooked hot

dogs and hamburgers, Dudley Mills and his wife Janett with homemade chili, Carl Calvert's homemade ice cream and the MTM volunteers that helped provided the rest.

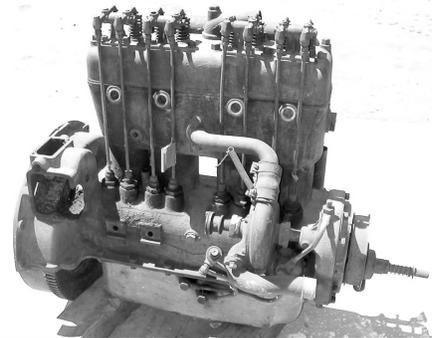
Some of the Southern California ATHS Chapter Truck Club members paid us a visit, bringing some of their beautifully restored and custom crafted trucks. Overall, The MTM's Open House introduced us to new friends in and outside of the Local Community, new members were gained and a good time was had by one and all.

New Donations

The following items were donated to the museum during the last three months.

- o A 1917 Buick engine by the Horseless Carriage Library of La Mesa, CA
- o An antique potbellied stove, a trailer, miners pans and other archival materials were donated by Pat Spencer of National City, CA
- o A 1923 Ford Model TT truck by Tom Klecan of Cave Creek, AZ
- o Eight parking lot lights were donated to us by Tom Hurley
- o Artie Hill recharged all of the museums fire extinguishers

We thank these donors for their generosity in helping the museum attain its goals.



1917 Buick four-cylinder engine donated by the Horseless Carriage Library. Note open valve pushrods



Open House Photos by: Glenn Collins
More Open House photos can be seen on our web site at:
www.motortransportmuseum.org

A 20-Year Mystery Finally Solved! By Carl Calvert

This year, 2008, the Motor Transport Museum has been at the Feldspar Mill for 20 years! One problem that has consistently perplexed us is the insignia on the roof of the building that contain an 18 foot diameter circle with a plus sign in the middle of it. Additionally, a large arrow is adjacent to the circle pointing easterly with the number 17 at the end of it. What did this mean?

It was obviously a marker for aviation, as the other insignias on the roof mark the North direction with an arrow. We have asked many people, mostly aviation enthusiasts, what this could possibly designate. The plus sign; meaning hospital? The border? The airport? And the 17; meaning 17 degrees, Or abbreviated for 170 degrees? And of which neither direction does the arrow point. The arrow is closer to 90 degrees, an easterly direction.

We recently painted the roof to help prevent rust corrosion from building up and to help prevent the galvanized tin from deteriorating and running into the soil. In the process of painting the roof and replacing the insignias and Campo sign this year, it renewed our interest in trying to solve the insignia question. About then a visitor and private pilot from Julian named Bill Chaney was visiting and said when asked about the insignia, "Oh, that's the nearest airport, 17 miles from here". Sure enough, in Jacumba, 17 miles from Campo lays the Jacumba Airport.

Many years ago, before electronic navigation equipment became popular, pilots would "fly by the rail" follow the railroad from one point to another. It was always easy to spot the rails from the air and knowing where the railroad went would keep you oriented and from getting lost. Our building, nine stories high and next to the railroad was an ideal spot to place directional sign for aviators.

1924 Cadillac Stage

The fitting of the stage body to the 1924 Cadillac chassis continues, as the MTM crew executes various necessary alterations. No doubt the original mating of the body to the chassis ran into similar ordeals, as is the way with all custom-made vehicles.

The fitting of the engine and radiator shroud awaits the necessary work currently being done to the radiator. The Julian Historical Society is funding the restoration effort and will store the stage in Julian operating it at civic events when the restoration is complete.

The Annual MTM Board Meeting

MTM had its annual progress and strategy board meeting May 18th. At the meeting MTM's long and short-term future was discussed. Extensive research by Ed Dilginis and John Thomas concerning the grounds, the trucks and the various items on the grounds was revealed. A new MTM logo created by new member Glenn Collins was accepted.

New MTM Logo:



**Motor Transport
Museum**

New Members

Shawn Meyers of Boulevard, CA has enrolled as a life member and **Robyn Garcia** of San Diego. **Bill Jackson** of El Cajon, and **Keith Dindinger** of El Cajon, CA have enrolled as general members of the museum, since publication of the last newsletter. We welcome these new members to our museum.

Attention All Members

You can donate money towards MTM's cause without spending a dime by simply receiving these quarterly issues by Email. This way MTM can save mailing costs and use the savings towards operating expenses.

Please Email us at motortransport@att.net and subscribe.

Also – MTM needs people like you to great and educate our visitors. Being a Docent is fun and rewarding.

Anyone interested in helping on any of the Saturdays during 2008 please call John Thomas at (619) 479-4318 or MTM at (619) 478-2492 to volunteer.

For Sale

The MTM has numerous items for sale at its main facility at the Mill in Campo, CA. To view the items that MTM is currently selling, visit our new web site at www.motortransportmuseum.org.

Upcoming events

The Heidrick Ag History Center will present The Best Show on Tracks at 1962 Hays Lane in Woodland, CA June 20 thru June 22. The show will feature demonstrations of Best, Holt and Caterpillar tracked tractors as well as early pull harvesters and steam traction engines. Visitors will also have access to the world class Heidrick Museum of agricultural history. For directions visit www.aghhistory.org

The annual Auto **Heritage Day** will be held in National City, CA Kimball Park on August 3rd. The parade will be from 9 to 10 am and auto show from 10 am until 4 pm. For more information visit www.ci.national-city.ca.us.

The **MTM Board of Directors'** meetings for the summer quarter of 2008 will be held at the Horseless Carriage Foundation library at 8186 Center St. La Mesa, CA at 6:30 PM on the following Thursdays: **July 17th**, **Aug 15th**, **Sept 18th** All members are invited to attend.

Hours of Operation

The Museum facility at 31949 Highway 94 in Campo, CA is open to the public every Saturday from 10 AM to 5 PM. Admission is free, donations are accepted.

MTM Officers and Directors

The officers and directors of the Motor Transport Museum are as follows:

Officers: Greg Long, President

John W. Thomas, Secretary

Carl E. Calvert, Chief Financial Officer

Directors: Reid Carroll, Roger Challberg, Jim Jensen
Steve Sackett, Bill Jellyman, Mike Anderson



Motor Transport Museum

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

New Renewal

Name _____ Spouse _____
Street Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ E-Mail _____

General Membership	1Yr \$20 _____	2Yr \$40 _____	3Yr \$60 _____
General - International Membership (Non USA Mailing Address)			1Yr \$25 _____
Corporate Membership			1Yr \$75 _____
Life Membership			\$250 _____
Endowing Life Membership			\$1000 _____
Associate Membership - Non Profit organization			1Yr \$35 _____
Jounior Membership - Children under 18 (non-voting)			1Yr \$1 _____
Student Membership - Full time students, 18 - 25			1Yr \$6 _____

I agree to comply strictly with the By Laws of the Motor Transport Museum; to conduct myself at all times in a manner which will support and promote the best interest of the Motor Transport Museum

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

MOTOR TRANSPORT MUSEUM
31949 HIGHWAY 94
CAMPO, CA 91906