Since the ship wreckage of the Sea Venture in 1609 brought Bermuda’s first settlers, almost four centuries ago, island residents have travelled by land, sea and, air. During the late 1940’s, the mode of vehicular travel changed, as shown in the table below. In 1946, the main choice of motorized transportation was service vehicles (Table 2). Four years later, auto bicycles were the vehicle of choice. By 1960, the number of registered motor vehicles had more than doubled reaching, 18,819.

### Table 2
**Number of Motor Vehicles Registered, 1946-1950**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicles</th>
<th>1946</th>
<th>1947</th>
<th>1948</th>
<th>1949</th>
<th>1950</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Car</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>1,474</td>
<td>1,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truck</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omnibus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Bicycle</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>3,276</td>
<td>3,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Vehicle</td>
<td>7,363</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8,490</td>
<td>3,176</td>
<td>5,258</td>
<td>6,309</td>
<td>7,031</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Significant 20th Century Events

- **1901-02**: More than 4,000 South African men and boys were prisoners on islands in the Great Sound
- **1902**: Two-Day Cup Match tradition begins
- **1904**: Bermuda Electric Light Power Company supplies first street lights
- **1910**: Bermuda obtained approval to use its coat of arms
- **1919**: Bermuda Union of Teachers, first union, established
- **1930**: First airplane to fly between North America and Bermuda
- **1930**: Bermuda’s first radio station opens
- **1931**: Inaugural Bermuda Railway, Hamilton to Somerset journey
- **1934**: Severn Bridge links St. David’s to St. George’s parish
- **1940**: America leased Bermuda land for military bases
- **1946**: The Motor Car Act was passed allowing the “general use” of motor cars

### Acknowledgements

*Old photographs courtesy of the Bermuda Archives and the picture of the cedar door provided by the Department of Communications and Information.*
Unlike many islands to our south, “Bermuda is another world, 700 miles at sea...” 1 with no indigenous people. Historically, the waves of Bermuda immigrants who came, or were brought to the island shores, were mainly of British, African, West Indian, Portuguese, and American Indian ancestry.

Between the 1911 and 1970 censuses, the population of Bermuda more than doubled in number (Figure 1).

Bermuda’s houses evolved from cedar timber walls and palmetto-thatched roofs to cedar shingles roofs, and by the end of 1600’s they were constructed primarily of limestone. This transition was encouraged because of the shortage of cedar, risk of fires, and settlers being given the land if they built limestone houses.

By the 1970 census, the outer walls of Bermuda houses for 9 out of 10 households (97%) were constructed of limestone or cement block. The remaining 3% were built of wood, or a combination of wood and metal, or stone and wood.

In 1950, 55% of households had water piped indoors, 1,913 households (20%) had to dip water or collect it from a pump in the yard, and 25% of households did not state their water supply. Twenty years later, 94% of households occupied dwellings with water piped indoors and 840 households used other sources.

As early as 1950, 70% of dwellings had a water closet while others used a pit or bucket latrine. At the time of the 1970 census, significant improvements were made in Bermuda’s standard of living; whereby 96% of households had flushed toilets and 4% had other means of waste disposal.

In 1950, Bermuda’s:
- Average household size was 3.89 persons
- Each dwelling had an average of 5.24 rooms
- 67% of households had families of 2 to 5 persons
- 20% of households had families of 6 or more persons

1 Verse from Hubert Smith’s song, c. 1969

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### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number of Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>1,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Labourer</td>
<td>1,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Clerk</td>
<td>888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonemason</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop Clerk</td>
<td>741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiter or Waitress</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi Driver</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Dealer</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>