

## The Volkswagen plant is converted from a Nazi armaments factory into a civilian vehicle plant

Liberation and reconstruction 1945 – 1949

10. April 1945 The last 50 *Kübelwagen* (Type 82) are completed at the Volkswagen plant. During the Second World War, 66,285 vehicles were produced, mainly *Schwimmwagen* and *Kübelwagen* for the German forces, as well as 630 "KdF"-cars, the "Volkswagen" designed by Ferdinand Porsche.
11. April 1945 US troops liberate the Volkswagen plant and the "Stadt des KdF-Wagens" on the Mittellandkanal. The troops meet no military resistance and advance to the east towards Salzwedel and the River Elbe.  
  
About 7,700 forced laborers are liberated at the Volkswagen plant.
15. April 1945 US troops remaining in Fallersleben occupy the Volkswagen plant and the city at the request of plant representatives and liberated forced laborers
- Early May 1945 The assembly of the "Volkswagen Jeep" (*Kübelwagen*) for the American and later British forces of occupation starts.
- In May, 1945 The Americans appoint Rudolf Brörmann, formerly inspection manager, as plant manager.  
  
The US military establishes democratic structures in the "Stadt des KdF-Wagens", installing a *Magistrat* (municipal administration) and a *Stadtverordnetenversammlung* (city council). The city becomes a collecting point for the later repatriation of all displaced persons in the rural district of Gifhorn.
- May 25, 1945 The City Council resolves to rename the city "Wolfsburg".
- June 5, 1945 The British reach their zone of occupation. The British Military Government takes over Volkswagenwerk GmbH as a trustee and appoints a Works Council.
- August 22, 1945 The British Military Government commissions the Volkswagen plant to produce 20,000 Beetles, Major Ivan Hirst is the officer responsible for the plant.
- November 27, 1945 Inaugural meeting of the first Works Council to emerge from democratic elections.
- December 27, 1945 Series production of the Beetle starts.
- March 30, 1946 For the first time, 1,000 vehicles are produced in a month.
- January 1, 1948 Heinrich Nordhoff takes up his post as CEO.
- May 23, 1949 The Federal Republic of Germany is founded by the promulgation of the Basic Law (Constitution).
- July 29, 1948 The registered office of Volkswagenwerk GmbH is relocated from Berlin to Wolfsburg.
- October 8, 1949 Official transfer of Volkswagenwerk GmbH to the trusteeship of the federal government, which delegates responsibility for administration functions to the State of Lower Saxony.