

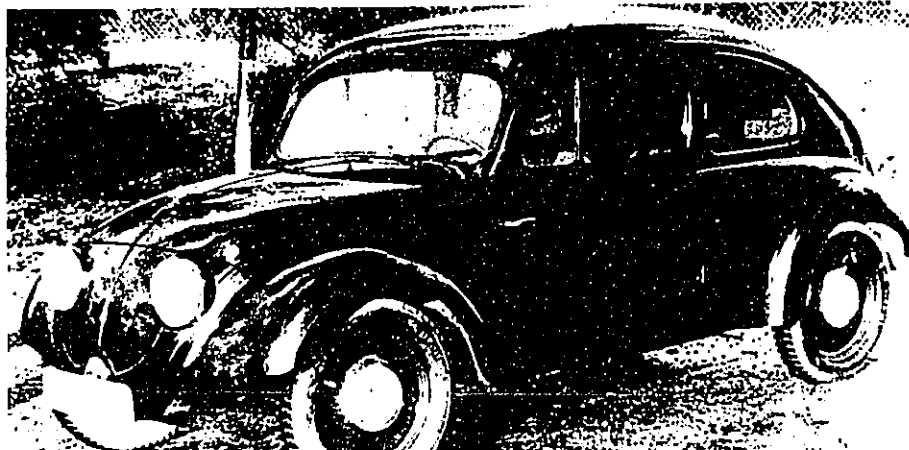
# Volkswagen Beetle marks 50th year

The Volkswagen Beetle was 50 years old in October. The Beetle became one of the world's most popular cars and helped shape the history of auto manufacturing.

In the United States, the Beetle introduced millions of Americans to German technology, quality and durability while firmly establishing the small car as a mainstay of the American automobile industry. It became the transportation, hobby and pet of more people than any other car in history.

The Beetle would spawn a whole folklore about its feats of endurance. It would be driven in ever corner of the earth from the Australian outback to the South Pole and even float 10 miles across the English Channel. A pilot for Continental Airlines would fly a light plane powered by a VW engine across the ocean and back. A composer would write "Concerto for Yellow Volkswagen and Orchestra." Children would be named so their initials would be "VW" and Walt Disney would immortalize a Beetle named "Herbie" in a series of box office hits, firmly establishing the Beetle as the world's best-loved car.

IT WOULD inspire what creative directors, art directors and copywriters across the country voted one "the most significant and successful advertising campaigns since World War II." Beetle advertising by Doyle Dane Bernbach won nearly every award the advertising industry offered. It did the unthinkable in terms of traditional automobile advertising and told consumers straight out that the Beetle was ugly, small, never changed its exterior and was very economical to buy and maintain. It was simply a machine that got you from A to B, cheaply



The 1935 prototype for the famous Volkswagen Beetle. The car's exterior changed little over 50 years of production.

and, above all, honestly.

While other car ads were heavy on superlatives, the headlines in Beetle ads urged drivers to "think small" (a revolutionary idea); trumpeted in modest, "a \$1.02 a pound"; and asked the rhetorical question, "Do you think the Volkswagen is tiny?" They stated, "We change the Volkswagen only to improve it, not to make last year's model obsolete." VW ads reflected the Beetle itself: honest, humble,

timeless, basic, substantial.

The origin of the Beetle dates back to Jan. 17, 1934, when Professor Ferdinand Porsche submitted a paper titled "Concerning the Manufacture of a German People's Car" to the German government. This paper delineated the most important technical details of his concept for a high-standard, reliable, easy to operate and comparatively lightweight utility vehicle. Preparations for construction of the first

prototypes went ahead in the same year. Starting in 1935, a variety of experimental and pre-production cars covered millions of miles as part of an arduous testing program. This was the birth of the Beetle as we know it today.

Over the years, the Beetle found its way to more than 140 countries around the world and secured an impressive market share of many of them. For generations, the age of motoring itself began with the affordable Beetle.

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