

# MODERN MOTOR COMPLEX

## PUBLIC INVITED TO INSPECT \$400,000 BLOCK

L. H. Johnson Motors will be "at home" to the motoring public of Taranaki this Friday and Saturday at the firm's new 21-acre complex in New Plymouth.



## Head of the firm

The \$400,000 car sales and servicing block bounded by Gill, Davidson and Moleworth Streets, came into operation on March 7 and boasts the most up to date aids for maximum efficiency.

To show the people of Taranaki what is now available to service their cars, the company is inviting public inspection all day Friday and on Saturday morning.

Long term plans involve the shifting of all the company's operations from the Devon St showrooms to the new site and to a five-acre block of industrial land at Bell Block.

For more than 12 years the general manager of Johnson Motors has been Mr Lionel G. Dickey.

He joined the firm in 1931, starting in the workshop office. When, four years later, it was considered advisable to have someone with a practical knowledge of mechanics in charge of the workshop, Mr F. Fozzore was appointed services manager, and Mr Dickey joined the main office as assistant accountant to Mr Roy Fairley.

He had a brief time away from the firm, but returned in 1937 as car reconditioning manager, a post he held at

the time of joining the New Zealand forces in 1940.

He served on the staff of the late Brigadier H. K. Kippenberger, earning mention in despatches and the MBE.

He returned to New Zealand in 1945 as a captain and to his company as an accountant.

In 1958 he was appointed secretary of the company with the division of duties between him and Mr Fairley to be reviewed when Mr Fairley returned from an overseas trip. The general manager's retirement was scheduled for March 1962 when Mr Dickey would succeed him.

The death of Mr Fairley on holiday, however, resulted in Mr Dickey's appointment as general manager on August 1, 1959, with the approval of General Motors (NZ) Ltd. The next year he handed over the secretaryship to Mr B. J. McCarthy.

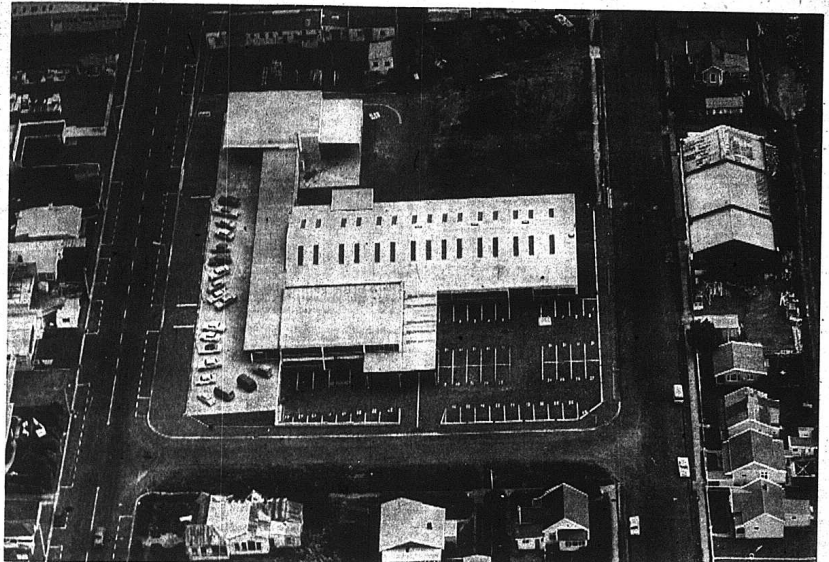
Mr Dickey is chairman of both the holding company and Johnson Motors Finance Company.



General manager, Mr Lionel Dickey.

### Measuring up

The areas of each section of L. H. Johnson's new complex are: workshop 13,408 sq. ft.; pit area 1628 sq. ft.; parts department 7200 sq. ft.; reception parts and office area 1775 sq. ft.; basement 10,718 sq. ft.; administration floor 850 sq. ft.; used car display 13,254 sq. ft.; service station 3400 sq. ft.; tyre centre 1625 sq. ft.; cypress room 120 sq. ft.



THE NEW 21-acre complex for L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd. The main entrance is from Davidson St, foreground, leading to the reception and service areas. From Gill St, left, customers can approach the used car sales department and a service station. A right-of-way from Gill St leads to the tyre centre of the complex. The vacant area to the top and middle of the photograph will eventually be the site of a paint and panel beating shop. A further entrance to the complex is from Moleworth St, right.

## PRIDE IN FIRM'S PROGRESS

On the occasion of L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd's 50th anniversary, the general manager, Mr Lionel Dickey, wrote:

Just as tradition assists the promotion of the moral fibre of a nation and ancestry pride in family life, so does the development and

growth of any trading organisation over a period of 50 years promote an atmosphere among its employees and customers.

Long-serving employees are proud of their contribution to the development, customers and other trading bodies of long

standing are proud of their association. It is this atmosphere of continued loyalty and support which are the foundations from which L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd has drawn its strength and vigour for the past 50 years and on which it will rely for future progress.

### RESCUE

From a small sales and vehicle repair operation commenced by Laurie Johnson in partnership with Len Thomas in 1919, the company of L. H. Johnson was subsequently formed in 1929.

Since then it has developed into one of the major sales and servicing organisations in the Province of Taranaki.

wreck back to New Plymouth.

An oil leak in the truck developed on the way. It was the time of the depression and the two men did not have much spare cash. After using it up on buying oil on several occasions, they finally had to reverse the position of the two vehicles, at the Meeting-of-the-Waters, and the damaged car pulled the breakdown truck home.

1919—EXPANDING WITH NEW PLYMOUTH—1972

# L.H. JOHNSON MOTORS Ltd.

NEW PLYMOUTH

WE PROUDLY ANNOUNCE THE OPENING OF OUR GILL STREET SALES & SERVICE CENTRE



Now we have for your convenience a complete motoring service centre under the one roof with easy access and customer off-street parking. Drive in for service, Drive out with satisfaction.

Your car will benefit from our most modern servicing equipment and the techniques we employ. Our factory-trained staff will provide courteous and efficient service at moderate cost.

- ★ CAR & LIGHT COMMERCIAL WORKSHOP
- ★ 'MILEMASTER' TYRE CENTRE
- ★ PARTS & ACCESSORIES
- ★ 'O.K.' USED CARS
- ★ PETROL AND CAR VALET

We cater for ALL your servicing requirements - Car and truck mechanical repairs, panel beating, painting, petrol and lubrication, trim repairs, 'Milemaster' recaps and new tyres.

Following our amalgamation with TASMAN MOTORS LTD. (Holden dealers for the past 18 years), we are now the New Plymouth franchise holders for new HOLDEN and VAUXHALL cars and BEDFORD vans and trucks. These will continue to be sold from our DEVON ST. SHOWROOMS.



# Confidence in Taranaki

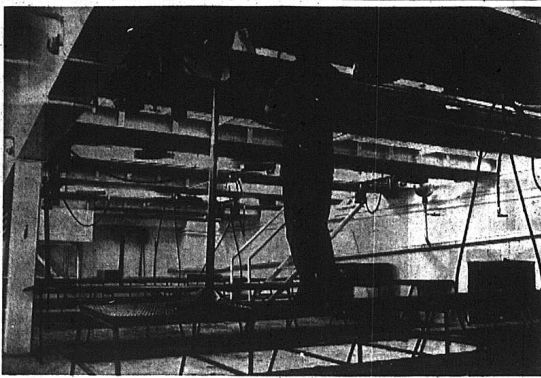
If L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd had a coat of arms, the motto would almost certainly be "expanding with Taranaki."

The latest development is further evidence of the directors' confidence in the future development and expansion of the province. The move is in keeping with the pattern of progress set by the firm's co-founder, Mr. Lamin Johnson, many years ago. The Gill St-McIntosh premises are a far cry from the first premises rented by Mr. Johnson and his partner, Mr. Len Thomas, in 1918. They settled for a wooden building in Devon St East, formerly used as the temporary headquarters of a building and valuing business and before that as a coachbuilding workshop. The building was bounded by vacant land on the Devon St-Cover St corner, a right-of-way running east from Gover St, and a fire-bell and Ross Brothers' plumbing shop (now at the site of the State Theatre) on the east. The remains of the substantial, walls-in concrete pedestal of the fire bell can still be seen in the basement of Johnson Motors' present building. The pedestal offered an unlooked-for advantage to

the firm in its early years when primitive conditions were the order of the day. A hole was cut in the thick concrete wall of the bell structure, enabling as many as 600 cases of petrol to be stored inside. At that time petrol was delivered in barrels that with two lines is a case. Former stables under the coachbuilders' became a basement garage workshop. The cars which arrived by rail in cases up until 1908, were assembled on the vacant section, part of which later became a scrap-yard for trade-ins. Some very old wrecks were included among these and made a treasury of spare parts.

**Footlarky**  
Many people thought the pair-footlarky in attempting to start a motor business in a strange town which had four busy livery stables and at a time when no motorcar was still offered. But their perspicacity has been well-rewarded. The partnership dissolved in 1916 with Mr. Johnson concentrating on his interest in selling vehicles and Mr. Thomas concentrating on fitting them and on engineering generally. Mr. Johnson retained the selling floor of the building, leasing the rest to P. E. Stainion and Co. Ltd. which dealt with trucks, motorcycles and parts. In 1923 more space was needed, so a new building was erected — put up around the old building to save disrupting business. In 1929 the company of L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd was formed and incorporated, and the premises were rented by it from Mr. Johnson.

**Depression**  
The worldwide depression of the 1930s had a telling effect on business but did not bring the company's development to a halt. Vehicle painting was begun in a small way in 1932 in addition to general mechanical repair work and panel-beating handed in the servicing department. This painting work was expanded considerably a year or so later and in 1934 — as the depression began to lift — the parts department was expanded. At the same time Mr



THIS TYPE of pit is unique in Taranaki. It is reached easily from the main workshop area by the stairs, centre, and has room for five mechanics to work on separate cars. A special extractor fan system takes away the exhaust fumes. Here a mechanic investigates a problem under a car.

Johnson bought a petrol station from P. E. Stainion and Co. on the Devon St-Cover St corner and extended it to provide workshop facilities. The sales services, parts, petrol and panel-beating departments were transferred to the building while the painting department remained in a building east of the present State Theatre. The building had been bought by Mr. Johnson in 1927 and was purchased

from him by the company in 1937. The paint shop was built behind it about a year later. The firm weathered the difficult period during World War II and in 1944 bought the Gover St property on which the panel-beating operations were transferred. **Retreading**  
Six years later Harris and Burnand's retreading business was bought and continued in Gover St under the trade name "Millmaster". In the three years before this land fronting Gill St behind and east of the paint shop had been bought by the firm as a site for a new workshop and lubrication and parts department. Plans were drawn up in 1950 and work began the next year. The new building was occupied in February 1957, allowing the corner building to be modernised into the present showrooms. The land for the new complex was acquired between 1959 and 1966.

**BRAKES:** When four-wheel braking was generally adopted in the mid-1920s, the footbrake usually operated on all four wheels, while the handbrake worked a transmission brake, or the rear-wheel brakes only. Linkage was by cables or rods.



The 12,000 sq. ft. workshop area at Johnson Motors allows a motorist to be serviced at once, the mechanics working in individual bays. The bay in the foreground at left has special tilting equipment for cleaning parts.

**CIVIL & CIVIC**  
PTY. LIMITED

## Design and Construction for Industry in New Zealand

- ★ SITE SELECTION
- ★ PLANNING
- ★ DESIGN
- ★ CONSTRUCTION
- ★ PLANT INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING

The L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD. project is yet another example of the application of Civil and Civic's project management services.

We extend our appreciation to all Sub-contractors and Merchants for their effort and performance in assisting in the successful completion of this project.

WE WISH L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD. EVERY SUCCESS FOR THE FUTURE.

# CIVIL AND CIVIC PTY. LTD.

Cumberland House, Willis Street, Wellington, and Queen Street, Auckland.

**JOHN BURNS**  
THE HARDWARE CENTRE

# AGAIN

Once again John Burns Ltd was entrusted with the provision of the architectural hardware for a major new building —

L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.

We can supply YOUR hardware needs for a new factory, business premises or new home.

WE ARE SPECIALISTS IN ANTIQUE AND COLONIAL HARDWARE ALSO.

## Merger of JOHN BURNS Ltd.

YOUR HARDWARE CENTRE  
Devon Street East New Plymouth

# Look for the paw prints...

Because when  
**L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.**  
moved into their superb new premises the Lucas Lion moved with them. But then, they've been together for over 40 years. Giving Taranaki motorists the very best service going. You'll find the full Lucas range available: Lucas electrical equipment and accessories; revolutionary new Lucas Pacasetter battery; Girling and Lockheed brakes; Girling shock absorbers; Zenith, Solex and Stromberg carburetors and parts. World-famous Lucas efficiency... another reason for seeing L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd.

# LUCAS

**JOSEPH LUCAS (N.Z.) LTD.**  
221 Devon Street East. Phone 5456

## 21 YEARS WITH FIRM

Mr. Eric Rydon, parts manager for L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd, has worked for the firm for a total of 21 or 22 years.

Born in New Plymouth, Mr. Rydon attended the West End School and the New Plymouth Boys' High School. He worked for the then Dominion Motors Ltd for a short while before spending four years on the staff of Johnson's.

After three years working for two other firms he returned to Johnson's in his present capacity as parts manager.

Mr. Rydon's main interests are golf, squash and tennis.

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- DEPRECIATION
- MAINTENANCE

FOR YOUR PROTECTION Nebulite Aluminium Joinery is fully advanced, Workfield Laboratory tested and State Standards approved.

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REMEMBER — your initial cost is virtually your only cost with Aluminium Joinery. Call us. AVAILABLE FOR EARLY DELIVERY at —

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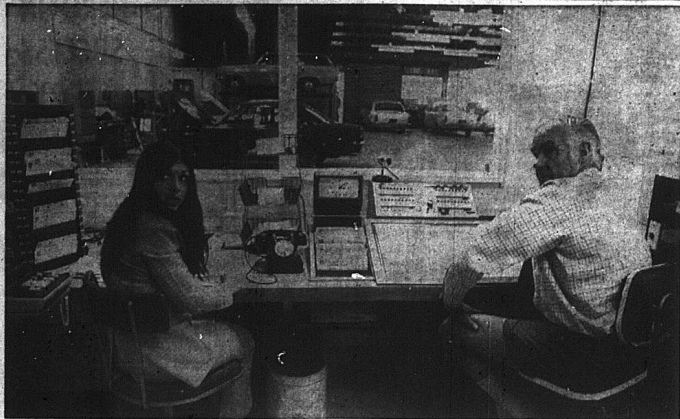
**NEBULITE WINDOWS**

in the

OFFICE AREA  
WORKSHOP AREA  
PARTS DEPT.

Parts manager, Mr. E. Rydon.

**JONES & SANDFORD Ltd.**  
JOINERY MANUFACTURERS, TIMBER MERCHANTS, BUILDING CONTRACTORS  
South Road, New Plymouth, Phone 5425



FROM THIS CONTROL OFFICE, instructions are relayed to mechanics throughout the workshop. The controller feeds out more work as each job is completed, allowing the firm to make the most efficient use possible of the skilled labour it employs.

We are proud to have been associated with L. H. Johnson Motors new complex. We are experts at—

**STRUCTURAL STEEL FABRICATION  
TURNING — MILLING — WELDING**  
ETC Also CRANES FOR HIRE

**TOLEDO**  
**ENGINEERING**  
Smart Road. — Phone 84308 N.P.

A big advertiser is a little advertiser who kept on advertising.

Modern buildings such as—



**L. H. JOHNSON  
MOTORS LIMITED**

are keeping pace with the growth of Taranaki.

ALL —

- ★ EARTHWORK
- ★ DRAINAGE
- ★ METALLING

carried out by—

**DAAMEN BUTLER LTD.**

In association with

**NEW PLYMOUTH DRAINAGE CO.**

10A BREAKWATER RD. — PHONE 88910 N.P.

and in co-operation with CIVIL & CIVIC PTY. LTD.

**HAVE YOUR BRAKES TESTED  
WHILE YOU WAIT!**

L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.  
have installed the most modern brake testing equipment available

- ★ TEST BRAKE EFFICIENCY
- ★ FADE
- ★ SNATCH
- ★ GRAB

AND MOST IMPORTANT, YOUR BRAKING BALANCE BETWEEN FRONT-REAR WHEELS

CONGRATULATIONS on the opening of your new premises, from Motor Specialties Limited.



P.O. BOX 148

NEW PLYMOUTH.

## New concept in servicing

A new concept in car servicing is being ushered in with the introduction throughout New Zealand of workshop complexes such as L. H. Johnson Motors' new premises.

Electronic aids enable garages to work super-efficiently and at increased convenience to the customer.

L. H. Johnson's new premises are no exception. Included in the servicing facilities is a pit set-up unique to Taranaki.

Just how the new complex operates and the difference it will make for you can be shown by tracing a vehicle's progress when it is left for repairs.

The entry to the workshop is from Davidson St.

At the reception area, details of the repairs necessary or of the trouble experienced are noted and referred to a controller. This man, working in a glass-paned office giving him a commanding view of the entire 12,000 sq ft workshop, controls the whole floor, his clocks the mechanics in and out and relays instructions to them by intercom.

The office is adjacent to a parts centre. Here the details taken at reception are considered, and the parts likely to be needed are obtained from the parts store ready for the mechanic's use.

Each mechanic has a work bay equipped with basic tools and an intercom through which he receives his instructions throughout the day.

A special envelope containing the controller's instructions and a copy of the owner's details is placed on each car and then referred to the mechanic. The controller keeps a close eye on overall progress in the workshop, and supplies fresh work to each mechanic as a job is completed.

This enables the firm to make maximum use of the skilled labour available.

The service area has 22 work bays and six quick-service bays supervised by four foremen.

The pit area is 1622 sq ft in size and allows five cars to be serviced at once. Mechanics can move freely from car to car in the pit area which is based on a one in Auckland, based in turn on a Sydney design.

A simple step up beneath each car takes the mechanic to a comfortable working level while allowing plenty of headroom for tall men. Trays, fixed within easy reach, hold tools temporarily not in use.

plenty of light is available and a special system takes out exhaust fumes to give the best pit working conditions possible.

Specialised equipment for all aspects of repair work is kept in certain areas throughout the workshop, handy to each group of workers.

In the north-west corner of the workshop is a specially-built dust-free room where repair work on automatic transmissions can be carried out.

Electronic equipment available includes wheel balance and alignment computers and Crypton triangle brake-testing rollers. This last piece of equipment, which takes pressure readings on each wheel, is an innovation for the industry and eliminates the need to road-test cars for braking ability.

The workshop's design stresses the value of ventilation and light to efficient working. Extractor fans in the roof take care of the first requirement while large areas of glass provide the latter.

The whole complex is heated by natural gas. When the repairs are completed, the client's car is left in one of the numbered parking areas. The keys are then left on a board in the reception area, leaving the owner's name and the space occupied by his car.

A customer lounge near the parts counter offers a quiet, comfortable spot to wait.

Traditional cross-ply cords run diagonally.

Radial tyres have very supple side-walls and powerful bracing layers beneath the tread. This gives a flatter profile when inflated and thus an increased tyre-road surface contact area.

Therefore radial tyres give a better grip when cornering and braking than the less expensive cross-ply tyres. Radial tyres last longer, too.

AA: The Automobile Association (which later incorporated the Motor Union) was founded in 1892 for the protection of motorists and to provide road patrols to warn car drivers against police traps, which were then the bane of motoring.



A COMPREHENSIVE filing system places records of the company's transactions at the office workers' fingertips. This airy office is typical of those in the new complex.

wait. A telephone is provided for the client's convenience and men and women's toilets are available nearby.

A short flight of stairs takes the customer to the G11 St level of the complex where a queue of used cars is ranged for inspection. Here too are the valet and car washing services and the service station.

The staff cafeteria is on this level and the administration offices will eventually be added here too. Solar-bronze windows eliminate the need for curtains in this office block.

**Tyre centre**  
Drivers can approach the tyre centre, which is at the back of the station and service departments, from either the Gill or Moewhorst entrances.

The rear of the parts store opens out to this area with a 20 ft by 8 ft door capable of taking containers if the company should require these in the future.

A 10718 sq ft basement area provides storage for 50 to 60 used and new cars. The basement is automatically shut off from the rest of the complex by a double door in the event of a fire.

Venture in household appliances

Sales of household and commercial refrigerators and other household appliances were once controlled by the management of Johnsons for 12 years.

When Mr E. B. Paterson joined the armed forces in 1942 he asked Mr L. H. Johnson to look after his company, Bennis Paterson Ltd, which had the franchise for Frigidaire products in Taranaki.

Mr Paterson formed a new company with Johnsons, and the franchise was transferred to the Johnson-Paterson Refrigeration Company.

After Mr Johnson's death the company was sold to Newton King Ltd.

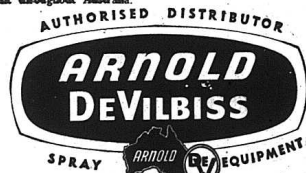
Congratulations L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS  
We supply all Automotive Spray Painting Requirements and Equipment including:



For the finest finish on any surface

**ARNOLD-DeVILBISS  
JGA SPRAY GUN**

Hard-wearing, precision-built JGA all-purpose Spray Gun will provide the highest quality finish on all surfaces with any type of material. All wear points are reinforced, extra capacity air and fluid passages, and there is a wide range of interchangeable caps and fluid tips. From leading suppliers of Spray Equipment throughout Australia.



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ARNOLD DeVILBISS EQUIPMENT

**Fitzroy Colour House**  
THE ARCADE — FITZROY, N.P. — PHONE 85872, N.P.



THEY HAVE CHOSEN the long term benefits of —

**DIMONDEK**

**LONGRUN ROOFING and  
CANTERBURY PRICKLES on roofing  
and fascia**

MR BUSINESSMAN, and FACTORY OWNER

Follow the example of L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS and choose the longlasting qualities of DIMONDEK for your premises. We have a large, well-trained staff available to fulfill your requirements.

**ASHMANS ROOFING**

**SERVICES LTD.**

CONSTANCE STREET

FITZROY

PHONE 83767, N.P.

**PLESSEY**

**WORKSHOP CONTROL SYSTEM  
& PAGING EQUIPMENT**

Supplied, installed and serviced by —

**BARLOWS Radio Telephone  
Service Ltd.**

COMMUNICATIONS & ELECTRONIC ENGINEERS  
265 ST. AUBYN STREET, N.P.

We also supplied the

**HARDIES SUPER SIX ROOFING** for the Service Department  
**STIPPLECOTE HUSH ACOUSTIC FINISH** for the Parts Department

# Electricity makes a building

# Spectacular

The simple act of switching on transforms a concrete complex into a place of business. Petrol pumps are powered for service, sales lines are floodlit for display. Workshops can go to it with lights, test equipment and power tools; while offices are lit and heated for efficiency.

All these things will function faultlessly thanks to our wiring as **ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS** — a top-quality and inconspicuous installation of which we are justly proud.

**LIGHT FITTINGS** too are our business for commercial and domestic purposes.

Discuss your requirements with the

## NEW PLYMOUTH CITY ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT

Liardet St. New Plymouth Phone 87689



**JOHNSON MOTORS LTD'S new parts store.** Covering an area of 7800 sq ft, this department not only services the general public's requirement, but is closely linked to the service workshop. Parts likely to be used in repairs are selected before the mechanic receives his instructions. At the back there is plenty of storage room and the area may become a warehouse for all the parts required by Johnsons and its subsidiaries.

## When U.S. car prices skyrocketed 'Pioneer staff'

The World Depression in the 1930s had some unusual repercussions in the motor trading industry. Not only were fewer people able to buy cars, but the price of American models skyrocketed with the dramatic increase in value of the United States dollar. This led to a "Buy British" campaign which looked likely to embarrass Johnson Motors, the agency for Chevrolats. On one occasion Mr Ivan Parker from Johnsons was almost tied up a sale involving a VX Vauxhall, commonly known as the "Bickford Saloon" — an all-British vehicle. However, the Ford man visited the potential purchasers to show them the latest models received, he said. Mr Parker saved the day for Johnsons when he got an assurance from the buyers that they would complete the Vauxhall deal if he could prove the Ford was not British.

Several hours of research later, he produced the necessary proof: showing that the New Zealand importers of the model came from Canada. The Vauxhall was bought.

In 1931 Mr Parker read of Henry Ford's more economical method of casting the V8 crankshaft. The new "cast iron" crankshaft performed very well under test, but as a precaution, each motor fitted with the new

The "pioneer staff" associated with L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd in its formative years were:

New Plymouth: Administration, Laurie Johnson, Roy Fairley, Harry Falk, Stewart Stack, Ira Glennie, Tina Lister, Mary K. Roberts, Laurel Dickey, Arthur Carter, Jean Daly, Jack Spedding, Bill Grace, Sybil Courtney, John Warner, Norman Johnson, sales, Peter Glennie, Jim Mortlock, George Bradbury, Geoff Whitcombe, Lance Freshley, Ken Blackley, Claude Grayling, Ted Towling, Clive Perry, Ivan Parker, Les Banks, Ken Holdaway, J. G. Robertson, Arthur Scott, Bob Hatcher, Geo. Tallis, Peter Houlahan, Jack Whittle, mechanical and servicing, Len Thomas, Bill and Ern Cubbon, Fred Schultz.



Definition: One definition of a motor-car: A carriage propelled by a power 2000 times human or animal muscles.

**ALL AIR COMPRESSORS** in the new **L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS** garage complex

Expertly installed by —

## E. MARTIN

FITTING CONTRACTOR  
24 PARITUTU ROAD, NEW PLYMOUTH

a toast from Castrol

to

## L.H. Johnson Motors Ltd.

on the opening of their fine new premises.

HOLDEN, BEDFORD, VAUXHALL.

### USED CAR SALES MANAGER

Mr Baden Jury, used car sales manager for both L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd and Tasman Motors Ltd, was born in Inglewood.

He attended the Urenui Primary School and the Waitara High School before spending eight years as a heavy transport driver for a Waitara carrier.

Mr Jury worked for 2½ to three years as a farm manager before joining the staff of Tasman Motors Ltd as a salesman.

Last year he was appointed to his present position as used car sales manager for Tasman Motors Ltd and L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd.

Mr Jury is an enthusiastic member of the New Plymouth Aero Club. He is also a member of the New Plymouth YMCA and a member of the council of the North Taranaki Kindergarten Association.



Used car sales manager, Mr B. Jury.

### Receptionist

Mr Kevin Boyer, receptionist for L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd, joined the firm as an apprentice in 1957. Born in New Plymouth, Mr Boyer joined the firm immediately upon leaving St Joseph's school. He served overseas in the Army for four years during World War II and upon his return rejoined L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd.

He was appointed receptionist about three years ago.

Mr Boyer's main interests are surfing and white-baiting.

## An Invitation TO ALL MOTORISTS

On the occasion of the opening of our new Sales and Service Centre in Gill Street, New Plymouth, we extend to all motorists and their families a cordial invitation to inspect our premises on—

**FRIDAY, 28th APRIL, 1972**  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**SATURDAY, 29th APRIL, 1972**  
9 a.m. to 12 noon

Continuous morning and afternoon teas will be provided

## L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.

LMVD.  
GILL STREET, NEW PLYMOUTH

## HERO IN SUCCESS STORY

One of the backstage heroes in the L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd success story was Mr F. R. (Roy) Fairley who joined the firm in 1926 as an accountant.

That same year he became secretary and a director when the company became incorporated. He looked after the company's finances through the tortuous times of the world depression.

In 1945 he took on the additional responsibilities of general manager, a position he held 14 years until his and his wife's tragic deaths in a hotel fire in Norway in 1959.

Born and educated in Nelson, he came to Taranaki when his father moved his bakery business to Okatawa. He joined the Post Office, working in Stratford, and then began to study accountancy. His first position was accountant to Masters Ltd, Stratford, and then in New Plymouth, before going to Johnson Motors.

He was a former president of the New Zealand Tyre Retreaders' Association, a member of the New Plymouth Chamber of Commerce Council and a director of the New Plymouth Young Men's Christian Association.

# Congratulations

TO L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.

It is appropriate that in our 50th YEAR OF ASSOCIATION we congratulate L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd on their enterprise and success. We are proud of our continuing association with them. The same long-term satisfaction and service in Insurance is available to you. For all Insurance consult -

## N.Z.I GROUP

FIRE, MARINE, MOTOR VEHICLE, ACCIDENT, LIFE, TRUST



JOHNSON MOTORS LTD'S used car sales department fronts Gill St. This part of the building is on a higher level than the parts, service and reception departments and stairs at right in the block take the customer to these areas.

# WHAT'S NEW

IN OFFICE EQUIPMENT & FURNITURE

can be seen to advantage in L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS NEW PREMISES

We are pleased to have supplied their full requirements in-

★ SIMPLEX TIME SYSTEMS & CLOCKS

★ OFFICE DESKS & EXECUTIVE CHAIRS

★ CANTEEN CHAIRS

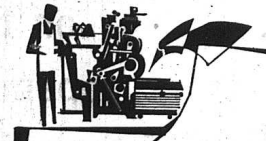
★ STEEL SHELVING throughout the Parts Dept.

We are complete contract office furnishers. Let us quote from our tremendous range.

## BEECHEY & UNDERWOOD

(NEW PLYMOUTH) LIMITED

P.O. BOX 115, 56 CURRIE STREET, NEW PLYMOUTH.



### CONGRATULATIONS

to L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.

The new building of L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd is a signal achievement in the course of over 50 years of good service to the motoring public.

TARANAKI NEWSPAPERS LTD is proud to have fulfilled their considerable commercial printing requirements and carried their advertising in its columns over the years.

CONGRATULATIONS TO L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.

For all high-class commercial printing

BOOKLETS, PROGRAMMES, BUSINESS CARDS, CIRCULARS, LETTER HEADS, INVITATIONS, etc.



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COMMERCIAL PRINTING DEPT.

CURRIE STREET NEW PLYMOUTH PHONE 80559

## Truck duel

A duel between two trucks is still remembered by Johnson Motors' former staff members. Mr. Jack Warnock, recognised as a truck specialist, joined the staff in 1931 and soon had the Egmont County Council converted to Bedford. He was about to sell the council once more when a Dominion Motors salesman heard of this and rushed to Opunake to list the merits of a Morris. The chairman of the council was not unduly impressed by words alone, so the salesman suggested a pulling duel under full load to demonstrate his truck's supposed superiority. Mr. Warnock was unconcerned by the challenge and left the time and place to be decided by the chairman - who was naturally enjoying the situation. He chose a tough Kaimi Rd hill for the contest. Dominion Motors' wonderer. Would Johnson mind if they used a nicely run-in truck? Not at all. The council came up with a further condition. Both trucks were to be driven by county drivers. Interest in the challenge was widespread and when the contest began, it was before a sizable crowd of on-lookers. The Bedford romped up and over the hill, but the Morris was dented by the grade. Dominion Motors sought a re-run, with the truck to be driven by its owner. Johnson had no objection, so the contest was held again. But the result was the same. A jubilant General Motors truck field representative explained the worth of having more torque - a quality he had learnt about on a recent trip to the United States but which was unknown to the local people. As a further demonstration of the truck's superiority, the Bedford's "full floating" rear axle was pulled out while the full load was still on, proving there was no load on the rear axle. This could not be repeated by the Morris which had a "semi-floating axle." It took only a few minutes for the council to hold a roadside meeting and confirm their order for a Bedford.

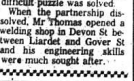
## Magic in his fingers

The late Mr Len Thomas, the other partner in the original company, had magic in his fingers. His engineering ability and inventiveness have become as much a legend as Mr Laurie. Johnson's sales talents.

He was "a natural engineer" who liked nothing more than a tricky problem to solve and his reputation grew to the extent that engineering problems unconnected with motor mechanics came from all parts of the district. He always found a solution.

His colleagues remember some of his feats like knocking a piece of metal with a hammer on some timber and getting it right to within 1/1000th of an inch.

Mr Thomas was praised as being second to none in New Zealand as an engineer by the New Plymouth borough electrical engineer, Mr R. H. Bartley (later engineer to the Auckland Electric Power Board) after a difficult puzzle was solved. When the partnership dissolved, Mr Thomas opened a welding shop in Devon St between Lizard and Cover St and his engineering skills were much sought after.



Vehicles manager, Mr G. Parker.



Mr D. Pascoe, retired foreman.



Progress Laurence Portney summed up progress in motor car design up to World War I in this way: "From 1885 to 1895 man struggled to make the car go. From 1895 to 1905 they contrived to make it go properly. Between 1905 and 1915 they succeeded in making it go beautifully."

## Herald Special Feature

## Pioneers

One of the first motor clubs in the world was the Automobile Club de France, founded in 1885 at the house of Count de Dion on the Quai d'Orsay in Paris. One of its first undertakings was to organise the Paris-Marseilles-Paris race of 1889. In 1897 the pioneer motorist F. R. Simms founded the Automobile Club of Great Britain and Ireland (later the Royal Automobile Club) by engaging a suite of rooms in Whitehall Court in London in his own name and at his own expense at a rent of £400 a year.

## Horses' revenge

Horses never really forgave the motorcar for superseding them and in the early days of motor transport, some animals took sweet revenge.

One horse jumped off the top of a cutting at Okara on a passing car, ending up astraddle the bonnet with its front hooves on the ground and its rump and hind legs through the windscreen.

Not satisfied with damaging the car - which provided the first recovery for Johnson Motors breakdown service - the horse kicked severely the driver and passenger in its efforts to get free.

Another horse found a less daring but equally effective way of retaliation. It was one of two horses offered with a brake as a trade-in on a car.

Mr Johnson held the horse in question by a rope bridle which slipped over its nose and round its neck when it threw up its head.

The horse took off down a road which was hedged on either side with blackberry six to eight feet high. Mr Johnson, still clinging to the rope, was dragged through the thorns.

He was still finding trucks a week later.



Company manager, Mr O. Pearce.

MUSEUM: The first motor museum was opened in Oxford St in London in 1912, sponsored by the proprietors of the magazine "The Motor".

WHEELS: Wooden-spoked wheels with metal hubs and rims were used on the first cars. These were supplanted by metal-spoked, steel disc, and wire-spoked wheels.

## Take a good long LOOK



at Johnson Motors Where it is intended the GLASS YOU CAN SEE THROUGH

We also supplied British Paints They're made to be decorative and serviceable. They're renowned for covering. SOLD BY

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TO L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS on the completion of a fine new motoring centre and a proud record of service.



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GO FOR THE BIG TASTE OF "WESTERN"

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Manufactured and distributed by -

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# Mobil

## Congratulate L. H. Johnson on the opening of a fine new building.

## Mobil Better Petrol, Better Oil Trust it.

Mobil Oil New Zealand Limited

# The man who always came out on top

It is unlikely that the late Mr L. H. Johnson ever foresaw his business reaching its present extent or even imagined the kind of workshop facilities now offered. But one can never be too sure.

His shrewd business sense and foresight are almost legendary, judging by the number of associates his staff and old rivals can tell. He masterminded the company through the difficult years of depression and world war, a time when the founding of businesses was commonplace.

Often his decisions seemed risky or whimsical but hindsight showed they were invariably sound. He always came out on top.

His ability to see a little further ahead than many other businessmen was matched by his shrewdness and a flair for selling.

**Love of cars**  
Mr Johnson's love of cars can be traced back to his school days in Masterton when the odd car was sometimes seen competing for road space with horse-drawn transport.

In 1914, when his father went to the war, Mr Johnson was left to run the family carrying business which was supplemented by a bus connected from an Arrol truck with solid tyres.

He became a familiar figure, driving relatives and friends of his in camp between Maston and Featherston Military Camp on Wednesday evenings and Sundays.

He entered the camp himself in 1916 but only 10 weeks later the armistice was signed. He returned home suffering from influenza and was unable to work for some time.

He then travelled to Napier with Mr Thomas to open a joint motor business

but the place did not suit them. In February 1919 he arrived in New Plymouth with his partner and just £200 in his pocket.

**Biggest decision**  
After the dissolution of the partnership in 1924, Mr Johnson made what he later described as the "biggest decision of my life".

Originally the partnership had dealt in Chevrolet cars as a sub-agency to the Farmers Co-operative Organisation Society of New Zealand.

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Mr Johnson was prepared to take the gamble and signed the form. The order included some GMC trucks known privately as "Big Brutes".

Mr Manthel said he felt quite glibly in wishing them on to him. "But, true to form, he seemed to have no trouble in disposing of them; I hope at a profit because competition was pretty tough in those days. Laurie Johnson was the most aggressive dealer General Motors had. He certainly made the grade."

**Won the loss**  
General Motors won the toss and its finance corporation helped by liquidating the hire purchase debts to Dominion Motors.

By 1926 Johnson Motors had franchises for Cadillac, La Salle, Buick, Oldsmobile, Pontiac, Chevrolet cars and trucks, Vauxhall and Oakland. In 1929 the Marquette franchise was introduced.

In December 1929, the company of L. H. Johnson

**Herald Special Feature**

al Motors to purchase its entire stock of Pontiacs at a discount, deliver to be spread according to demand. In the next years there were virtually no car imports but Johnson was able to continue selling Pontiacs with a satisfactory margin.

**Buy British**  
The jump in value of the US dollar in 1931 saw the selling price of Chevrolet cars drop from the 1930 price of £315 to £435. Imports from the United States suffered.

Mr N. H. Manthel, now managing-director of Manthel Motors Ltd, Wellington, was a fieldman for General Motors in the 1920s and early 1930s and recalls the time Mr Johnson accepted some surplus stock from General Motors.

At the time the company had reached its limit under General Motors' accommodation plan but Mr Manthel was able to get permission to increase Johnson's accommodation considerably.

**Gamble**  
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**Made money**  
"I feel quite sure he made money out of the deal," Mr Wright said.

As the depression lifted in 1934, so did the company's activities. Mr Johnson's foresight and confidence began to bear fruit.

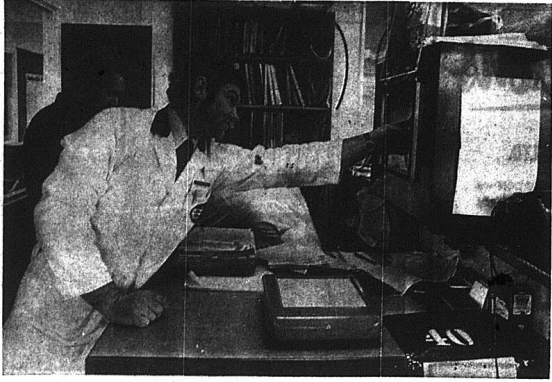
In 1938, peak sales of 999 cars and one motorcycle in Taranaki were recorded.

World War II brought another set of difficulties. Skilled staff was depleted by the demands of the armed services and the industry was inhibited by central rationing.

**Picking up**  
By 1948, however, things were picking up again. Mr Johnson decided to form separate companies from the branches at Stratford and Hawera and established Tasman Motors Ltd in New Plymouth.

But suddenly, in February 1953, he died.

In 1952 it was decided to form a holding company, Johnson Consolidated Ltd, to control the four companies and give greater strength and stability to the group which owes its existence to the business acumen of Mr Johnson and the loyalty of his staff during hard times.



MR LINDSAY McCABE sends repair details by chute to the service workshop from the reception area. Customers' requirements are noted here and referred to a workshop controller for assignment to a mechanic.

## Finance

To aid the financing of vehicle stocks, parts and other stock items — always a problem for motor companies — The Johnson

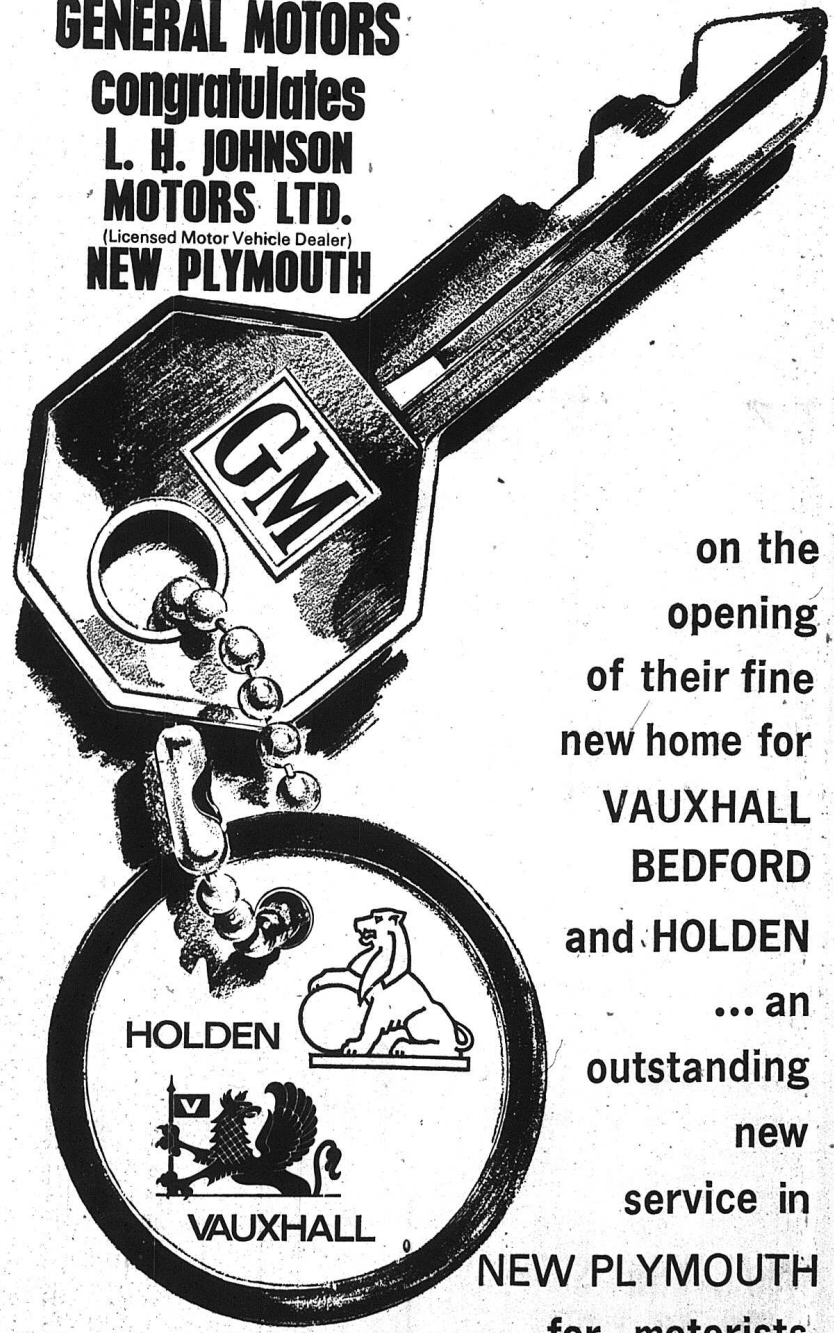
Motors Finance Co. Ltd was formed in 1960. The executive members of the firm were shareholders.

Previously financial aid had been given by the General Motors Acceptance Corporation and the Traders Finance Corporation.

The new finance company provided very strong support through the years, financing not only the retail his purchase agreements for cars and trucks sold, but also the purchase of new cars parts and other stocks.

Tyres: Pneumatic tyres were first used on cars by the Michelin brothers in the Paris-Bordeaux-Paris race of 1889. However, the race was won by a solid-tired car, with an average speed of 16 mph.

# GENERAL MOTORS congratulates L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD. (Licensed Motor Vehicle Dealer) NEW PLYMOUTH



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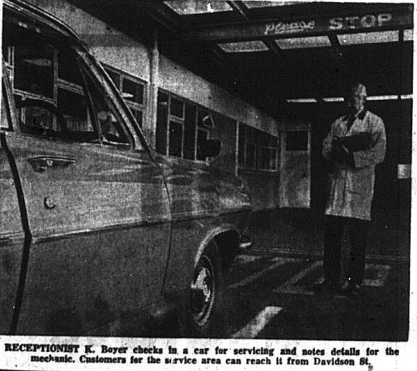
Congratulations to  
**L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS LTD.**  
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The only available type of fire extinguisher that is suitable for A, B and C classes of fires.

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**FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT**  
Ring soon. Later may be too late!



RECEPTIONIST K. Boyer checks in a car for servicing and notes details for the mechanic. Customers for the service area can reach it from Davidson St.

## COMING IN AND MEET AN OLD FRIEND

Old friends of Dunlop — and that's a lot of safety-minded Taranaki motorists — will be pleased to know that our long and happy association with L. H. Johnson Motors will be continued in their splendid new premises.

**CONGRATULATIONS  
L. H. JOHNSON MOTORS**

from  
**DUNLOP**

## WANGANUI RECRUIT

Mr Neville W. Johnson — 30 relation to Laurie — son of L. H. Johnson Motors Ltd 3 1/2 years ago.

Born in Wanganui, he attended the Technical College

there before serving an apprenticeship with the Wanganui and Bedford agency.

His interests include Rugby, rowing and his family.

## Largest European producer

West Germany is the largest producer of cars in Europe. Porsche (1975-1982) had a great influence on car design there. He was responsible for the 19-100 horse power Austro-Daimler and some Mercedes Daimler and some Mercedes of the 1920s. He also produced some Sney and Wanderer models. In the Auto-Union Grand Prix car of the 30s, the Volkswagen and the post-war Porsche. In 1959 Daimler-Benz took over Auto-Union and in 1964 an agreement was reached with Volkswagen.

A number of manufacturers still operate outside this group and include BMW, Opel, American Ford, Porsche and NSU.

In 1966, West Germany produced more than 2,700,000 vehicles, more than 1 million by Volkswagen.

