



The Legends Live on at Labatt Breweries of Canada in both the Streamliner and the 1919 Antique Keg Truck.

When John Labatt Brewery began converting from horse-drawn vehicles it chose the 1919 White Model 45 motor truck. The 1919 Keg Truck gave way to the Labatt's Streamliner, which became the king of the road well into 1960.

Today, these legendary vehicles can be seen in local parades and fairs across Canada. And for those collectors who would like an everlasting memory of these beautiful vehicles, artist [Greg Backwell](#), has made some paintings and prints available.

A Brief History

The Streamliner legend was born in 1936 with the delivery of the first Labatt 'Streamliner' truck, conceived and designed by Count Alexis de Sakhnoffsky, the famous French-Russian technical designer.

The tractor chassis was produced by the White Motor Company of Canada Ltd. Smith Bros. Motor Body Works of Toronto crafted the bodies from hardwood and aluminium panelling. The need of the day was for an efficient and highly recognizable truck to deliver Labatt beer– and that is exactly what the Streamliners accomplished.

Labatt Streamliners brought a dramatic aerodynamic design to roads populated with trucks of square drabness. They also gave Labatt instant identity with their bright burst of red colour and gold graphics.

The second Streamliner model, produced in 1936, was bolder in its look, winning the 'Best Design' award at the New York World's Fair in 1939. Labatt and The White Motor Company were well aware that this truck had the makings of a legend. A third design was commissioned by John and Hugh Labatt, a design that would see even more sweeping curves added to the roof of the tractor and long tail fin added to the trailer.

World War II interrupted commercial production of trucks and it was 1947 before Labatt began receiving regular delivery of Streamliner trucks. Even then, 15 years after they first appeared, Labatt Streamliners were a unique sight on Ontario's roads and provided the company with a powerful and

instant identity— an identity that also received worldwide attention in trucking magazines.

The Streamliners were seen on Canadian highways for almost 20 years. In 1977, Labatt contracted former President of White Truck Sales Limited in London, Ontario, Joe Scott, to begin putting together a plan, with the help of his brother Bob, to find and restore an original Streamliner. A classified advertisement announced that Joe Scott was posting a \$500 reward for anyone who could locate a Streamliner tractor and trailer.

Newspapers across Canada picked up the story, and what followed was an unexpected barrage of replies. People phoned by the hundreds, from as far away as Sweden, with clues to the tractor's whereabouts. It seemed that the Scotts had finally made a breakthrough in their search. Joe flew down to Colorado to follow up on one lead, and after driving about 1,500 miles in and around the state; he discovered that the tractor had been scrapped.

Another lead took Joe to Revelstoke, B.C., where he had to contend with a community of Doukhobors, who were convinced he was an RCMP officer up to no good. Once again, he came away empty-handed.

After exhausting all of their leads, the Scotts found two Labatt cab over tractors of the same year— 1947. They decided to build the cab itself, from the ground up.

Although blue prints of the Streamliner had long disappeared, the brothers decided to make every effort to restore the truck to its original shape. By feeding old photographs into a computer, drawings of the tractor- trailer were produced that were accurate to within one thirty-second of an inch. These drawings would become a constant guideline for the duration of their work.

With patience and determination, they rebuilt the frame with hundreds of pieces of wood of varying shapes and sizes.

An antique roller, that had been discovered in with old machinery at Fanshawe, a local college, was used to roll the aluminium body parts. And more than 30 different hammers were used to pound the metal parts out on a leather sandbag. Piece by piece, the body began to take shape.

The original fenders, which needed replacing, were made from a complicated wire bead no longer available in North America. It would have cost \$6,000 just to buy the die for the right roller.

Fortunately, Joe discovered exact fenders needed during a trip to Holland, and a set of six was shipped home.

The brothers went to great pains to reproduce the lustrous glow of the original units, using five primer coats, five coats of bright red paint, and five clear coats to protect the finish from wash and wear. And for the lettering, styled

after the signature of the second John Labatt, nine coats of authentic gold leaf were used along with 5 clear coats.

By the spring of 1984, after six years and thousands of hours of work, the long sought-after dream of the Scott brothers to restore the Streamliner was achieved. And for Labatt, a legend was reborn. The Streamliner was on the road again.



Restoration

The Labatt Streamliner is on the road again. Thanks to the efforts of Joe and Bob Scott of London, Ontario, a 1947 model of the once famous tractor-trailer has been restored to its original splendour.

The Streamliner was a proud symbol of the Labatt organization back in the 30s, 40s and 60s. But, as trucks with larger hauling capacities came into existence, the Streamliners slowly disappeared.

In 1977, Joe Scott, the same man who had sold White trucks for years to Labatt, was contracted to restore a Streamliner tractor-trailer.

Having just retired as President of White Truck Sales Limited in London, Ontario, after 32 years of service, he suddenly needed something interesting and challenging to do.

Enlisting the help of his brother Bob, who was also a long-time White employee, and with the approval of Labatt, Joe set out to find a 1947 Streamliner– the most striking of the four models made.

The brothers found six of the old trailers in different parts of Southern Ontario. One of the trailers, which had been used as a field office for a construction company, was sound enough to be restored. It was decided the others would be used for parts.

But the tractor continued to evade them, and with no solid leads available the Scotts began to look outside the province.

A letter of inquiry was sent to every salesman, every manager, and every branch of White Motor Company across North America, without success.

With the help of the Labatt Public Relations Department, Joe posted a \$500 reward for any information leading to the discovery of the tractor.

After a search that took Scott from Nevada to British Columbia, 3 discarded trailers were found. A similar search for a Streamliner tractor was unsuccessful.

The Scotts then began their arduous task of completely restoring the trailer and building a corresponding tractor for the Labatt Brewing Company. Parts have been searched for and found all over North America. Others have been totally remade.

A dedication to minute detail has seen the Streamliner restored to mint 1947 condition.



Specifications

Count Alexis de Sakhnoffsky, an automotive engineer whose drawings were known throughout the world during the 1930s and 40s, designed the Labatt Streamliners. Three major companies took part in the manufacturing of the original tractor-trailers: White Motor Company of Canada supplied the tractor chassis; Fruehauf made the single axle trailer chassis and the body was handcrafted by Smith Brothers Motor Body Works.

The 1947 Streamliner, restored by Joe and Bob Scott of London, Ontario, was the fourth and final model designed for Labatt. With the tractor and trailer combined, the unit is 37 feet long, 10 feet high and 8 feet wide. The body is made from .065 M aluminium sheets that have been pinned over a frame made from hundreds of pieces of hard wood.

When empty, the truck weighs 10 tons. It has a trailer capacity of about 825 cubic feet and can haul a load of beer weighing 8 1/2 tons. Its top speed has been measured at about 50 miles per hour. The unit is in perfect running order.

Streamliner Facts

Tractor:	1948 White Model WA122/Cab over engine. Serial #L101248.
Engine:	White Mustang/Model 150A/6 Cyl./386 C.I.D./135 B.H.P./4 1/2 Bore 51/8 Stroke/Gov. @ 3000 R.P.M.
Transmission:	White Model 501-B/5-speed forward direct in fifth-one reverse.
Rear Axle:	White Model 33C/Single reduction single speed. Ratio 6.67:1
Front Axle:	White Wide Track/Model 30-D I-Beam reverse Elliot.
Brakes:	Bendix-Westinghouse full air.
Tires:	900 X 20.
Trailer:	Fruehauf/Single axle low bed.

Count Alexis de Sakhnoffsky

Count Alexis de Sakhnoffsky was at the height of his career as a technical designer when he was asked to design Labatt streamlined truck in 1935.

Sakhnoffsky first came to the West after fleeing the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. While in Switzerland, he studied automotive engineering, and, combining this acquired knowledge with a fertile imagination, the Russian embarked on a career of designing custom-built sports cars for the rich and affluent.

After storming Europe with his eye-catching creations, Sakhnoffsky was drawn to the North American automotive industry, where during the early 1930s he designed models of the Nash, the Cord and the Airflow Chrysler.

When a new magazine for men called 'Esquire' began in 1934, Sakhnoffsky agreed to become the technical and mechanical editor. The magazine immediately became a showcase for Sakhnoffsky's design concepts. Each month readers were treated to drawings of futuristic cars, trucks, boats and other examples of mechanical wizardry.

In addition to his fascination for different modes of transportation, Sakhnoffsky was preoccupied with ways of making life easier for his fellow man. He produced drawings of movie theatres with alternating seats for more legroom, a swimming pool with rubber escalators and bathtubs with everything from headrests to temperature controls.

For the office worker, there was the executive desk, complete with built-in water-cooler, clock, barometer, thermometer and a flashing red light when it was time for an appointment.

And for the well-heeled adventurer, an air-conditioned jungle caravan was designed with all the amenities of home, encased in a body that was insulated against heat, humidity, insects and even tropical pollen.

With these and many more ideas Sakhnoffsky gained a reputation for incorporating comfort, beauty and detail in his work. It was a reputation, which caught the attention of Labatt and convinced the brewer that he was the ideal choice for designing the Streamliner.