
Introduction

This website has been put together to help those KFers out there who have decided to collect Kaiser-Frazer Literature. Along the way a very informative insight into the battle Kaiser-Frazer waged on the Detroit Automobile establishment will be documented. Timing is everything.

Henry Kaiser had a passion for building, not just automobiles but loads of other things. He formed scores of companies during his lifetime to follow his enthusiasms in steel, chemicals, cement, aluminum, construction, electronics, aviation, and more.

If there is a single story that sums up the spirit of Henry Kaiser in the early years, it is how he got his first construction job in Northern California. One of HJK's lieutenants, A. B. Ordway had heard about a major road job coming up for bid in Redding. Ordway and The Boss were already on the way to submit a bid when they discovered that their train didn't stop in Redding. Kaiser's singleness of purpose made the next decision for him. ... they went up to the middle of the train where there wasn't any brakeman and opened the vestibule to jump off. Ordway used to do a little hoboing in his time and was pretty good at hopping off moving cars, but Henry was a little heavy and they both had suitcases. ... Henry decided to grab his suitcase and jump. He let go near the little Cottonwood station house and tumbled, head over heels, skidding headfirst into a pile of railroad ties. ... The station master came out just as they got to their feet and were examining their skinned hands and legs. 'You damn fools,' he said. and of course he was right. They lost a little skin and ruined their suits but they did get the job at \$527,000, the biggest one up until then, and Kaiser's Companies have been in California ever since.

For well over a generation, Henry J. Kaiser was a household name. He was one of the best known and most admired men in the world. His friend, Franklin Roosevelt, considered him for his running mate in the 1944 presidential election. Kaiser earned his greatest fame during the Second World War building ships that supplied Allied armies fighting a global war.

Before World War II, Henry J Kaiser by utilizing a management style which stressed good pay, health-care, child-care and fairness for workers never encountered labor problems and/or labor unions like those in the automobile industry. Kaiser was able to bring his contracts in under budget and earlier than deadline.

In 1945, Kaiser partnered with veteran automobile executive Joseph Frazer to establish a new automobile company from the remnants of Graham-Paige, of which Frazer had been president. It would use a surplus Ford Motor Company defense plant at Willow Run, Michigan, originally built for World War II aircraft production by Ford. Kaiser Motors produced cars under the Kaiser and Frazer names until 1955, when it abandoned the U.S. market and moved production to plants in Brazil and Argentina. In the late 1960s, these South American operations were sold to a Ford-Renault combine. In 1953, Kaiser purchased Willys-Overland, manufacturer of the Jeep line of utility vehicles, changing its name to Willys Motors. In 1963, the name was changed again to Kaiser-Jeep, which was ultimately sold to American Motors Corporation in 1970, when Kaiser decided to leave the auto business entirely.

The K-F Literature 1943 to present is the focus of this website. One of Kaiser's many slogans was "Find a Need and Fill it." As you page through this website do look for the needs Kaiser was attempting to fill.
