

# Muscle-Car Heritage



**F**or many car lovers, one period in automotive history defines the epitome of American power and style: the muscle-car era.

And Dodge plays one of the biggest roles in this muscular heritage.

In the 1960s and early '70s, drivers of all ages aspired to drive Dodge cars because of their awesome, tire-smoking power and sleek, aggressive styling.

## HEMI ENGINES

One of Dodge's biggest contributions to the muscle-car era is the development of an engine with a hemispherical combustion chamber — the HEMI, as it's known today.

This new design, which

was first introduced in 1953 on the Coronet, allowed for higher compression and more power to be generated from its V8 engines.

The HEMI not only powered some of Dodge's most legendary muscle cars in the 1960s, but it also led to Lee Petty winning Dodge's first NASCAR race and setting world speed records at the Bonneville Salt Flats.

## FAMOUS NAMES

Buyers loved the idea of putting powerful V8 engines into small or mid-size cars, and Dodge was happy to oblige by

building some of the best-known cars of the era — many of which sell for huge money when restored today.

Some of America's most memorable muscle cars were built by Dodge, including the Charger R/T, Coronet R/T, the Super Bee and the Challenger.

Unfortunately for horsepower lovers, the 1973 oil crisis that sparked skyrocketing gasoline prices meant the end of America's love affair with giant V8 engines. It was the end of the muscle-car era — but not the end of Dodge's emphasis on performance in the decades to come.

