

**Historical Marker - S686 - Packard Motor Car Company / Packard Proving Grounds
(Marker ID#:S686)**



Front - Title/Description

Packard Motor Car Company

In 1899 brothers James Ward and William Doud Packard founded the Ohio Automobile Company in Warren, Ohio. In 1902 Detroitier Henry Joy and several other local investors purchased the company, moved it to Detroit, and renamed it the Packard Motor Car Company. During the 1920s and 1930s, Packard set the standard for luxury and design. Under the direction of chief engineer Jesse G. Vincent, Packard, known as "America's Master Motor Builder", also made advances in aviation technology. Vincent contributed to the development of the Liberty aircraft engine during World War I and predicted the growth of commercial aviation. He considered a proving ground to be essential to high quality.

Significant Date:

Industry and Invention (1875-1915)

Registry Year: 2005 **Erected Date:** 2005

Marker Location

Address: 49965 Van Dyke Ave (22-1/2 Mile Rd)

City: Shelby Township

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Macomb

Township: Shelby

Lat: 42.66139500 / **Long:** -83.03422300

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Packard Proving Grounds

The Packard Motor Car Company began building a proving ground on this site in 1926. Packard, like its competitors, had previously tested cars on city streets. Architect Albert Kahn designed the principal buildings. By 1929 the complex included the Gate Lodge, warehouses, laboratories, a high-speed test track, and twelve miles of roads simulating the worst conditions of the day. During World War II (1942-1945) Packard built aircraft and marine engines while leasing the grounds to Chrysler for tank testing. Packard ceased production in 1958, and the Ford Motor Company purchased the site in 1961. In 2000 Ford and the Packard Motor Car Foundation began working to preserve the design complex portion of the site.