

AMERICA'S AUTOMOTIVE *Trust*

Honoring the Past. Celebrating the Present. Driving the Future.

When, in 1891, F. W. Lambert drove his gasoline-powered tricycle through the streets of Ohio City, Ohio, the American automotive age was born. By 1896, the Duryea Motor Wagon Company had produced 13 “Buggyauts” and numerous other pioneers were building cars launching the industry in America.

Shortly thereafter, the Chicago Times-Herald organized the first important American auto race, 55 miles of icy roads and horrendous conditions. A Duryea won, completing the course at an ‘exhilarating’ average speed of 5 mph. ‘Speed’ had captured the American imagination and the horseless carriage provided it.

Then as now, the automobile, with its attendant environmental and societal impacts, ignited controversy. But to the vast majority, the auto was decidedly “American”—an egalitarian force offering the possibilities of self-propelled power to the average American—something heretofore available only to the wealthy. At the dawn of the automobile age the car was a symbol of freedom of choice and adventure and facilitator of commerce. America’s love affair with the auto began and the automobile transformed American life in the 20th Century and continues to impact it today.

As The Automobile Evolves, its Heritage is at Risk and The Future of Driving is Uncertain.

In the 21st century the automobile remains a controversial economic and social force with passionate advocates on both sides of the debate. It is clear that the place of the automobile in our culture is changing and it’s impossible to ignore the accumulation of signs threatening America’s automotive heritage:

- ◆ Legitimate concerns about global warming and carbon emissions have brought the role of the automobile under scrutiny. Government, environmental groups, and industry are all exploring ways to make vehicles environmentally friendly and safer and alternative propulsion systems are being developed—primarily versions of battery powered vehicles but also nitrogen, hydrogen and other sources. Traditional internal combustion engines are becoming more efficient and ‘cleaner’.
- ◆ Cities faced with traffic congestion and ‘gridlock’, such as Seattle and New York, are charging increased fees and restricting use of vehicles within their limits.
- ◆ Autonomous vehicles exemplify the continued controversy over the role of the car which has existed from its earliest days. Robotic cars will fulfill a societal need as they provide mobility to millions who are deprived of it—the elderly, and those with physical

disabilities. Over time, they may increase traffic safety. Yet, they may completely eliminate the driving experience which the majority of Americans love and want. Car services are increasingly popular and are competing with the traditional ownership model and a growing percentage of young Americans display little interest in obtaining their license, driving or owning an automobile.

- ◆ America’s educational system neglects the applied arts, crafts and trades. Young people are steered away from careers in the applied arts” and are encouraged to enter “prestigious” and “higher paying” careers. Further driving this educational shift is the incessant emphasis on “glamorous” lifestyles in popular entertainment and advertising. Little attention is given to the fact that rewarding careers continue to be enjoyed by countless professionals working in today’s auto industry as technicians, engineers and designers. Even less attention is given to the fact that there are rewarding careers in the restoration, preservation and maintenance of vintage vehicles—autos, motorcycles, trucks, wooden boats, even planes.
- ◆ Technological advances have been a boon to consumers as modern automobiles are more reliable and longer lasting. At the same time, this has reduced the need for local repair shops. Hyper-sophisticated safety and environmental components make it nearly impossible for the local mechanic or car owner to repair today’s vehicles.
- ◆ Our country’s cultural guardian, The Smithsonian, has dedicated museums for the arts, technology, history and ‘air and space’. The car, arguably 20th Century America’s most important cultural icon and still an important part of American life, is largely ignored.
- ◆ Most traditional auto museums simply present the collections of their founders. Static in nature and with limited educational purpose, they have limited cultural relevance and generally collapse with the death of their founders with collections sold and dispersed. Without an understanding of the past and without efforts to promote driving, interest in the automobile in the future will be hindered.

Americans Remain Passionate about their Cars and Driving.

In spite of the uncertainty regarding the role of the driven automobile in the future, countless Americans remain passionate about the joy collectible cars—modern and vintage-- bring to our lives. The love affair continues.

- ◆ Car clubs of every brand, vintage, and class thrive at local, regional and national levels—Corvettes, Mustangs, Chargers, ‘exotics’, MGs, Jaguars, Model As, Corvairs, low-riders, tuners—the beat goes on and on.

- ◆ From Main Street in small town USA to grand venues like Pebble Beach; cruise-ins, show & shines, concours, drive in movie nights and club meets add fuel to the passion Americans feel for their cars.
- ◆ Auto-based TV shows can be found on channels like History, Velocity, Discovery and ESPN. Films such as Rush and Snake & Mongoose are joining the Fast & Furious franchise in theaters.
- ◆ The auction scene demonstrates the power the collectible auto still retains in our culture. January in Scottsdale draws thousands of enthusiasts to multiple auction venues where hundreds of millions of dollars change hands. Tell those who gather in Monterey each August for the Pebble Beach Concours d' Elegance, the races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, Concorso Italiano and The Quail Gathering that the auto is dead. RM Sotheby's, Gooding & Co., Barrett Jackson, Mecum and others hammer home hundreds of millions of dollars in collector vehicle sales annually.
- ◆ Car 'country clubs' are springing up around the country providing opportunities for enthusiasts to drive their modern sports cars and vintage race cars in a controlled environment.
- ◆ The automotive aftermarket industry is thriving as demonstrated by the size and scope of the annual SEMA Show in Las Vegas; the numbers of TV shows about custom rod and bike building; and the thousands of young people engaged in building, driving and racing 'low-rider's, 'drifters', 'tuners' and other types of 'hot rods'.

A Vision to Honor the Past, Celebrate the Present and Drive the Future.

When we built LeMay--America's Car Museum our vision was more ambitious than that of a traditional car Museum. Our intentions have always been to distinguish ourselves from the traditional museum with largely regional impact. Private museums primarily showcase the collection of their founders or preserve the history of a region, a single marque, or a brand. Rarely do they engage in the automotive culture of the present or seriously explore the future of the auto itself.

It is within that context that LeMay--America's Car Museum (ACM) entered the world stage when its doors opened on June 2, 2012. USA TODAY called the opening "one of the 8 most important cultural attraction openings in the world" recognizing the fact that ACM was not just another "vanity project". USA TODAY, the NY Times, Auto Week, Sports Car Market and countless periodicals across the world published more than 1,000 articles about the Museum's opening. They did so believing that ACM would relentlessly pursue its commitment to fill a real cultural void by promoting America's automotive heritage and culture. The columnists were right. Since its opening,

ACM, or ‘The LeMay’ as it is popularly known, has attracted over 1,250,000 visitors from all 50 states and 42 foreign countries.

The Museum expanded its efforts to have a lasting impact on our national culture. Club Auto and Concours Club provide national and international automotive events and driving experiences. ACM has brought displays to major auto shows and concours across the nation. We have supported institutions providing education in automotive preservation and given young people the opportunity for rewarding careers. The Museum’s ‘Powering the Future’ laboratory works closely with the public schools providing young people experiences exploring alternative means of propulsion.

With these and other programs well underway, we revisited our strategic priorities to fulfill our ambitious vision.

The vision is to be at the center of a movement to secure America’s automotive heritage and to promote the continued enjoyment of the automobile today and in the future. It is a vision that suggested a new name better encompassing its purposes than the word ‘Museum’. It also suggested a new structure to integrate and fulfill the strategic elements of the vision.

Fulfilling the Vision: America’s Automotive Trust.

A better name encompassing our vision is ‘America’s Automotive Trust’. The word ‘trust’ conveys serious persons engaged in a serious purpose. In finance, ‘trust’ suggests ‘confidence’—those who invest with a trust company deem that entity worthy of their investment. Those who invest through philanthropic support of America’s Automotive Trust deem it a ‘worthy’ institution. Our education programs through the RPM Foundation, the Museum’s efforts to preserve America’s automotive treasures, and our promotion of the use of vintage and modern vehicles today through Club Auto programs are worthy purposes. The Concours Club exists to develop a philanthropic culture among the collector community and to engage its members in conversation about the future of the automobile and society. The unifying theme of all these efforts is to ‘honor the past, celebrate the present and drive the future so that America’s love affair with the automobile’ continues for generations to come as the auto and its use evolve with societal changes.

The Specifics.

- 1. America’s Automotive Trust is an IRS qualified 501C3, not-for-profit corporation with mission to secure America’s automotive heritage and to promote its future.**

Member entities of the Trust include LeMay--America’s Car Museum, The RPM Foundation, Club Auto and the Concours Club. The Trust also has a growing number of partners including The North American International Auto Show, The Nicola Bulgari Center for Automotive Heritage, America On Wheels Museum and others. It also regularly collaborates with like-minded organizations including the Gilmore Automotive Museum, Lane Museum, Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum, and several Concours d’Elegance including Amelia Island, Forest Grove, Greenwich and Pebble Beach.

2. **LeMay--America's Car Museum, continues to be the repository of the collection, serves as a gathering place for the public, presents exhibitions and educational programs for enthusiasts and works closely with the public schools in STEM education efforts.**
3. **The RPM Foundation supports educational institutions providing career training for young people in automotive restoration and preservation.** It grants scholarships, internships and full-time apprenticeships to young people providing them with a pathway to careers in vintage vehicle and wooden boat preservation and restoration. Finally, RPM initiates collaborations with high schools across the country to generate interest among young people for careers important to the collector community.
4. **Club Auto is a national club which provides enthusiasts the opportunity to drive collectible vehicles and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow enthusiasts.** Club Auto promotes driving experiences and road trips across the nation in affiliation with other clubs. Club Auto activities promote the vision of AAT and the use of collectible autos—both vintage and modern-- on the roads today and enhance public and media attention to the idea that cars are meant to be driven. While the self-driving car will be embraced to provide much-needed access and freedom to the elderly and handicapped, countless Americans will continue to want to drive their automobiles. Club Auto is committed to providing that opportunity particularly for collectible cars.
5. **The annual Drive Home road rally, in partnership with the North American International Auto Show, uses vintage and modern vehicles to draw attention to the importance of the automobile in our culture and to the importance of Detroit and today's automotive industry.** Now in its 6th year and traversing thousands of miles with enthusiast events and media promotions annually, the Drive Home is the perfect 'vehicle' to demonstrate the connection between automotive heritage and the auto's present and future.
6. **The Concours Club** brings together individuals whose philanthropy and influence help America's Automotive Trust fulfill its vision. This exclusive group gathers for annual Summits for interaction with AAT leadership to help shape future directions, provide counsel on urgent issues, and engage in strategic discussions. The Concours Club also comes together in an Annual Gathering at America's Car Museum to induct new members, celebrate major philanthropy, and learn about institutional progress. Concours Club international travel and other activities are designed to foster community and to encourage others to join in philanthropic support of the Trust and its mission.

An Important Opportunity.

The automobile had and continues to have a profound impact upon American life. Indeed, the American auto industry in Detroit played a decisive role in winning World War II and bringing freedom to millions of people around the world. Today through technological advances, the vehicle will provide new freedom for the elderly and handicapped will enhance public safety and will help ease traffic and other mobility concerns.

Yet, unlike the arts, history, space and technology, little governmental or corporate effort exists to preserve America's automotive legacy. Most museums struggle to survive, have little impact on today's automotive culture, and do not help provide for its future. Entities working to preserve our automotive heritage or foster its future typically do so in isolation with narrow and short-term impact.

America's Automotive Trust is boldly stepping into the cultural void and is committed to collaboration with like-minded institutions to ensure that America's automotive legacy is honored, that the skills and knowledge necessary to drive the future are transferred to the next generation, and that vintage, and modern, collectible vehicles will be driven and celebrated as intended for generations to come in ways that are congruent with a rapidly changing world and the advent of the autonomous vehicle.