

# 2015



*T*oday, Tennessee's transportation agency continues to evolve to meet the needs of a changing society. While much of our transportation system is in place, finding ways to move people efficiently while keeping our communities livable will continue to be our goal for the next one hundred years. For a hundred years, Tennessee's transportation system and the employees and leadership who developed it stepped up to meet the needs of our citizens. We are the public stewards of Tennessee's transportation system and will continue to be dedicated to meeting our obligations to taxpayers and motorists.



The I-40 section through Overton Park in Memphis was never completed after litigation resulted in a 1971 U.S. Supreme Court decision that said there was a "prudent and feasible" alternative to passing through the park. This decision forever changed the method in which highway planners design interstates in urban areas.



In 1999, intelligent transportation begins in Tennessee as urban interstate systems were outfitted with cameras and message boards to help reduce congestion and provide motorist information.



## Tennessee

	THEN	NOW
Gallon gas .....	\$0.08 .....	\$3.48 .....
Car .....	\$490 .....	\$32,086 .....
TN state highway miles .....	4,000 (1919) .....	13,884 .....
Agency funds expended.....	\$474,236 (1919) .....	\$1.8 billion .....
Agency employees.....	1 (1915) .....	3,900 .....
Gas tax.....	\$0.0 .....	\$0.21 .....
Vehicles in TN (1919) .....	79,180 .....	6,898,157 .....

### In 1915

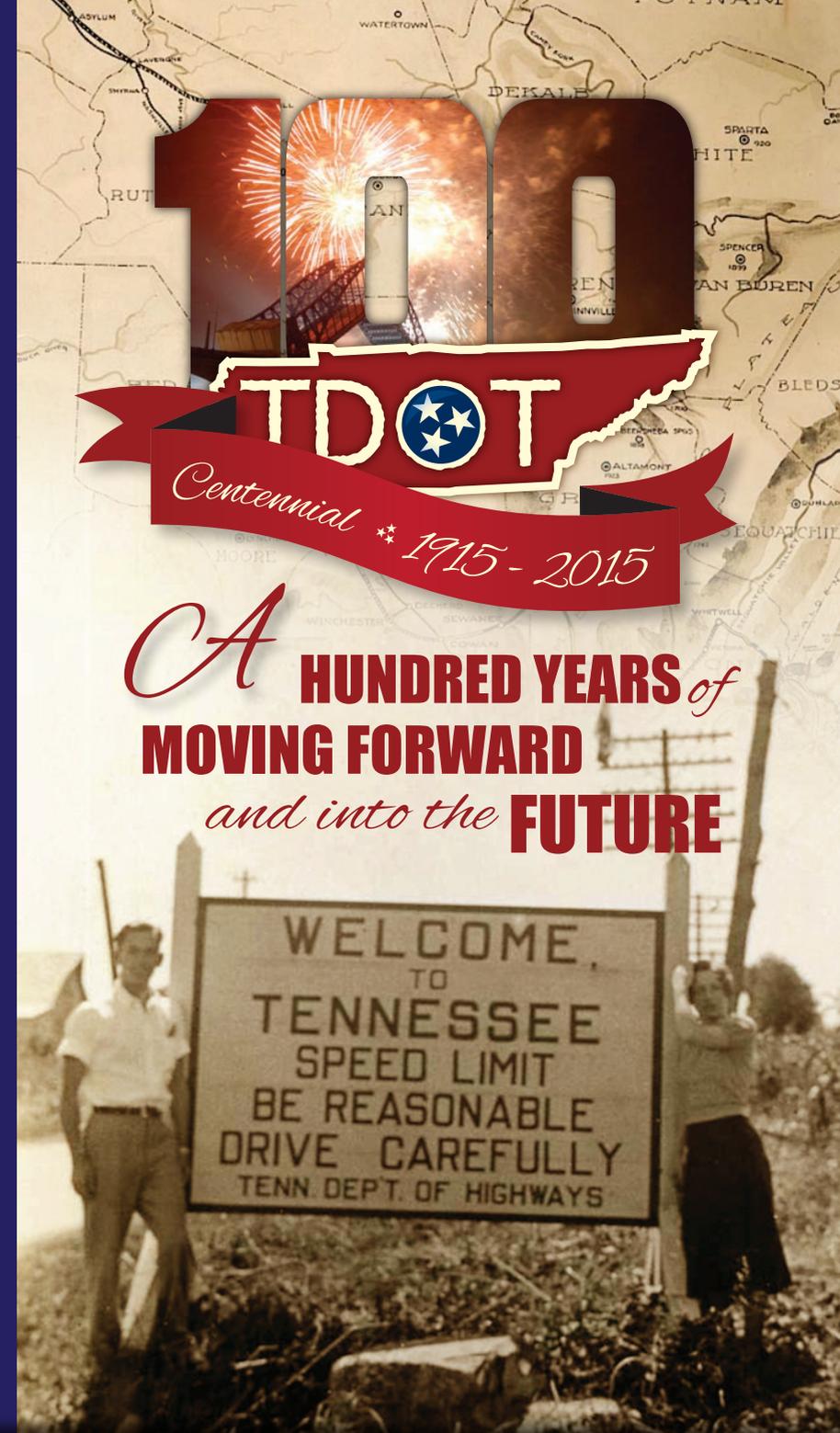
- President was Woodrow Wilson
- Over 814,000 vehicles are built, Ford built 501,000 of them
- U.S. Postal Service threatens to deny rural free delivery to communities with poor roads
- First tractor-trailer truck built in Detroit
- U.S. population was 100,546,000
- Average annual income was \$1,076
- New car average was \$500
- New 1915 products: aspirin, telephone and gas masks

Beginning July 1, 2014 TDOT will celebrate its 100th year as a state agency to be concluded with a celebration on July 1, 2015. If you want to be a part of the celebration, tweet us, Facebook us or email us at [TDOT.100years@tn.gov](mailto:TDOT.100years@tn.gov)

See our website for lots more information about how we have kept Tennessee moving for 100 years.



Tennessee Department of Transportation, Authorization No. 000000, 3,000 copies, June 2014. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$.26 per copy.



**TDOT**  
Centennial \* 1915 - 2015

*A* **HUNDRED YEARS** of  
**MOVING FORWARD**  
and into the **FUTURE**

Since Daniel Boone first traveled through the Cumberland Gap between Kentucky and Tennessee in the mid-1700s, we were destined to have a highway system among the best in the nation. For over a hundred years, railroads were the main transportation mode, but the invention of the automobile in the early 1900s made highways the preferred choice for the next 100 years.

## 1915

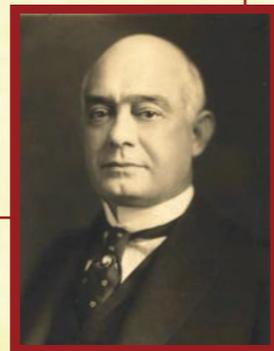
In 1915, as other states organized transportation agencies, the Tennessee legislature approved an initiative to create an agency with the sole purpose of building a state highway system in Tennessee. The first priority was to be State Route 1, the Memphis to Bristol Highway spanning across the entire state.



The 500-mile SR 1, the Memphis to Bristol Highway, ran horizontally across the state between these two cities connecting developing urban areas.

In 1923 as demands for better roads grew, the agency was restructured and Tennessee's first gas tax was passed. Air travel grew and Tennessee came on board with an Aeronautics Division.

The Dixie Highway was planned in Chattanooga just six months before the formation of the Tennessee highway department. It was to connect the urban north to the rural south and stretched from Michigan and Chicago to Miami, traveling two parallel routes. One went through Nashville and the eastern route traveled through Knoxville.

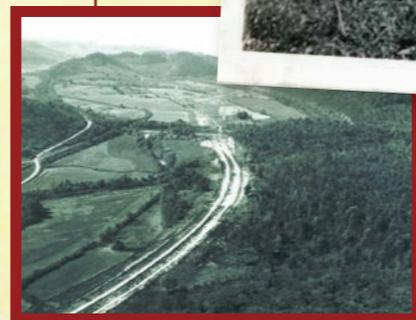


"Road building" Gov. Austin Peay gave a strong organizational structure to the state transportation agency and proposed a philosophy of users taxes that has endured to the 21st century.

## 1923

During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, the federal government took on a major role in providing a national vision and funding for transportation with organizational structure and a more streamlined approach to a national system of highways. The interstate system was born in 1956.

The first gas tax was imposed in 1923. It was two cents and removed the burden of roads from property owners and placed it on motorists.



In a prelude to the 1956 federal act creating the interstate system, Gov. Frank Clement, in 1953, began planning in Tennessee for "superhighways" to address the antiquated design of the Tennessee highway system.

## 1960s & 70s

In the 1960s and 1970s, communities became more involved in the planning and development of the highway system. More focus was given to beautification and environmental issues, such as preserving historic landmarks, parks and tribal burial grounds. The National Environmental Policy Act was signed in 1970 providing guidance and requirements on all federal projects as they related to the environment.



For Tennessee, the 1980s took on an important significance. Tennessee's roads were falling apart and Gov. Lamar Alexander and the Tennessee legislature implemented the 1986 Road Program to improve existing roads and build new ones. This jettisoned Tennessee to a position where it still resides as having the best roads in the nation.

To reflect closer coordination among transportation modes, Gov. Winfield Dunn changed the name of the Tennessee Highway Department to the Tennessee Department of Transportation in 1972.



As aviation grew, the division of aeronautics was created to promote growth in 1929.



The "bloody July massacre" in 1931 was so named because of a failure by the legislature to fund the highway department resulting in the discharge of all construction and maintenance employees.

## 1980s