



Automobile Timeline in Driving America



Museum Plaza



Theodore Roosevelt's Horse-drawn Brougham



Car with Theodore Roosevelt Brougham

Great Garages

HENRY FORD MUSEUM®: ALWAYS MOVING AHEAD

Written by David M. Brown

Nov. 22, 1963. Dallas, Texas.

Fifty years ago this month, the Earth stood still as a fanatic sharpshooter, perched in a window of a book warehouse for Dallas schools, murdered a young president who represented the hopes of a new generation of Americans. The violent and volatile 1960s in America had begun; Camelot was gone.

This month, the world-famous Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, which owns the Lincoln limousine in which the 35th president was assassinated, will memorialize him with "JFK Remembered," 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m., welcoming Dan Rather, with a lecture Nov. 18, 7 p.m., and former Secret Service Agent Clint Hill, who jumped across the trunk of the car to protect a horrified Jackie Kennedy, will be speaking the following evening, Nov. 19, 7 p.m. The museum will be free to the public Nov. 22, 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Celebrating Henry Ford's 150th birthday this year, the museum displays many significant cars, some world-changing, on its 12 acres, including Henry Ford's 999 Racer, which won the famous Manufacturer's Challenge Cup in 1902; a Ford Mark IV Race Car,

driven by legends Dan Gurney and A.J. Foyt, to win the 24 hours of Le Mans on June 10–11, 1967; the Ford Mustang Serial #1, the first of the great pony cars produced, sold to Stanley Tucker of St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, on April 14, 1964, as a 1965 model.

Fords aren't the only models here or the only transportation means. The 1906 Old 16, the prized Locomobile race car, won the prestigious Vanderbilt Cup, the first time an American car checked at an international auto race, and a 1930–31 Bugatti Royale Type 41 Convertible, a synthesis of art and technology by Ettore Bugatti and son Jean, is also showcased.

In addition, an Allegheny Locomotive, built in 1941 and weighing in at 600 tons, was one of the largest steam-powered locomotives ever built. And The Rosa Parks Bus, on which she stayed in her seat and stood up to centuries of inhumanity, is also displayed.

Founded in 1929, the Henry Ford Museum is, then, more than just great cars, showcasing tens of thousands of artifacts whose broad purview is Americana, social heroes, such as Parks, and technological innovation.

One of the few surviving copies of the Declaration of Independence, hand copied in 1826, can be seen, as well as George Washington's Camp Bed and Chest. Mesmerizing is The Lincoln Chair on which the great president sat in Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C., the tragic evening of April 14, 1865.

Buckminster Fuller's plexi-glass and aluminum Dymaxion House, weighed only 8,000 pounds and sold for about \$6,500, including appliances. Visitors also see the original Lamy's Diner, "fast food before fast food," with marble counters and cupboards mahogany, and an early 26-foot-high neon-lighted McDonald's Sign, installed in August of 1960 at the second McDonald's franchise in Michigan, is signed: "Licensee of the MCDONALD'S Speedee Service System — HAMBURGERS Over Million Sold."

The Henry Ford also shows "Heroes of the Sky": a 1939 Douglas DC-3, which had flown more than 12 million miles in 83,032 hours, wearing out 136 engines, before retirement; a 1928 Ford Trimotor, the one Admiral Byrd piloted over the South Pole; an early 1939 Sikorsky VS-300A Helicopter that went backward, sideways, up and down but couldn't fly forward; and a Wright Flyer Replica, which, weeks before the Centennial of Flight celebration in December 2003, made successful flights at the Wright Brothers National Memorial in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina.

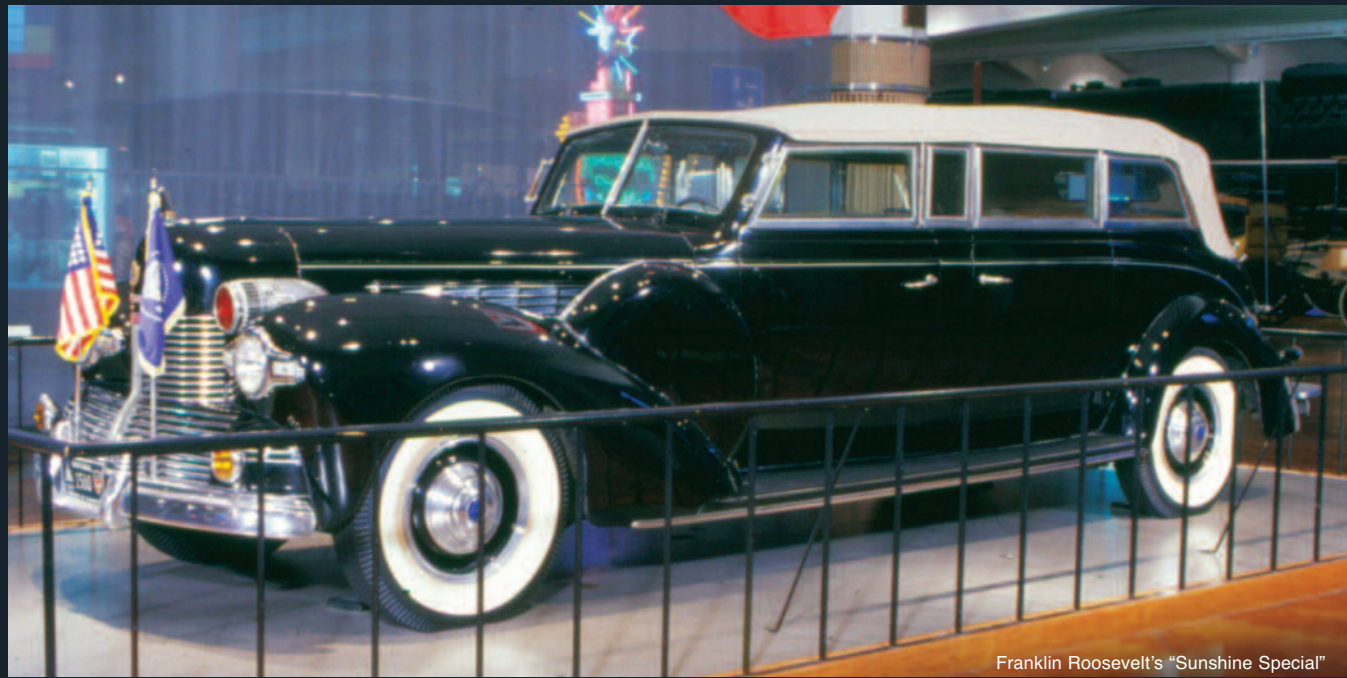
"The Henry Ford Museum is all about ideas and innovations that changed the world, whether Ford was directly involved or not," says Edsel B. Ford II, the Ford Motor Company, which, with many corporations and individuals, offers support to the non-profit museum.

"My great-grandfather, Henry Ford, was a visionary and he believed in the power of real objects that represented everyday progress in America," Ford continues.

He explains that with another visionary, his friend and mentor, Thomas Edison, Ford "wanted the museum to be a place where people could see those historical objects — many of them forms of transportation — and be inspired so much by the important stories of the past that they, too, could make a mark in this world and create a better future."

This month, to honor President Kennedy and our other chief executives, Matt Anderson, curator of transportation at the HFM showed us five of its one-off presidential vehicles:

- **Theodore Roosevelt's Horse-drawn Brougham** — Used for official occasions by the equestrian hero of San Juan Hill and the exponent of rugged individualism, it was later repurposed, as



Franklin Roosevelt's "Sunshine Special"



Dwight D. Eisenhower



Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Bubble Top"

automobiles took charge, during the administrations of Taft and Wilson by the White House housekeeping department. Taft, by the way, drove a Baker electric.

•**Franklin Roosevelt's "Sunshine Special"** — This is FDR's limo before and during World War II for public appearances. "It began a more-than-50-year run of Lincolns as the 'official' White House limousines," Anderson says, noting that this 1939 Lincoln had many custom items such as interior containers installed by Brunn & Company. Armor plating and bulletproof glass were added just after Pearl Harbor. Weighing 9,300 pounds, the Lincoln has a V-12 with L-head valves, outputting 150 horses from its 414 cubic inches.

•**Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Bubble Top"** — Four presidents enjoyed this 1950 Lincoln convertible sedan. Following Truman, Eisenhower had the plastic bubble top fitted over the tonneau so that riders could be visible even in bad weather.

Presidents Kennedy and Johnson used the 6,500-pound car as

a spare until its retirement in 1967. Queen Elizabeth II, Nikita Khrushchev and Charles De Gaulle are among those who were passengers. The V-8, also with L-head valves, has 337 cubic inches, producing 152 horses.

"Like the other presidential cars, the car was leased from the Ford Motor Company to the White House, then donated to the museum," Anderson explains.

•**Ronald Reagan Limousine** — When Ronald Reagan was shot by John Hinckley Jr. on March 30, 1981, this was the 1972 Lincoln the president was rushed into. President Ford was also in it when an assassination attempt was made.

The first presidential limo custom built and armored from the start, the 13,000-pound car has a 460-cubic-inch V-8 producing 214 horsepower. Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter and George H.W. Bush also used it.

"This is the last presidential limousine we'll see on display,"



Ronald Reagan Limousine



Photos courtesy Henry Ford Museum



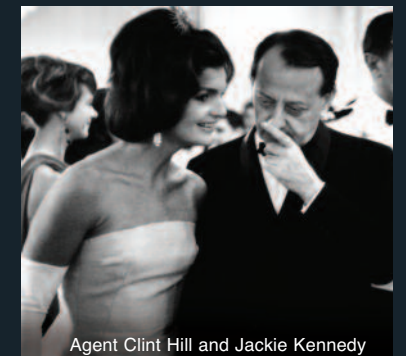
Kennedy Presidential Limousine



Rosa Parks Bus



Henry Ford and Edison



Agent Clint Hill and Jackie Kennedy

Anderson says, noting that all cars used by presidents are now destroyed by the Secret Service so that individuals can't determine their protective capacities.

•**Kennedy Presidential Limousine** — Presidents Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford and Jimmy Carter also used this famous car, as it remained part of the White House fleet until 1977.

Built by the Ford Motor Company at the Lincoln plant in Wixom, Michigan, in January 1961, it was turned over to Ohio company Hess and Eisenhardt, which extended the car 3 1/2 feet. With an overhead-valve V-8 generating 350 horsepower from 430 cubic inches, it also had a heavy-duty suspension to accommodate the extra weight.

After the assassination, armor plating, bullet-resistant glass and a

permanent roof made the limo an armored vehicle at 9,800 pounds. The updated car served Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter before coming to The Henry Ford Museum in 1978.

The original color, midnight blue, was changed to black in 1964. Says Anderson: "President Johnson thought the previous color was too closely connected in society's mind to the Kennedy assassination."

For more information on the Henry Ford Museum, please visit www.thehenryford.org.

If you or someone you know has a GreatGarage and would like it to be considered for an upcoming issue, e-mail us at GreatGarages@highline-autos.com.