# The 'D', 'Motor City', 'Motown'

## The 2012 AVSA/AVSC Convention City

By Bill Farrand

*Photo credit* - **Lori Pori**

It is interesting to know that Detroit shares the world's first auto traffic tunnel between two nations – the Detroit/Windsor Tunnel. The convention logo above shows the other fine connection between the two cities and countries, the Ambassador Bridge, the busiest international border crossing in North America.

Detroit, the 'D', began to shape into its current form roughly three centuries ago. That's when the French explorer Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac landed on the banks of the Detroit River and established a fort in 1701. Detroit was incorporated as a city in 1815 and spent the decades leading up to the Civil War as the final U.S. stop on the Underground Railroad. So why did Detroit become the 'Motor City'? It's in large part due to the influence of a farmer's son named Henry Ford. In 1896, Ford built his first car in Detroit – not an entirely earth-shattering event since the automobile had already been around for a while. It was the method of building cars that he would later devise – the moving assembly line – that put the world on wheels. Ironically, it was a former autoworker that led the way for Detroit's other famous 20th century contribution – 'Motown'. Founded by Barry Gordy Jr. with just an $800 family loan, the upstart record company introduced the world to Stevie Wonder, Smokie Robinson, Diana Ross, the Temptations, and others. Be ready for a little 'Motown' entertainment during your visit!

***Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau***

The early days of June should find wonderful temperatures in the mid to upper 70's welcoming the beginning of the summer season. The Detroit River will be active with the very large lake freighters passing each other on the Detroit River on their journeys between Lake Superior and Lake Erie, the St Lawrence, and beyond. Large ocean-going ships will also be seen. The GM Renaissance Center is the perfect location to visually enjoy the water activities whether you're on the top floor of the convention hotel enjoying a fine meal, visiting the Wintergarden Atrium area of the RenCen, or standing at the railing watching the ore carriers as they glide by the Riverwalk. Hart Plaza will be starting its outdoor festivals, but African violets will have our attention at the Convention Center. Plan on visiting the 'D' and having your own Renaissance next year between June 3 –10, 2012, at the AVSA/AVSC Convention.