



TRIUMPH SPORTS CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA
JOHANNESBURG CENTRE
NEWSLETTER



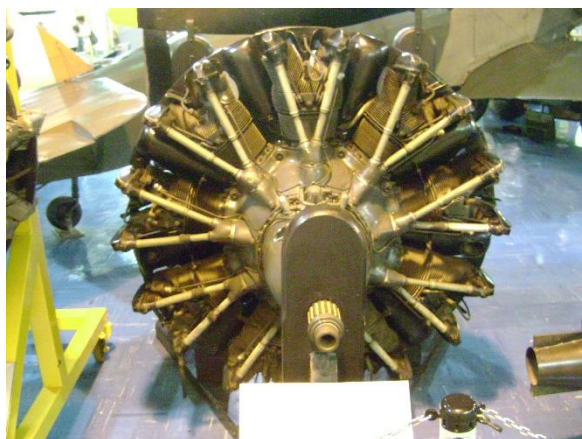
PO Box 1102,
Southdale 2135

ISSUE NO. 03/19

**Please note that all contributions to the newsletter should be directed to
John Crowther, e-mail johncr@hotmail.co.za by 25th of each month**



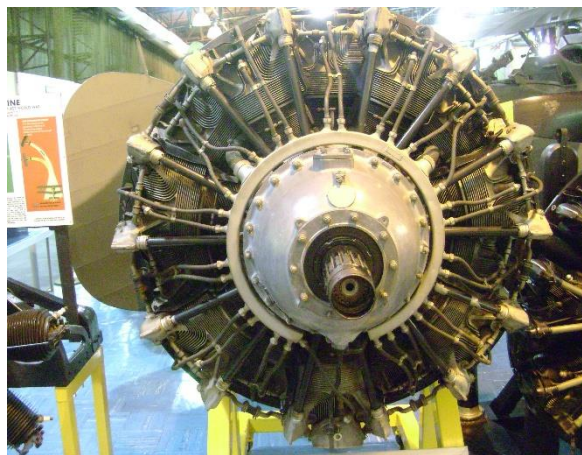
Anzani rotary engine



Piaggio PXR 9 cylinder radial engine



Gnome rotary engine



Pratt & Whitney Twin Wasp 14 cylinder Radial engine

Military Museum, Johannesburg

Committee members				
Chairman	Norman Bull	+27 11-849-1113	+27 83-469-6833	normanb0147@gmail.com
Vice Chairman	Gary Booyens	+27 11 896 3192	+27 82 445 5111	gcb@netactive.co.za
Treasurer	Rob McLeod	+27 11-802-4655	+27 82-358-7733	bucclenchss@telkomsa.net
Regalia	Mark Hirst		+27 82-459-2124	markhi@lenovo.com,
Victor ludorum points	Eddie Steele	+27 11-680-8421	+27 72-270-9557	ew.steele@telkomsa.net
Membership secretary				
Events co-ordinator	Rob McLeod	+27 11-704-1786	+27 82-358-7733	bucclenchss@telkomsa.net
Newsletter editor				
Newsletter distribution	John Crowther		+27 83-950-1934	johnocr@hotmail.co.za
Samca representative	Rene de Villiers	+27 11-680-3124	+27 83-317-4339	triumphclubspares@telkomsa.net
Door prizes	Dave Sawyer	+27 11-314-2666	+27 82-779-1606	fourways@cashconverters.co.za
	John Craig	+27 11-478-2292	+27 61-804-9551	opsoek@mweb.co.za
Marketing	Gary Booyens	+27 11-896-3192	+27 82-445-5111	gcb@netactive.co.za

Chairman's Chat

After a few weeks of 'plenty' of rain the skies opened for a tops-down Valentine's run to Uncle Tim's Cabin in Benoni for members from Jo'burg and Pretoria. A hearty breakfast was enjoyed in the shelter of a huge tree with calm surroundings. The ladies then enjoyed a most interesting stroll through the many quaint little shops. A splendid day was had by all.

Our next event will be Angela's Picnic on Sunday 7th April . . . always well supported by Triumph members

Remember to book your place for the Hartebeespoort Classic Car Meander in July – only 200 cars are permitted for this event.

Finally, we all wish our barman at the VVC at speedy recovery after his unfortunate recent fall off his motorbike - maybe time for a 3-wheeler, Pierre!!!!

Cheers,

Norman

Events Calendar

MONTH	DAY/DATE	EVENT	HOST	STATUS
January	Tue 15	Noggin		
	Sun 20	Glenburn Lodge	Jhb	official
February	Sun 17	Valentine run-Uncle Tim's	Jhb	official
	Tue 19	Noggin		
March	Sun 17	Piston Ring Swop Meeting		optional
	Tue 19	Noggin		
	Sun 24	Michelotti Centenary run	Pta	official
April	Fri 05-Mon 08	Stars of Sandstone		optional
	Sun 7	Angela's Picnic	SAMCA	official
	Tue 16	Noggin		
May	Tue 01	Dambusters	Sunbeam Club	official
	Tue 21	Noggin		
	Sat 26	Just Wheels	Muriel Brandt	optional
	Sun 26	Cars in Park-Pietermaritzburg		optional
	Sun 26	Cars on the Roof	Pta/POMC	optional
June	Tue 18	Noggin		
	Sun 30	TBA....lunch at Val????		
July	Tue 16	Noggin		
	Sun 14	Scottburgh Classic Car Show		optional
	Sun 21	Pta/Jhbg combined Concourse	Pta	official
	Sun 28	Rotary Hartbeespoort Classic Meander	Rotary..Brits	official
August	Sun 4	Cars in Park-Zwartkops	POMC	optional
	Tue 20	Noggin		
	Sat/Sun????	Graham Cheetam anniversary	KZN	official
September	Sun 01	Wheels at the Vaal		optional
	Sun 08	4th Ave -Parkhurst Show	VVC	optional
	Sun 15	Piston Ring Swop Meeting		
	Tue 17	Noggin		
	Sun 29	TBA		
October	Tue 15	Noggin/AGM		official
	Sun 20 or 27	Jacaranda Run....Pta	MG club	optional
	Sun 27	TBA		
November	Tue 19	Noggin		
	Sun 24	TBA		
December	Sun 08	Year-end Function	Pta	official
Dates and events subject to change				

Dates and events subject to change

April 2019 Fri 5th - Mon 8th Stars of Sandstone – Ficksburg

Uncle Tim's Cabin – Sunday 17th February





Tuesday, 24 January 2012

from Gary Booyens

MOTOR ASSEMBLIES LIMITED

A small South African Assembly Plant that became a major Manufacturer

Part 2 of 7



The Excise Duty factor of mass had the great advantage that it could be easily checked and this formula did not bring into the calculation any distortion of profit or other secondary costs. This concept was expected to encourage the basic steel-related industries making castings, forgings and metal pressings for which the basic materials were in most cases already made. But it did not favour light weight, high cost components such as instruments, or complicated assemblies such as gearboxes or axles.

The starting point was to be more or less the existing local content by mass taking into account the battery, tyres, glass, trim, odd small parts and consumables. The incorporation of these materials had only been a purchasing function as the suppliers were local operations of established, high reputation, manufacturers such as Firestone, Dunlop, Goodyear, Lucas, Exide, ICI and Pilkingtons.

There can be no doubt that GM and Ford thought that there was little chance of the fragmented competition being able to conform to the local content regulations, or for new-comers to enter the market. Therefore they thought it would only be a matter of time before they had the market to carve up amongst themselves. Apart from each announcing R4m plant investments the approaches differed. GM already had an in-plant facility modelled in a way on their US subsidiary Delco and they produced batteries and pressings for their light truck bodies. They expanded this horizontal structure by increasing the size of their press shop to satisfy the major volume of new local content as well as expanding into engines (with components made in-house), radiators and other fabrications. Ford also decided to follow the engine route for local content with an engine machining and assembly facility with a capacity of 30 000 units a year but, they planned to obtain all other items from outside suppliers.

Introduced as Phase I the initial requirements for “Manufactured Models” were to reach a 35% content by 1963, at which point a review would have already been made as to how much further and by when this should be followed by Phase II. There was also a category for “Assembled Models” which only had to reach 25% local content but volumes were limited in some relation to previous import permit limits. The local content requirement for these was raised to 30% by the end of 1966 and 35% by the end of 1967. In this way the smaller volume companies were offered a chance to survive and grow and maybe later convert to “Manufactured” status. Those “Manufactured Models” that reached the 35% level but could not attain viability over this target would be able to continue as “Assembled Models”.

When in 1964 GM opened its engine plant, they together with Chrysler and Ford still had a 50% market share in passenger vehicle sales, due largely to the introduction of US so-called Compact models, as well as 4 and 6-cylinder UK models from Ford and Vauxhall.

To the surprise of the Government and the Big Two, the independent assemblers were to show that, even if they could not match the investment capability, they could make full use of the pioneering work being carried out by GM and Ford in developing a supplier industry, and by doing this they need not be excluded from the market so easily. Motor Assemblies, like the other independent assemblers, found most of its customers without the resources of a parent motor manufacturing concern and thus without not only investment capital but the engineering know-how and systems to develop local content. If it was to stay in business the only response was to offer a local sourcing facility in addition to assembly and in 1960 a Vehicle Engineering section was created for this purpose, under the control of Mike Compton. BMC also decided to use the increased local content requirements as a reason to transfer the Durban part of their production to their own plant in the Cape, so the first MA customer for an increased level of local content was Standard Triumph.

The Standard 8 and Vanguard had been MA's initial Standard Triumph products but with the introduction of the Herald range in 1959, and the 2000 to come, there was some hope that they could attain a production volume that would sustain the introduction of local content. For various reasons, not least a design that did not fully take into account African road conditions, the Herald failed to meet its sales targets. Hence in time only the 2000 remained as their hope for the future and it was introduced as an "Assembled Model" in 1965 with 25% local content.

The primary objective at MA was to be able to retain assembly clients by presenting a viable plan whereby they might meet the local content objectives, obtain the excise rebate, and not have to invest heavily in tooling or dedicated production facilities. There were also a large number of actual and potential component suppliers who were more than interested in expanding their facilities and so doing their bit to help both the Government and Manufacturers reach their targets.

The increased assembly volume and number of clients, an unsatisfactory experience with operating a double shift and recognition that the original paint facility was not then state of the art, caused the MA shareholders to agree in 1959 to the construction of a new paint shop. There was no additional property directly adjacent that could be used for this expansion and the nearest available site was about 500m away in Lansdowne Road and of sufficient size for the future construction of a new body shop and off-line vehicle storage. Bodies in the white (bare metal) would be transported by tractor trailer units and returned fully painted by the same system.

Almost the first components to be localised at MA were seat frames as the trim was already made and the main requirements of tube manipulation and seat springing existed at several potential outside suppliers making steel furniture. To these were added items with a spare parts demand such as oil and air filters, hub caps, shock absorbers, suspension springs and exhaust systems. Firstly, since in many cases the production facilities existed at "pirate" manufacturers, and secondly because the addition of spares gave a greater volume of parts over which any tooling could be amortised.

Unfortunately not too many of the early component suppliers were good at production planning or quality! It was one thing to make after-market parts with no exacting delivery date, sometimes using "knife and fork" methods, and quite another where non-delivery was going to stop either the production line or vehicle delivery. The after-market for "genuine" parts was also not normally a factor used, as the official dealers of the car manufacturers were required to sell only genuine parts. Likewise the normal supply route to independent parts factors had clients where low prices and good margins were of greater importance than quality. The appreciation of what quality meant on a series production basis was normally as absent as that of the equipment or the systems required to control it.

The need for increasing local content did not go unnoticed by several European OE component manufacturers and through the 1960's plans were put in hand, normally based on their own experiences outside of Europe or the USA, for local manufacture. Of major importance were transmission drive shafts (GKN/Anglo-Vaal), wheels (Rubery Owen/Vecor), radiators (Coventry Radiator/Silverton), disc and drum brake assemblies (Girling), engine piston-ring-pin assemblies (Hepworth & Grandage/Wellworthy/Lauf Lumenite) and electrical components (Lucas, Bosch). Already active in the after-market and more than willing to add to their volumes were Woodhead Kempo (shock absorbers, coil and leaf springs), Armstrong (shock absorbers), BTR (rubber components), and Smiths Industries (spark plugs). Later, some US companies also joined the fray - Thompson-Ramco (pistons and rings), Borg Warner (rear axles) and Motorola (alternators and regulators). This potential also attracted non-OE manufactures such as Quinton Hazel (exhaust systems) and Repco from Australia (brake drums and discs) as well as new investments from outside the motor industry such as construction company Murray and Roberts into iron castings.

It was always intended by Government that Iscor would supply as much as possible of the steel requirements, but there were production limitations in high quality steel sheet for external body pressings and specialised alloy forging steels from USCO. There was also no suitable source for complex castings. As a result of these circumstances the investment plans of Ford and GM were assisted by the Government. At their behest, it introduced the concept of "Approved" manufacturing schemes whereby, until the local availability of suitable castings and forgings, un-machined parts could be imported, be locally machined, and still qualify as local content. A similar concession was given to steel strip needed for the more specialised large external body pressings.

Taking an opposite track was CDA which was coming more and more under the influence of Mercedes Benz and trying to obtain for their clients less rigorous content requirements for low volume / high value units. In contrast, MA seemed to offer, with a clear realisation of the need to localise, a better long term possibility for customers (actual and potential) and could even be a potential take-over target if all went well.

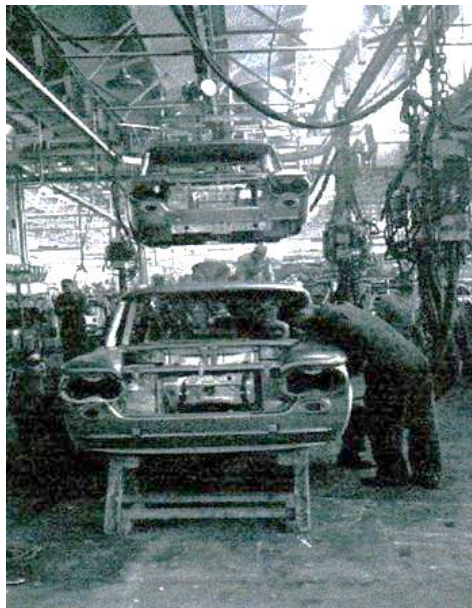
However, to everyone's surprise Fiat were not to be outdone and raised the stakes quite considerably by making an announcement that they too would be applying for an engine manufacturing programme using the same "Approved" concessions. This manufacturing activity would also be out-sourced, in an even more surprising move, to Turin Motors, a small engineering company in Johannesburg.

In short, not too many manufacturers were going to be left behind, at least at this stage of the game.

Motor Assemblies involvement with Fiat's local content programme assisted considerably in making the learning curve easier to climb. Their Argentinean experience permitted them to take a practical, engineering-based approach rather than what might have been written in manuals – if they ever had them. The Turin factories would remove parts from sub-assemblies that would not even be considered by other manufacturers, and approval was given locally in South Africa without reference to Italy. Apart from the assembly documentation being comprehensive, all the required part production drawings and material specifications were made available. In addition there were quite a number of Italian immigrants who were ex-Fiat employees owning small manufacturing factories in the Johannesburg region, and this network was engaged to make Fiat parts.

Fiat's decision to increase local content by the machining of engine parts might not have occurred without what was then new technology. When Ford and GM set out their machine shops they were based on what were conventional lines where individual single-purpose machines were linked and machining carried out in the same sequence as the machines were set out on the floor. It was conventional practice but was very capital intensive requiring large volumes to provide viability. Fiat and their contractor Turin Motors considered that, by using a combination of a Numerical Control (NC) machining centre and limited special purpose machines, the capital requirement could be reduced significantly and this would enable them to compete with GM and Ford.

There were several problems with this approach that were not taken into their calculations. One was that a detailed and complicated planning system was needed to carry out the correct machining sequence and achieve the correct machine loading. The other was that there was a complete lack of experience as to how NC machines and their computers worked. Both the machine sales staff and the customers understood the principles but a technician had to be sent from Europe to resolve many of the problems encountered. MA considered that, although production had not started, this approach was also valid for the Toyota engine and also signed up with Turin Motors. These initial encounters with NC machines resulted in serious production line stoppages at MA at times, especially in the early stages. But the financial advantages were proved correct.



The Fiat 1500 provided a valuable increase in output and was perhaps the first car to be built with real enthusiasm. Fiat's determination to reach the required local content levels also gave very valuable insight as to their methods, including that of establishing new suppliers.

It is also appropriate to mention the Turin Motors approach of using general purpose machines such as plano-millers with say three blocks mounted in different ways on the same machine and being machined in one pass. This may have been very practical so far as machine usage was concerned but meant that some operations were performed out of sequence and thus keeping track of production progress was a nightmare, with huge problems of missed operations. It was a very unusual way to do it but on small to medium volumes was viable and therefore marques with marginal volumes could meet the requirements and survive.

After the withdrawal of the Herald from the market all the Triumph resources cantered on the marketing of the 2000 making it essential that it reached at least the 25% level. But in time it went on to reach the 35% content level by the end of 1967. To do this MA took the lead role with a free hand to choose the components to be localised provided the economics were satisfactory. In the process the MA engineers gained valuable experience in local manufacturing processes. A major advantage was that unlike say Fiat, the local OEM suppliers were all from the UK, the most important

of which were established in SA. This made it much easier to source locally, for example, disc brake callipers, clutch assemblies and drive shafts. This MA staff know-how would be fully utilised in the next year or so for the development of Toyota.

In 1964 Phase II of the local content programme had started with the obligation to reach a 45% level by the end of 1968. However, it had already been made known that those who wished could continue to a 55% level in the following 3½ years, the main incentive being the higher rebate of Excise Duty. However, those manufacturers who had reached the 35% level but who could not viably proceed, would be permitted to continue with the status of an “Assembled Model”. If able to increase their market share and achieve the viability required, they would then be permitted to obtain “Manufactured” status and the tax rebates this brought, without any limits on volume.

While the initial local content targets were not too difficult to attain they were to become progressively harder, particularly for those who were independent importers and with lower sales volumes. While in terms of free enterprise the greater the competition the better, in reality the lower the number of manufacturers there were, the better would be the economic results of the government’s manufacturing programme. Where heavy investment was needed for model-specific tooling, this was no particular obstacle for those selling reasonable volumes of their own products, but not so for a local importer who was only a profit orientated intermediary between the foreign based manufacturer and the local customer.

One of the most outspoken objectors to the whole local content programme was Walter Essex Clarke of CDA. On behalf of their main customer, Mercedes Benz, he maintained that it would never be possible to obtain components of a satisfactory quality level in South Africa for such as MB, who he argued had very high standards to maintain. His demands appear to have had little effect on Government policy. At a later stage, to meet them, MB contracted to buy many body pressings from VWSA, which must have been another first for South Africa.

Volvo, imported by Lawson Motors in Johannesburg had also projected an up-market image, backed by a very successful local saloon car racing and rallying programme. In 1960 an assembly contract was given to MA who first started with production of the 544 but then quickly changed to the then new 122S. For Volvo this was also the first time they had supplied material in CKD form. Having started with a limited local content programme they were encouraged by both the entry of Mercedes Benz into the Local Content race and their objections to it, which Lawson’s thought might succeed. They followed the MB route of going for a large number of body pressings but did so first with Datsun, which proved to be very problematic as the Swedish engineers had tried to save on tooling costs by using a lot of hand work. The serious quality variations of this approach led them in 1973 to follow the MB route by moving not only the body press work to VWSA but also the vehicle assembly.

Lancia was another up-market make whose importer, TAK, hoped they could remain in business, at least for a little longer, by participating in local assembly. Production started at MA with the Appia, followed by the Fulvia Coupe, Flavia 1500 Sedan and 1500 Coupe, the latter yet another one off for MA - the only production site outside of Italy to complete a Pininfarina-made body. The body shell was delivered fully assembled only requiring painting and trim. The world-renowned body builder was not that impressed with this news and had a special B-post badge produced to fit in place of the normal one emphasizing that it was a Pininfarina design.

The last Chrysler units to be built by MA were D250 pick-up trucks which were more than competitive to the GM and Ford equivalents and still had many supporters, particularly in the SA Railways and Provincial Governments’ Roads Departments. Later the Japanese were to take over the market of all three American manufacturers in this sector. This particular MA production line was started in 1960 in the place previously occupied by the old paint shop, and had also been used to assemble BMC trucks of various sizes until 1962.



*Lancia Flaminia Coupe as trimmed by
Motor Assemblies*

Chapter 3. The Japanese entry into the market.

In setting their initial local content strategy the SA Government had not expected that in the early 1960's Japan would become a major export customer for iron ore, coal and wood chips. Nor had they foreseen that the Japanese at a diplomatic level would point out that there were no reciprocal imports helping to balance the trade between the two countries. The volume of exports was also much larger than could be compensated by the import of consumer products such as radios and cameras.

This diplomatic pressure led to a number of SA businessmen, with SA Government encouragement, making trips to Japan to see what was on general offer and it should not have been a surprise to them to find that MITI, that all powerful of Japanese Government organisations, had earmarked the motor industry to be the leading trade partner with SA. Some of the first businessmen to make this pilgrimage were Afrikaners from Pretoria with close ties to the Nationalist Government and who had been privately assured of import permits for products that they were interested in. They were not however motor men and it was perhaps just as well, since what was on offer then in Japan would not have excited anybody from the industry.

To the brothers Thys and Andries Bekker the Japanese Motor industry should owe a never-ending debt of gratitude as the importers of the first Datsun model, made by Nissan. Because the price was so low and the terms unrepeatable they placed a test order for just 100 built-up so-called 1-ton pick-up trucks with a 1000cc petrol engine, in spite of the fact that as rather large and typical Afrikaners neither of them could sit in comfort behind the steering wheel! Little were they, or anybody else for that matter, to know that this visit to Japan was not only to be the death knell of the US pick-up but in time the Japanese dominance of the market.

The LDV was an excellent product with which to open up the market because it was a commercial vehicle not subjected to excise duty or local content requirements. The first deliveries were to urban companies such as dairies and, since it was the buyers' employees who did the driving, maybe this space problem was not a major feature at this time. Sales of the first 100 units went so well that a more permanent arrangement had to be made and this involved a trip by the Bekkers to MA and, without much delay, in 1962 a contract was signed to assemble just 1000 trucks in the next 12 months.

In spite of the desire to sell automotive products to SA, the Japanese Government was very conscious of the government's apartheid policies, as well as its repugnance to the rest of Africa with whom they also wanted to do business. They therefore laid down simple and clear rules for their exporters to follow - no investment, direct or indirect and no credit - payment by Letter of Credit.

Once it was clear that Datsun LDVs could be sold, to accommodate the Japanese, the SA Government had to modify the local content plans somewhat, first delaying the introduction of local content regulations on commercial vehicles and then in a more significant ruling, providing a period in which new entries could build up their local content to the then required levels of local content without penalty. This was not to be the last change made to help the Japanese as one of SA's major trading partners.

It was also at this time that McCarthy Rodway made management changes and the then Sales Director, Noel Horsfield switched to a subsidiary, Illings, as Managing Director. He and the new McCarthy Chairman, Pat McCarthy then made the trip to Japan, also with government encouragement, to see what products they could obtain for this business subsidiary that they had decided was in need of new direction. They came back with the agencies for earth-moving equipment manufacturers Komatsu and Hitachi as well as Mazda. Not surprisingly, the latter in pick-up form, was to be assembled from 1963 onwards in the McCarthy Rodway "family" by MA.

For the first time worldwide, two competing Japanese manufacturers were to find their products assembled in the same factory! But this situation was not to last and from the Japanese point of view, was to get even worse after MA agreed to assemble models from Toyota and Mitsubishi as well.

Dr Albert Wessels was another Afrikaans businessman, involved in clothing manufacture and already using Japanese textiles but who was also looking for new industrial opportunities. Spurred on by the perceived success of Datsun and wanting a little light diversion from a recent divorce he obtained the franchise for Toyopet products, the then commercial vehicle range of Toyota, and imported the first Stout test unit in October 1961. The Toyota car franchise was already taken and at that time all he could do was wait and see if it became available although at this time its need was questionable.

Realising that his fellow Japanese importers seemed to be making progress with MA it should have been no surprise that he and Hennie Klerck, the Managing Director of the newly formed Toyopet Commercials Company, should visit Durban to talk about and finalise an assembly contract for 1963.

All these new clients with absolutely no motor industry experience were willing for MA not only to build their vehicles but also to plan and execute their local content obligations.

Apart from the fact that Wessels and Klerck were in good company with Fiat, Standard Triumph and Datsun who all wanted to do their best to comply with the Government regulations (which was not the case with Mazda, Volvo or Lancia!) there was little to do but to follow the route taken by the others. However, one of the major reasons that Datsun and Mazda had come to MA is that McCarthy Rodway had a subsidiary, Aircor Engineering, which, while its main business was the manufacture of Carrier air conditioning, had also built the load bodies for Dodge pick-up trucks assembled at MA.

The first Toyota product to be built by MA and with a load body similar in size to a Dodge D250, was the Toyopet Stout, a 1,5t pick-up with beam front axle of somewhat larger dimensions externally than the Datsun LDV that was by then taking the market by storm. However, the internal dimensions of the cab were not much better than the Datsun but more importantly the market reaction was nevertheless favourable. At the same time assembly was started of the Tiara pick-up, but with a mono construction local content was neither viable nor technically possible and production was ended.

It was not long after the introduction of the Stout that MA was asked to look at the introduction of the Corona 1 ton Pick-up, a direct competitor to the Datsun "Bakkie". Also there was a revised Stout with a lower payload, larger cab and independent front suspension marketed in Japan as the Lite Stout! Not surprisingly Toyota SA chose to call this model the Stallion. It was supplemented later by the Dyna, a forward control pick-up.

When the Corona LDV was first introduced in 1965 it was an instantaneous hit, probably because the load body had somewhat more style to it than that made for Datsun and the cab interior was more passenger car in size and style so that it fitted in with the trend of using LDV's as a replacement for the family car, especially as the lack of Excise duty made them much cheaper.

Whereas in Japan the load bodies were pressed with stylish curves, in SA they had to make do with somewhat rectangular designs because at that stage there was no chance of recovering the tooling costs of pressed panels. It was most certainly the Corona 1500 LDV that set the foundation for Toyota in South Africa as the Datsun 1000 LDV had for Nissan.

When these first Japanese LDV's successfully entered the SA market there could have been very few people who gave them a chance to repeat this story in the car sector, nor at that point were there any provisions in the local content regulations to let them even attempt to do so. The Japanese themselves thought otherwise and very soon started pressing their importers and the Government to permit imports and in this they were successful, the first make to be assembled being the Datsun 1200 Sedan followed shortly afterwards in June 1966 by the Toyota 1500 Corona. The government again assisted by giving a short period for them to reach the same 45% content level as their established competitors which they were able to do.

In 1966 there were 16 030 Japanese vehicles sold in SA making it their 3rd largest export market.



Yoshi Aikawa with the first off-line Toyopet Stout at Motor Assemblies in 1963

Part 3 next month

Tail End Giggle

I was in the six item express lane at the store quietly fuming.

Completely ignoring the sign, the woman ahead of me had slipped into the check-out line pushing a cart piled high with groceries. Imagine my delight when the cashier beckoned the woman to come forward looked into the cart and asked sweetly, "So which six items would you like to buy?"

Wouldn't it be great if that happened more often?

Because they had no reservations at a busy restaurant, my elderly neighbour and his wife were told there would be a 45 minute wait for a table.

"Young man, we're both 90 years old," the husband said. "We may not have 45 minutes."

They were seated immediately.

The reason Politicians try so hard to get re-elected is that they would "hate" to have to make a living under the laws they have passed.

All eyes were on the radiant bride as her father escorted her down the aisle. They reached the altar and the waiting groom. The bride kissed her father and placed something in his hand.

The guests in the front pews responded with ripples of laughter. Even the priest smiled broadly.

As her father gave her away in marriage, the bride gave him back his credit card.

Women and cats will do as they please, and men and dogs should relax and get used to the idea.

Three friends from the local congregation were asked, "When you're in your casket, and friends and congregation members are mourning over you, what would you like them to say?"

Artie said, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful husband, a fine spiritual leader, and a great family man."

Eugene commented, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful teacher and servant of God who made a huge difference in people's lives."

Al said, "I'd like them to say, 'Look, he's moving!'"

Smith climbs to the top of Mt. Sinai to get close enough to talk to God.

Looking up, he asks the Lord. "God, what does a million years mean to you?"

The Lord replies, "A minute."

Smith asks, "And what does a million dollars mean to you?"

The Lord replies, "A penny."

Smith asks, "Can I have a penny?"

The Lord replies, "In a minute."

John was on his deathbed and gasped pitifully, "Give me one last request, dear," he said.

"Of course, John," his wife said softly.

"Six months after I die," John said, "I want you to marry Bob."

"But I thought you hated Bob," she said.

With his last breath John said, "I do!"

A man goes to see the Rabbi.

"Rabbi, something terrible is happening and I have to talk to you about it."

The Rabbi asked, "What's wrong?"

The man replied, "My wife is going to poison me."

The Rabbi, very surprised by this, asks, "How can that be?"

The man then pleads, "I'm telling you, I'm certain she's going to poison me. What should I do?"

The Rabbi then offers, "Tell you what. Let me talk to her, I'll see what I can find out and I'll let you know."

A week later the Rabbi calls the man and says, "I spoke to your wife on the phone for three hours. You want my advice?"

The man said, "Yes" and the Rabbi replied, "Take the poison."