

THINGS WORTH KNOWING  
ABOUT THE KdF CAR  
AND THE  
VOLKSWAGEN PLANT

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## *A look in the rearview mirror!*

When we drive a car on the highway and from time to time take a careful look in the rearview mirror, the stretch of road we are driving on often seems strangely distant. It seems "no longer real" that this stretch of road is still in the present, it seems so strange to us.

And when we look at the past, as if it were in the rearview mirror, it seems to us as if the years that lie behind us are no longer real either. It is an unsettled and untidy picture that presents itself to our gaze, with jagged crevices and hard-won heights. Today, the path that the motor vehicle has traveled in Germany since the war (World War 1) seems truly incredible.

It is difficult to remember the state of the German automotive industry in the immediate post-war years. After all, in those times, there were more important things at stake than the observation of an economic and living environment in which only a tiny number of people had a share of at the time. An "automobile" - was still a thing that had been marveled at open-mouthed before the war, it was something for very rich and somewhat eccentric people, even if in the meantime one had heard about the frequent use of the motor car by the army. It was only gradually that people began to take notice of "the car" when, during the savage times of inflation, the "new masters", in whose pockets the fortunes of the defrauded people were gathering, could not do enough in "special orders to the car industry". The more striking and unusual such an "exceptional design" was, the better. What it cost did not matter. But the strong fragmentation and turmoil of our people was only strengthened by this development, it was one more class-dividing wedge that was driven into society.

Little changed in the period that followed. Germany was inundated by a wave of foreign cars, whose captivating and yet unknown driving characteristics gave them a towering superiority over the few German products that were not even close to being able to take up the fight.

Gradually, however, a transition took place in our country, not in all cases happily and only in a few cases positively. We lay on the windowsill, as it were, and stared with enthusiasm at foreign countries, especially America, the "land of the automobile." Henry Ford became a familiar figure to us; his work was surrounded by the glory of the unattainable. Nevertheless, there was no lack of attempts to create a motor vehicle for the people, even before the seizure of power. All the major car manufacturers tried to produce inexpensive cars. Many millions were spent on these attempts. Some of them were successful. They were pacemakers on the way to winning over an ever-wider circle of people. But none succeeded in becoming a "Volkswagen" in the truest sense of the word.

Keeping and maintaining a car, taxes, and official mishandlings, always required sums that only a "certain class" of people could afford. The general view was that every car owner was able to afford these "extra expenses. Thus, the motor vehicle retained its class-dividing character; indeed, this concept became increasingly deeply anchored in people's minds as the hardship of the people became more severe. Despite model restrictions, mass production and payment reductions, a barrier had been reached that seemed impossible to eliminate. How could a 5-million-strong army of unemployed people think of buying cars? How could hundreds of thousands of medium and low-income employees afford the down payment and installments for even the cheapest car?

The picture changed abruptly in 1933, the year of the transfer of power. The desolate army of the unemployed melted away and disappeared. Trade, industry, and professionals were fully employed, and everywhere the wheels were turning again. The car tax fell, and the number of registered cars soared.

At the beginning of 1934, at the Motor Show, the leaders of the automobile industry, the builders, the automobile trade, the motor transport industry and finally the entire German people hear the words of the Führer, which must convert even the last doubters.

## 1934. FROM THE FÜHRER'S SPEECH AT THE AUTOMOBILE EXHIBITION:

“As long as the automobile remains only a means of transportation for particularly well-to-do circles, it will be difficult to remove its class-emphasizing and thus unfortunately also class-dividing character.

It is a bitter feeling to know from the outset that millions of decent, hard-working, and industrious fellow human beings are excluded from using a means of transportation that could not only be useful for these classes, which are limited in their opportunities for living but could also be a source of happiness, especially on Sundays and holidays.

I would now like to make it the most important mission for the German automotive industry to construct more and more cars that will inevitably attract millions of new buyers. For only if we succeed in winning over the broadest masses for this new means of transport will the economic and the social benefits be undeniable.”

"There is no doubt: We owe the best cars in the world to our directors, engineers, supervisors, workers and merchants. Today, I am convinced that we will also produce the cheapest car in short time.”

At the end of the year 1934, the Führer appoints the men to whom he entrusts the implementation of the Volkswagen project: Jakob Werlin and Dr. Porsche.

Clearly and explicitly, the Führer makes his wishes known to them. The car must be a four-seater, it must not separate parents and children. It must be suitable for weekend trips, for vacation trips, and should take workers out of the confines of the cities to the beautiful German countryside. For this reason, it must also have room for everything that one needs during the trip. The car must be light, every kilo adds both to the purchase price and in usage costs. For all its technical perfection, the car should be simple in its construction. All replaceable parts must be easy to work with. Cleaning and maintenance must also be kept at a minimal cost. The best materials must be used; the interior must be practical and comfortable, the performance must be excellent, and the lifespan of the car must be as long as possible. Despite all this, it must not cost more than 1000 RM.

These are the conditions set by the Führer. No statesman in the world has ever trusted men with such a task. What is certain is that it must be solved and that it will be solved.

## 1935. FROM THE FÜHRER'S SPEECH AT THE AUTOMOBILE EXHIBITION:

"In addition to these measures, another task is the creation of a car for the broader masses. I am pleased that the talents of a brilliant designer and the efforts of his staff have succeeded in completing the preliminary designs for the German Volkswagen, so that the first examples can finally be tested from the middle of this year. I already explained at the last motor show that the fulfillment of this task may take years, but the task must be solved, and therefore it will be solved. It must be possible to give the German people a motor car that costs no more than a medium-sized motorcycle did in the past and whose fuel consumption is moderate."

Since Dr. Porsche has fulfilled the Führer's order so brilliantly, he begins his work, and after a brief time the principles according to which the car is to be built are already established. It would be an air-cooled rear-engine car with a displacement of one liter, a center-tube frame and, of course, swing axles. From the racing car that Dr. Porsche had designed two years earlier for Auto-Union, he took the torsion bar suspension; the type of wheel suspension, the steering, and the drive. The testing department of the well-known Daimler-Benz company built three cars. During their first inspection, the Führer expresses the wish to give the car an even sleeker and more pleasing shape. He sketches the body design himself. The body was then finally built based on these sketches by the Führer. Daimler-Benz-A. G. is now producing the first thirty units under Dr. Porsche's supervision.

The workshop and engineering department work tirelessly. The first 30 cars must endure an endless series of test drives, stress tests, and measurement trials of all kinds. The cars run thousands, eventually two million kilometers on country roads, on highways, in the mountains and on the steepest roads in Germany.

The results are evaluated in the most thorough manner. The most ingenious modern car tests are applied to finally reach the technical maturity of years, in a few months.

## 1936. FROM THE FÜHRER'S SPEECH AT THE AUTOMOBILE EXHIBITION:

"If I hope to arrive at a motor vehicle pool of three or four million in Germany, then the price and maintenance costs of these motor vehicles must show a similar price range as the incomes of the three or four million buyers who are eligible for them. I recommend to the German motor transport industry to get a picture of the income ratio of the four or five million employed Germans from these points of view, and they will then understand why I am carrying out the preparatory work for the creation of the German People's Car with ruthless determination and why I want to bring it to a conclusion, a successful conclusion.

I have no doubt that the ingenuity of the designer entrusted with it, as well as the subsequent producers, combined with the highest national-economic insight of all those involved, will succeed in bringing the acquisition, operating and maintenance costs of this car into a manageable proportion to the income of this broad mass of our people, as we can already see successfully accomplished in America as a brilliant example."

## 1937. FROM THE FÜHRER'S SPEECH AT THE AUTOMOBILE EXHIBITION:

"It is now necessary to finalize the requirements for the production of the new Volkswagen and then to begin with it.

I would like to add here that it is a big mistake to believe that the production of the cheapest People's Car could somehow limit the buyers of expensive cars. People refrain from buying expensive and therefore better cars because they are not able to buy the more expensive ones! And to the extent that the

total number of units produced continuously reduces the cost. This corresponds to the distribution of our wealth and income ratio. However, it has always been the case that, as soon as the attention and the interest of buyers and later owners was aroused and developed by the inexpensive product, buyers for better products came later from these very classes.

There can therefore be only one Volkswagen in Germany and not ten. But between the coming Volkswagen and the top-of-the-line car, there will have to be a large group of other car classes that correspond to the economic upswing of the buyers.”

A new enormous project emerges: Where will the Volkswagen be built? In the spring of 1937, the Reich's head of organization, Dr. Ley, was entrusted by the Führer with the task of finding a solution. The million-strong organization of the German Labor Front is thus put at the service of the German Volkswagen idea. At the beginning of May 1937, the Company for the Preparation of the German People's Car m.b.H was founded and Dr. Jakob Werlin, Dr. Ferdinand Porsche and Dr. Bodo Lafferentz were entrusted with its management. Otto Dyckhoff was recruited to take charge of the technical equipment for production. Thus 50 million Reichsmarks were made available for immediate action.

This means that the idea of building the Volkswagen in existing automobile factories is finally dropped. Dr. Lafferentz takes on the task of selecting the most suitable site for the new large Volkswagen plant. His choice finally fell on an almost ideally located site near Fallersleben, close to the Midland Canal and the Berlin-Hanover highway which will later lead to Cologne and the Rhineland. The plant will be located not far from the Hermann Goering iron ore mining works.

Already at the automobile exhibition in February of the same year, the design approved by the Führer, which is the result of the collaboration of three important architects, can be released for construction. - The plant will have its own harbor facility and its own housing complex, which will be able to accommodate the entire workforce. It will be a new city, the most modern and advanced in the whole world.

## 1938. FROM THE FÜHRER'S SPEECH AT THE AUTOMOBILE EXHIBITION:

"These four years have been used to gradually develop a vehicle which, we are convinced, not only meets the desired conditions in terms of price, but also, in terms of the ease of its production, it offers the possibility of achieving maximum effect with a minimum of manpower. The vehicle that has now emerged from Dr. Porsche's years of work has crystallized and will be subjected to continued and increased scrutiny this year as well.

Therefore, only the German Volkswagen, without touching the already existing production in the least, will bring an additional and enormous increase of German motorization. It will open millions of new buyers with lower incomes to the automobile.

And this must be increasingly understood by the German comrades: What makes life more and more beautiful for all people are the results of work. For they alone create values which make life more pleasant. They guarantee the individual and the whole nation a correspondingly increased utilization of goods and commodities for the increase of the national income. For this very reason, the production of the German People's Car is a necessity."

## THE LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE

On May 26, 1938, the Führer himself lays the cornerstone in the presence of 70 000 comrades.

The head of the Reich Office, Dr. Lafferentz, announces details of the Volkswagen for the first time:

"The Volkswagen is equipped with full swing axles and is 4.20 meters long, 1.55 meters high and wide and weighs 650 kilograms ready to drive. It has room for four to five people. The air-cooled rear engine has 24 horsepower, fuel consumption of six to seven liters and a tenth of a liter of oil per 100 kilometers. The car is capable of 100 kilometers per hour of continuous highway driving, so all in all it is a small technical wonder.



But it is also a price miracle because it will cost only RM 990 from the factory. This sensationally low price will make it possible for the broadest classes of our population to acquire the Volkswagen. To make the purchase even easier, we will open a new savings and insurance system at the beginning of the second half of the year, the details of which will be announced later. The minimum rate will be 5 RM per week, including liability and limited collision insurance. Securing sales for this huge production must not make the car more expensive and thus represents one of the most unique and difficult tasks that can only be carried out by the German Labor Front.

The problem is to be regarded as solved by the NS. community "Strength through Joy".

The Führer makes his remarks under the heading "The motor car must become a means of transport for the people", and then speaks himself:

"The significance of this plant and its wider impact is still recognized by very few people today. The Volkswagen will not be a competitor for the rest of the automobile industry! Those who buy this car and not a Mercedes do not do so because they are enemies of the Daimler-Benz factory, but because they cannot buy a Mercedes. These are quite simple, sober considerations that force people to turn to the cheaper products. Those who can afford to buy expensive products do so anyway! The broad masses however cannot. For these broad masses, this car was created. It will meet their need for transportation, and it will give them pleasure!

I believe that this automobile can therefore be given only one name, which I will give it now. It should bear the name of the organization that is making the greatest effort to fill the broadest masses of our people with joy and thus with strength:

**IT SHALL BE CALLED " KdF CAR".**

When we build this enormous German automobile plant, we also want to create an exemplary German workers' city. It is to become a school both for urban planning and for

social settlement. We want to show how national socialism views such problems, how it tackles them and how it solves them. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the men who did the initial work and thus ensured the success of this work: first and foremost, the man from the automotive industry who, standing by my side for many years, have endeavored to represent my ideas everywhere and thus to realize them, our party comrade Jakob Werlin. And further to those gentlemen who are now bringing this project to practical completion: our great idealist, party comrade Ley, the ingenious designer Porsche, and finally Mr. Lafferentz. These are the men who will essentially be thanked for the realization of this enormous undertaking."

"I lay the cornerstone in the name of the German people! The factory shall arise from the strength of the whole German people, and it shall serve the joy of the German people!"

## FROM RETROSPECT TO FACT!

It has never been a National Socialist custom to say much about plans and undertakings or to withdraw from present tasks by promises for the future. There is also no doubt that in a short number of years, where the Führer broke ground on May 26, 1938, the factory and city of the Strength Through Joy Car will be completed. When we speak of this today, we are not making any questionable predictions about the future but speaking of these things with the same certainty with which we can say at noon that it will be 6 p.m. in six hours.

Even the most doubtful skeptic would be left with no doubt if he saw the spacious halls of the factory, the massive complex of the power plant on the Berlin-Hanover railroad line, north of the Midland Canal, and to the south the extensive shantytown, the Cianetti Leisure Hall, and the first streets. All of this grew out of the earth in 1938, the same year in which the gigantic fortifications and defense structures along the Western Front were built with a massive input of material and manpower. Immediately after the laying of the corner stone for the Volkswagen plant, which took place on May 26, 1938, the West Wall (The Siegfried Line, known in German as the West wall) was begun by order of the Führer on May 28, 1938. There is no doubt

that the parallels between these two events meant a drastic slowdown in the construction of the Volkswagen city and the Volkswagen plant.

However, the fact that the construction is nevertheless taking place according to plan and schedule, and is already so far along today, gives us even more reason to speak of the present and future shape of this unique construction project.

The German Labor Front is responsible for the enormous construction project for the entire city as well as for the factory. In a hilly wooded area on the future outskirts of the city, we can see the first housing development with 500 apartments in a scenically attractive location nearing completion, while several multi-story apartment buildings with a total of 700 apartments are already completed adjacent to the barracks. They are being occupied these days. Homes for single people, in which single employees of the factory will find small homesteads, is also ready for occupancy. Tremendous earthmoving is underway, the first embankments for the future roads are being built, and here and there small clouds of steam indicate where trains pull cars across the huge construction site. The block of the first 1,000 apartments - seen from above - still stands small and isolated in the terrain, but signs of construction can already be seen everywhere, especially, of course, in the north, where the broad front of the factory halls rising behind the ribbon of the Midland Canal.

All this is the work of one year!

On May 26, 1938, the countryside here still lay silent and untouched at the feet of the Führer, and the only substantial structure to catch the eye was the old Wolfsburg Castle on the banks of the Aller River.

Here, below the Kliever Mountain, which will be the city's crown, we will create a hundred-meter-wide main street almost 1.5 kilometers long as a business and traffic hub. Round traffic plazas will be created at both ends, into which the access roads to the two main entrances to the east and west of the Volkswagen plant will also be integrated. These two plazas will be the starting point of a wide comprehensive perimeter road around the entire Kliever Mountain. This inner loop of our city will be roughly the length of the Vienna Austria loop, proof of the generous subdivision of the future city center.

A second long loop road runs around this inner loop at a suitable distance, while a system of roads leading from the inner loop provides access to the residential areas, which are

interspersed with wide green areas. A long, south-west facing traffic axis, starting from a third circular plaza on the loop to the south of the city's crown, will lead out of the city in a straight line until it meets the autobahn which that passes west of the factory and city.

The plans for the city of the KdF Car are based on the expected heavy automobile traffic that the plant will bring. Even though the access roads leading directly from the factory to the Reichs Autobahn are likely to take the brunt of the traffic, the city must nevertheless expect unusually heavy traffic. The width of the major road and the beltway, however, will permit swift travel even at the highest volumes, so that the city will be able to cope with the expected heavy traffic in the most distant future.

The individual expansion stages for the city, which are naturally tied to the output of the factory, anticipate a base population of 30 000 in 1942. The second expansion stage will create a city of 60,000 inhabitants, and the third, when the factory is operating at full capacity, will provide for a population of 90,000. But this does not mean that further growth of the city is impossible. The city is laid out so loosely and spaciouly that even then it will still have sufficient space for development.

One gets a lasting impression, when one drives back down from the top of the Klievers Mountain to the workers barracks, and by the will with which the Führer is creating a city like this from the idea of the motorization of a nation. No one can doubt that here, in a few years, will stand not only a technically ultra-modern city, but also a beautiful and cozy one. The consistently beautiful and stately design of the buildings can be appreciated by anyone who has seen buildings of National Socialism before. After all, the purpose of this city is not only to become the future, but also the home of working people. That's why no ugly housing units and administrative building modules are being built, but rather a city that is growing rapidly and naturally into the landscape. It will one day be one of the proudest examples of the Third Reich. Surrounded by oak trees and greenery, the barracks (based on the pattern of the Work Service barracks) stand as a temporary home for about 10,000 work comrades. A considerable number

of which are Italians, while smaller groups of workers are of Czech, Dutch and Slovak nationality.

The city administration is also being temporarily housed in barracks. It is being organized particularly quickly, because it must get ahead of the curve and be prepared for all the problems that are expected. After all, an interesting new municipal organization is being set up here from the ground up. The tax and registry system, as well as the implementation of all police functions, is already well developed, since the present citizens came in large numbers in very short time. The same applies to the welfare system. All the municipal institutions and functions are growing stone by stone with the city.

As soon as the first several hundred families move into the city of the KdF car, in late summer, sufficient schools, sanitary facilities, utilities, etc. must be provided. Even more, the administration, like the construction planning for the various stages of development, must provide all the public facilities of a large municipality. This city is growing from nothing. There was no industry here, no business, no school, no road, no waterworks, no hospital. All this is being created by the German Labor Front. In 1942, the city will have 30,000 inhabitants and will continue to grow. Anyone can see how many new facilities will have to be built in order to create an exemplary municipal system that meets all modern technical, social and health requirements.

For this reason, the men and women working here not only have to cope with the numerous problems, but they also have to face hardships. It goes without saying that until the completion of the first larger housing units, the current living conditions are quite limited. Family fathers have been separated from their relatives for months and the diversions after the day's work are limited.

But already they see the fruits of their work, carried by genuine idealism, manifesting in the first streets of the city, the first residential units of several stories, and the substructure of the streets and squares. These people can feel a sense of satisfaction, because they know that in a few years a model city will be created, growing by the hour, which is their own factory, and in which they will find a beautiful home.

A visit to the communal camp and to the local group of the NSDAP convinces us that everything has been done to provide a home for workers living in these temporary accommodations. Laundry, shower rooms, cafeterias and parks belong to each camp section, and in the middle of these barracks rises the tall gable of the Tullio Cianetti Leisure Hall, built in the style of the KdF city of Nuremberg. It has room for 5 000 people and offers entertainment and recreation night after night. German and Italian films are shown here, cabarets and variety shows perform, and renowned concert orchestras (e.g., the Nazi Reich Symphony Orchestra) brighten up the after-hours of the workers.

There is the best comradeship between the German and Italian workers, as is to be expected in view of the full support provided by the DAF. The Labor Front, as men from the local branch of the party confirm, is making the task of leading people easy. The close living together requires mutual respect and a well-disciplined attitude, so the party and its organizations (there are own camp formations of the SA, 44 and the NSKK) take care of the preservation of comradeship and a healthy national socialist spirit. Incidents are almost unknown, even though 10,000 men live together in a small area. Like the party's and the DAF's preservation of discipline, the leadership of the Italian workers contributes decisively.

Leaving the grounds of the young city, the guest is once again presented with the proud image of creative work. The buildings and scaffolds of the factory rise high right next to the canal. They are impressive examples of socialism. They are intended for the strength of life and the joy of the people. A few seconds later a train disappears in the green wide forests and the plains of the Altmark. They lie as untouched as the quiet, green, countryside at the Midland Canal until that hour a year ago, when the Führer transformed it with a word of his command into a great working place.

Today the word and will of the Führer has been carried out. The people's car, the "KdF car", has arrived! And with its appearance the last barrier has fallen, which divided our German people into "buyer classes". Today it is possible for every German citizen to buy this car; tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, who were unemployed only a few years ago, are already doing so!

We no longer have classes that can "afford" or "not afford" to buy it, there are no longer "classes of buyers": each of us can have our car!

Against all the head shakers and know-it-alls, the Führer's unshakable will accomplished this great social deed for his people. And to fully appreciate the greatness of this deed, it is important to look in the rear-view mirror, which shows us what a united people under strong leadership can achieve.

# *The KdF car and the Volkswagen factory*

Anyone interested in engines and cars will be as familiar with the success of German racing cars as they are with the name of the man who played a key role in these successes: Dr. Ferdinand Porsche. And when Dr. Porsche was commissioned by the Führer to create the German Volkswagen, it was clear that the vast experience and knowledge of this ingenious designer would also make the Volkswagen an above-average vehicle.

The planning and creation of this car was not about producing the absolute lowest-cost vehicle at any price. That would have been easy and would not have required the years of work that the Volkswagen has behind it. Rather, it was a question of creating the best possible vehicle for the lowest possible price! A car that is a people's car in the broadest sense of the word, that was as reliable and usable in the mountains as it was on the plains, and that was absolutely safe to drive in any season.

This was the task that Dr. Porsche had to undertake. It took years of hard, tireless work and countless trials to produce the perfect model, which is now ready for production as the "KdF Car. It was a struggle for every gram of weight saved, and for every penny in the costs. The test cars have not had it easy: over a total distance of more than 2.5 million kilometers, their properties and performance were subjected to the toughest tests! Anything that was found not to be completely reliable during these test runs was improved until it met all the requirements. Because the Kd wagon should serve every profession. The farmer should be able to drive it on unpaved roads and off-road just as safely as the businessman who must cover long distances on the autobahn.



The tradesman who transports his tools must have just as much space as the worker who wants to take a relaxing trip with his family.

This goal has been achieved today. This was only possible because the Führer entrusted the German Labor Front with the implementation of the entire Volkswagen project. This ensured the smooth development of the Volkswagen to full maturity. Only this way was it possible to carefully test every detail and to improve the interaction of all units to a performance level that will remain unequaled for years to come.

This reveals the whole secret of the Volkswagen. The high acceleration capacity and the fast traction torque result from the favorable gearing of the transmission. The KdF car needs 14 seconds from start to a speed of 60 km! Shifting down from fourth gear (which is designed as a fast or slow gear) to third is possible at 40 km without double-declutching! The streamlined shape of the car reduces drag to such an extent that the 23.5 hp engine, with a normal consumption of 6.5 liters per 100 km, is sufficient to reach a top speed of 100 km/h without straining. This top speed means continuous power on the highway and is due to the air-cooled boxer engine with oil cooling. In a normal water-cooled car, the temperature depends too much on external factors, i.e., on the intensity of the air flow that passed through the radiator's tube system. Overheating easily occurred when the draft of the airflow was insufficient, e.g., when the car was driven in low gear on a hill. The oil in the crankcase was no longer cooled sufficiently, became too thin and thus lost its lubricating capacity. The consequences were leaking bearings and pistons. The KdF car, however, has a built-in oil cooler, which in principle resembles a water cooler and is designed to keep the oil in a lubricating state under all imaginable conditions. The air flow of the cooling fan is regulated by the number of revolutions of the engine. It is entirely unaffected by the force of the wind. The KdF car can negotiate the steepest pass without overheating and can reach a continuous speed of 100 km per hour on a flat road without straining or damaging the engine.

Furthermore, the air cooling of the engine has eliminated the risk of freezing. The KdF car is completely unaffected by cold or heat and is always ready for operation. It is safe to operate under any condition. Its excellent hill-climbing ability and exceptionally good acceleration are due to its low curb weight of 650 kg. Its low fuel consumption of about 6.5 liters per 100 km is due to its low curb weight and streamlined shape. Torsion bar suspension, which had previously helped the German record-breaking race cars to their extraordinary successes, was used in the KdF car for the first time in a commercial vehicle giving it excellent road-handling. Independent suspension, shock absorbers, favorable weight distribution, a low center of gravity, and a completely rigid chassis are coordinated in such a way that their actions result in almost perfect cornering allowing the engine's power to be fully utilized.

It is hard to tell from the outside how spacious and comfortable this small car is. The adjustable front seats offer enough space even for unusually tall and heavy people. Control panels and operating switches are innovative, practical, and clearly arranged. The rear seats, like the front seats, are located between the axles, i.e., in the most favorable suspension zone, so that a vibration-free and pleasant ride is guaranteed for all occupants even on rough roads. Two storage spaces provide ample room for luggage, blankets, and provisions, etc. Warm air heating, dual windshield wipers, a foot switch for headlight dimming, two storage compartments in the dashboard, interior lighting, and space for a radio complete the interior. The smooth floor of the chassis simplifies the maintenance and cleaning, and the all-steel body, eliminates all dirt-forming corners and edges. All parts of the car are protected against the weather, for example, the spare tire is located under the front hood, in front of the gas tank, which is also located there, giving the car an operating range of about 400 km with its 25-liter capacity.

Completely new paths were taken in planning and setting goals for the car itself, it is also true for the site that will begin production as early as the end of this year: the Volkswagen plant in the town of the KdF car near Fallersleben. The site on which the Volkswagen plant is to be built was chosen based on economic and landscape considerations. A favorable location was found.

The plant is located on the Midland Canal and has its own harbor, its own rail sidings, and the best road connections. By the end of this year, the huge halls foreseen in the first phase of construction (tool shop, stamping shop, body shop, mechanical workshop, and the power plant) will be completed, and the first mass-produced KdF cars will roll off the assembly line. It would be too much to mention all the planned facilities in this paper, let alone describe them in detail. Here it should be emphasized that the plant will have its own entrance road for cars, with all types of roads and terrain, as well as communal houses, sports fields, and a central heating plant, which will supply not only the plant but also the emerging city of the KdF car.

This city is in the immediate vicinity of the plant, on the other bank of the Midland Canal, and guarantees quiet, healthy, and trouble-free living. For the time being, it will accommodate 30,000 inhabitants, some of them in apartment buildings and others in housing developments. Each apartment, even the smallest, will have a bathroom or at least a shower room and will be supplied with central heating and electricity from the power plant. It is understood that in the planning, from the beginning, all the buildings and facilities will meet the sanitary, social, and cultural needs of the future occupants.

The new city that is being built will one day be the most beautiful and largest model settlement of the Greater German Reich. It will become a sanctuary for all those who have the privilege of participating in the work that a powerful state leadership and German engineering spirit gave them: the German KdF car!

# *The communal housing of the Volkswagen plant*

In the history of civil engineering, it was extremely rare that almost 10,000 workers of different nationalities had to be accommodated in a small living space for years on end in barracks free of any fencing and restriction of the individuals.

The freely chosen discipline that has prevailed among the construction workers in the communal camp of the Volkswagen factory in the city of the KdF car is due to the extraordinarily good care with which the social leadership has considered the diverse ways of life of the various nationalities.

Today, almost 10,000 men live together in the barracks of the Volkswagen factory communal camp, more than half of whom are Italian colleagues. The way of life of the Italians is different from that of the Germans, both in their diet and in other ways. The Italians have been provided with their own kitchens in their barracks, which prepare their national foods, so that their homeland is represented to them in every way. - The food in the canteens is extraordinarily hearty and tasty, and there have never been any complaints.

The Tullio Cianetti Hall\* has been built for the leisure activities of the workers. With its immense dimensions, it has a capacity of over 5,000 people. It serves to entertain the colleagues in their free time with shows such as cinema, theater, lectures, boxing, etc.

The workers' barracks are functional, hygienic, and designed according to all the requirements of the concept "beauty of work".

During a tour of the communal camp, one hears repeatedly from all those working at the Volkswagen plant that they have never been employed under more favorable conditions.

The camaraderie between the German and Italian workers is exemplary and goes far beyond professional cooperation.

At the end of this year, the first stage of expansion of the Volkswagen plant will be completed and the city of the KdF car will be able to receive its first employees. But for years to come, the construction workers will continue to work on the Volkswagen plant in ideal team spirit to complete the next stages of expansion and to further develop the city.

## *The preliminary facility and its significance for the Volkswagen plant*

When in 1937 the Führer entrusted Dr. Ley, the head of the Reich Organizational Committee, and the German Labor Front behind him with the task of launching the German Volkswagen, the Führer at the same time determined that a separate production facility should be set up for the Volkswagen.

This necessity was a given because none of the existing German automobile factories, due to production structures, would have been able to produce such large numbers of Volkswagens with their existing facilities to meet the needs.

Just as the construction of the plant itself required solutions to problems of the greatest magnitude, it was necessary from the very beginning to think about providing training for the next generation of skilled workers who would be employed in the production of the KdF car.

In 1937, the Preliminary facility of the Volkswagen plant was built in Braunschweig as a preparatory facility for future careers at the Volkswagen plant. The purpose of the preliminary facility is also to manufacture special tools and equipment for the main plant. However, its main task is to train apprentices for a wide variety of jobs.

In the works engineering school, systematic training and orientation of adult skilled workers takes place, who are to become employees of the main plant after the start of production. - The selection and training of future members of the plant's workforce is therefore the main task of the preliminary facility.

The Volkswagen plant will be equipped with the most modern means of production to meet the requirements

for reliability and affordability of the KdF car. However, this requirement alone can be achieved not only with the best machines, the best organization, and the best raw materials, but using the best skilled craftsmen and highly qualified individuals. The future workforce of the Volkswagen plant will work under conditions that must be regarded as particularly favorable. Not only will they be employed in the most modern industrial plant in the world, but they will also live in the most beautiful model city of the Greater German Reich.

The selection of those working in the Volkswagen plant must be made with great care, because these men and their families will be settled in a completely unique environment and will have to form not only a working community, but also a social community.

The preliminary facility apprentices are prepared for their future tasks from the very beginning, and their sense of community is developed to a particularly high degree. Before their integration into the apprentice workshop, they are grouped together in Hitler Youth camps. This grouping serves to assess the character of the young people and is intended to show their suitability for their future profession. The camp stay spans a period of 4 to 6 weeks.

After their admission, the apprentices live on the premises of the preliminary facility in apprentice homes built there. Care has been taken to remove the boys as far as possible from their parents' home, especially during the most important period of their physical and mental development. At present, about 500 apprentices from various regions of the Greater German Reich are being trained at the preliminary facility, together with several German expatriates.

Initially, all apprentices receive basic training as machinists, regardless of the profession they wish to learn. After six months, each apprentice's final profession is determined based on his or her performance in school and in the apprentice workshop. Considering his or her own career aspirations, the corresponding specialized training begins. The following apprenticeships are planned at the preliminary facility:

Machinist - toolmaker - lathe operator - blacksmith - electromechanics - plumber - welder - universal cutter - universal grinder - temperer - carpenter.

The apprenticeship takes 3 years. 2 years are spent training in the apprentice workshops, the 3rd year is spent doing practical work in the manufacturing operations of the main plant.

The layout of the preliminary facility with its buildings and training workshops meets all the requirements of the concept of " beauty of work," and the spacious workshops meet all the modern needs of industrial sanitation.

The individual shops are equipped with the most modern machine tools, and the mechanical training of each apprentice allows for advancement far beyond the usual.

All apprentices are divided into performance groups in their work so as not to arouse false ambition in the individuals. Only the performance results of each group are evaluated, not the individual performances.

Particular attention is paid to physical training at the preliminary facility. Physical training alone is not the goal, the physical activities of the apprentices are a necessary addition to the educational plan, geared to their profession. As well as sports, vocational performance is encouraged to develop achievement, self-discipline, and attitude.

All familiar sports are practiced: Athletics, gymnastics on apparatus, boxing, fencing, swimming, rowing, etc. A gymnasium, a large sports field and a swimming pool have been built on the grounds of the preliminary facility.

The apprentices' diet is very nutritious and specially tailored to the young people's growth.

At the Volkswagen plant, a German skilled workforce is being trained that will lead the way worldwide.



# *The Volkswagen factory in the city of the KdF car*

On May 26, 1938, the Führer laid the cornerstone for the construction of the Volkswagen plant. After 1% of its construction time, the plant was handed over for its intended purpose and production began. What was achieved in these 14 years is unusual in its size and stands worthy alongside other achievements in the Greater German Reich.

The first construction phase covers an area of 2X1.5 km. In total, three construction stages are planned. The first stage, which will be completed by the end of this year, includes four large halls, the power plant, and the shipping hall. - A large track, with all types of roads and terrain, will be used to subject the KdF cars rolling off the assembly line to a final test.

The four halls result in a building frontage of 1.3 km. All halls will be connected to each other by a southern side structure. Their depth is 256 m. In the halls, work will only be carried out on the upper floors. The lower floors will house wiring and utilities for the work halls, and will also serve as changing rooms, washrooms, and showers for the employees. All halls have sidings, north and south connecting buildings and ramps for supply vehicles. The facades are faced with bricks.

The power plant heats all halls with warm air and supplies the electricity. A wide road was built in the north-south direction between each of the halls. - The southern hall contains the dining rooms for the employees. All halls are provided with tour aisles to give KdF buyers the opportunity to tour the plant when picking up their cars without disturbing the operation.

To eliminate any glare while working, the skylights of all halls were directed to the north.

After the start of production, the workforce of the first expansion stage will number about 9000 men per shift.

The tool shop is used to produce special tools and for work preparation for the entire manufacturing process.

The pressed parts of the KdF car are being manufactured in the press shop, a steel structure with a foundation of reinforced concrete, using enormous presses.

The body shop covers an area of 72,000 square meters. It is 256 meters deep and 282 meters wide. This is where the KdF car is assembled and painted. In addition, a mezzanine floor 18 meters wide was built over the entire depth of the hall to accommodate the upholstery shop.

The technical workshop is used for finishing work. This hall has several large exit ramps for the finished cars with direct access to the driveways.

In addition to the production plant, the power plant supplies heat and electricity to the city of the KdF car through a central heating system. A 70,000 hp facility ensures the power supply. The building is 56 m high.

The Volkswagen plant is situated parallel, directly on the Midland Canal. A separate harbor was built behind the power plant. It is 400 meters long, 120 meters wide and has a water depth of 3.25 meters.

A large kitchen, which will be set up as a central kitchen for the entire workforce, will provide catering.

The entire plant will be surrounded by landscaped areas. In addition, a large sports facility is planned for the workforce.

Only the highest quality equipment and materials made it possible to meet the record completion dates of the plant. Today, the entire plant is under roof and the interior outfitting of all halls is underway, so that the first KdF cars will roll off the assembly line by the end of this year.

## *The city of the KdF car*

On the other side of the Midland Canal, in the immediate vicinity of the Volkswagen plant, the city of the KdF car is being built. This city will be built as a model settlement and will provide housing for the Volkswagen factory's employees and their families.

The individual buildings will be erected in terraces around the Klievers mountain in a scenically beautiful location surrounded by large state forests. Large, wide streets will run through the entire site. Great importance will be attached to the construction of multi-story buildings with individual apartments of all sizes, as well as to the construction of idyllic housing estates in the middle of the forest, which will differ from one another in their design from street to street. Each house will have a beautiful garden.

The planning of the city was based on the principle of placing commercial enterprises such as markets, slaughterhouse, etc. in a special part of town to preserve the cityscape in all its beauty.

On the height of Klievers mountain the official buildings such as the city hall, buildings of the party, administrations will be located. This square is the center around which the city will be built. From the heights one will have a magnificent view of the most beautiful model city of the Greater German Empire. The city itself will have abundant green spaces. The construction of sports fields of all kinds will be taken care of. Hotels, entertainment venues such as cinemas, etc. will also be provided in sufficient quantities.

In addition to residential houses intended for the employees and their families, a large residence for single employees will be created to accommodate all unmarried persons who prefer not to have their own apartment.

Large, wide rooms will accommodate 2 to 4 persons. The construction of a large building with one-bedroom apartments is also planned.

All apartments, even the smallest, will be equipped with a bathroom or shower room. By June of this year, housing for several thousand people will be completed. In 1942, about 30,000 inhabitants will be able to live there. In total, the city was planned for about 90 000 inhabitants.

All apartments in the city will be heated by central heating from the power plant of the Volkswagen factory. Electricity is also supplied by the power plant. - The greatest importance was attached to the sanitary design in every way. The kitchens will be heated only electrically.

To accommodate the expected heavy traffic that will be generated in the immediate vicinity of the Volkswagen plant, the street layout has been designed very spaciouly. On one side, parallel to the Midland Canal and the Reichs Street, is the Volkswagen plant, on the other the town of the KdF car. In order not to disrupt traffic on the Reichs Street by crossing it from the city to the plant, the roads leading from the city to the plant were routed under the Reichs Street, as in the case of the autobahn, so that no traffic congestion could occur.

The planning of the city is in one hand, and only this way is it possible that here, as with no city in the world so far, principles can be realized which guarantee achieving the goal and making the city of the KdF car the most beautiful city in the Greater German Reich.

\*Tullio Cianetti served as the Italian secretary of the Fascist Confederation of Industrial Workers' syndicates and Vice-President of the Institute of Social Assurance. As head of the Confederation, Cianetti concluded a deal with Robert Ley in 1937 to allow Italian workers to go to Nazi Germany for employment. He was held with such high regard by the leaders of the German Labour Front that the main Volkswagen factory leisure complex called Cianetti Hall was named in his honor.