



Celebrating Milestones: Significant dates for Mid America Motorworks & Volkswagen

February 23rd marks the 42nd anniversary of Mid America Motorworks. What began more than four decades ago with a \$500 loan and a dream, has grown to become a nationally recognized leader in the aftermarket industry. As we celebrate this significant milestone, we can't help but think of all the great moments we've experienced in the Volkswagen hobby. It's tough to pick a favorite, so we invite you to enjoy highlights of the moments – and the vehicles – that have made Volkswagen an enduring part of the car culture.

Important Moments in Volkswagen History

There are many significant dates in Volkswagen history. Here are a few that shaped the direction of the automotive company, followed by some of the most recognizable vehicles bearing the VW badge.

- 1938 – Construction begins on Kdf-Stadt factory in what would become Wolfsburg
- 1939 – Type 1 vehicles produced as The People's Car
- 1946 – Type 1 production resumes on the VW Beetle after the war
- 1949 – Type 2 production begins; the Transporter is born
 - First VWs imported to the United States
- 1952 – First Volkswagen dealership opens in England
- 1955 – The Karmann Ghia model is introduced
- 1968 – Production began on VW Things
- 1971 – The Super Beetle is developed
- 1972 – 15,007,034th Beetle is manufactured and called the Marathon or Baja Beetle
- 1977 – Volkswagen ceases production of the standard Beetle
- 1979 – Volkswagen ceases production of the Super cabriolet/convertible Beetle



The People's Car – 1938
Through the efforts of Ferdinand Porsche's design team, the first incarnation of the VW Beetle, known as The People's Car, came to life as an affordable option to the luxury vehicles on the German market. A factory was built in Kdf-Stadt (today Wolfsburg) in 1938. Production began in the fall of the following year. However, the start of World War II halted production with only a few Type 1 VWs made.

Post-War Volkswagen
In 1945, Kdf-Stadt and the VW factory were captured by American forces. The town and factory fell under British occupation and were handed over by the Americans to the British. The British Army placed an order for 20,000 light transport vehicles to be used locally, with vehicles being used by occupying forces and the German Post Office.

Nearly all of the other major automotive companies were offered the chance to acquire Volkswagen and all turned it down, saying the car was unattractive and wouldn't find a place with the everyday consumer. However, new leadership took command in 1948 and the company became a government trust in 1949, with production steadily increasing. While other models were tested and joined the Beetle, it secured its place as the first in a succession of iconic vehicles.

As the VW Beetle grew in popularity, the style and features evolved. [Review the Beetle's changes over the years.](http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2015/changes/changesStatic.html) <http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2015/changes/changesStatic.html>



Type 2
The Volkswagen Type 2, known as the Transporter, Kombi or Microbus, or, informally, as the Bus (US) or Camper (UK), is a panel van introduced in 1950 as Volkswagen's second car model. Following – and initially deriving from the Type 1 Beetle – it was given the factory designation Type 2.

In the first year of production, 9,541 Type 2s were made. For the next four decades, the basic design remained the same and around five million Buses were produced over that time. The Type 2, with its rear engine and "box on wheels" body, filled a much needed gap in the market, providing a simple, sturdy and economical vehicle

Its affordability and availability made the VW Bus a pop-culture sensation that has endured well beyond its humble beginnings as a cargo vehicle. Read more about the Bus [here.](http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2015/bus/busStatic.html) (<http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2015/bus/busStatic.html>)

Karmann Ghia – The Looker

The Karmann Ghia made its first appearance in 1955 to the European press and instantly praised for unique style and form. The public was enamored with the Ghia and it became a version of the automotive haute couture.



The Ghia quietly slipped into VW's showrooms, letting its quality design and handling speak for itself. Enthusiasts were listening, as demand for the Karmann Ghia exceeded supply during the 1950s. In 1961 the convertible Karmann Ghia was introduced and by 1962, new techniques were developed to replace the hand labor that went into the production of the Ghia, allowing for a price drop in the U.S. of \$135.00 for a coupe and \$200.00 for a convertible.

Though always stylish, the Ghia did undergo a few changes during its production. Learn about them [here.](http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2015/ghia2/ghia2Static.html) (<http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2015/ghia2/ghia2Static.html>)

VW Thing – Living Up to Its Name

First manufactured in Wolfsburg, West Germany in 1968 the Type 181 shared some of its mechanics with the 1966–1977 Standard Beetle and the floor pans of the Karmann-Ghia. It's similarity to the Type 82 Kubelwagen that had been used by the German military during the Second World War is obvious to anyone who looks at it. This vehicle weighed 1,920 pounds and held up to four people comfortably. It had a manual 4 speed transmission that accelerated from 0–60 mph in 23.2 seconds.



There were more than 90,000 181s and Right Hand Drive 182s produced from 1968 to 1983. Approximately 50,000 of these were sold to NATO countries between 1968 and 1983. Mexican manufactured 181s were available for purchase from VW dealerships in the United States in 1973 and 1974 only. Check out the history of the Thing [here.](http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2014/thing/thingStatic.html) (<http://image.mamotorworksmedia.com/production/Website/emailArchive/vw/newsletters/2014/thing/thingStatic.html>)

No matter where the road takes this iconic vehicle, Mid America Motorworks will be there celebrating right along with them!