

QUEEN CITY

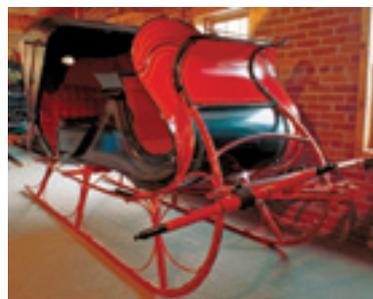
Transportation Museum

Written by **Dan Whetzel**
Photography by **Lance C. Bell**

THE CITY OF CUMBERLAND established itself as a transportation center early in the 19th century. Starting with the National Highway, then followed by the arrival of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Cumberland developed into a regional transportation hub. Industrialization followed the transportation routes to the city, bringing growth and prosperity to residents for decades. Glass manufacturing, breweries, a tire company, a synthetic fabric manufacturer and a steel company called Cumberland home because of transportation advantages that connected the city with national markets.

The Queen City transportation Museum traces the development and forms of transportation through the region with a variety of displays ranging from an 1840 Conestoga wagon to a 1920 Buick Roadster. Vehicles appear within their historical context, including the early twentieth century ones that become part of a stroll along Baltimore Street, Cumberland's premier thoroughfare. Some of the town's most prominent stores, including Rosenbaum's, Schwarzenbach's, and McMullen Brothers, provide the backdrop for the vehicles that were typically found in downtown Cumberland. The museum is located at 210 South Centre Street in downtown Cumberland.

Jeff Nealis, Director of the Queen City Transportation Museum, also explains that the museum is more than static displays, because it includes hands-on experiences and educational programs. "We have programs that offer hands-on activities to students in elementary through high school. Building a section of the National Road, working on an assembly line, packing for a journey on a Conestoga wagon, and scavenger hunts are some of the offerings to students and educators at the museum.



Transportation is also highlighted in the Thrasher Carriage Museum located at Depot Center in Frostburg, Maryland. This remarkable collection of horse-drawn vehicles, once owned by Midland, Maryland, resident James Thrasher, is considered to be one of the premier displays of its kind in the United States. Mr. Thrasher began collecting carriages before World War II and continued to acquire them during the 1980s. Allegany County government purchased the collection upon Mr. Thrasher's death, thus keeping it intact and available for public enjoyment at the Frostburg location.

The Thrasher Carriage Museum is served by another form of transportation from May through December—the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's Baldwin steam locomotive, which makes round trips between Cumberland and Depot Center in Frostburg. Passengers and visitors may watch the WMSR #734 locomotive as it enters the turntable to be positioned for a return trip to Cumberland.

Visitors and residents are invited to experience the schedule of activities and attractions offered by the Queen City Museum and Thrasher Carriage Museum. Contact information may be obtained at thrasher@thrashercarriage.com.