Bread and butter with plenty of bite!

THE old image of the basic bread and butter car is still very strong in Ford's business-conscious mind.

Following the success of the Popular in the last range of Escorts, Ford decided to maintain this historic name but switch it away from the elegant and upmarket new Escorts.

The name was passed on to the Fiesta range, Ford offering two Popular models aimed at providing well engineered small cars at budget prices.

Out of the two models, Popular and Popular Plus, Ford decided to supply an example of the latter for road test — and what an eye-opener it was!

Although the engine of this front-wheel-drive hatchback has a capacity of only 950 cc it was one of the most lively in its class that has ever passed through my hands. Acceleration in all gears was so snappy that it was difficult to imagine that this car was under 1000 cc.

Indeed, I had to check that the optional 1100 engine had not been fitted to this car. In any event as far as performance was concerned it outshone some hatchbacks of larger engine capacities I have driven over the last couple of years.

The Plus shares all the Fiesta design features and differs from the basic Popular in having carpets, grained fascia, two sunvisors, rear package tray and centre console with clock.

The Fiesta Populars share one feature with the old Escort-based model — black painted bumpers. At the launch of these cars Ford chairman Sam Toye assured me that Popular customers preferred the black finish which in fact is more expensive to supply than the bright-finish associated with more expensive models!

Fiesta Popular Plus from Ford.

Driving topics

Ian Johnson

Less than a minute — that's how long it will take salesmen at local BL specialist James Edwards Ltd., to search the country for a particular car using BL Cars' Viewdata based stock locator system.

Using an ordinary television set, the system is connected via the British Telecoms public telephone system to a mini computer at the headquarters of BL Systems Limited in Redditch. An up to date record of every BL vehicle in stock in the United Kingdom will be kept on this computer.

The system will benefit BL Cars' customers by allowing BL dealers to search the country for a vehicle to the correct specification for a particular customer in a matter of seconds. The customer can sit with the salesman while he finds the correct vehicle.

This ability to supply vehicles quickly and to specification from existing stock will become a more important factor in gaining car sales. Viewdata also allows participants to control their stocks more effectively; an important point with interest rates at their present high levels.

Peter Johnson, director of UK Operations said: "In the first quarter of 1981, BL Cars has significantly increased market share in a declining market. To continue this success it is essential that all concerned take advantage of every possible sales opportunity. Viewdata will help our sales by allowing every participating dealer access to the full stock of BL cars in the UK."

BOWATERS—CANADIAN £46m INVESTMENT TO BRING 450 JOBS

Canadian firm, Consolidated-Bathurst Inc., will invest a total of £46m in the Ellesmere Port paper mill closed by Bowaters last November, and bring around 450 jobs to the area.

The mill, which has been named the Bridgewater Division of the company, will aim to produce 245,000 tonnes of newsprint annually and will come into effective operation in early 1983.

The bosses of the Montreal based concern gathered in Chester on Tuesday to confirm the good news that comes to a region that has suffered only gloom and despondency on the jobs front in recent months.

Executive vice-president of the Pulp and Paper Section, Mr. Oscar Stangeland, told a Grosvenor Hotel Press conference that the support of "many organisations has given us the courage and conviction to proceed with this project."

The plan involves the establishment of a pulp mill in Bathurst, New Brunswick, and the importing of the raw material to Britain where it will be processed into newsprint.

The firm, who intend to carry out major modifications to equipment, already turn out nearly a million tonnes of newsprint and they hope the scheme will permit them to increase their share of the UK market to about 25 per cent.

Mr. Stangeland added that 400 people would be employed at the mill site itself and around 50 extra jobs would result from other work connected with the plant.

The role of the British Government in granting around £6m in Regional Development Aid was cited as a factor in the completion of the deal.

The town's Chief Executive, Mr. Ray Bernie, warmly welcoming the company's decision to take over the mill, commented: "I want to assure you that we will continue to give you all the support we possibly can."

Last autumn's closure, he explained had been "a great blow to the area. We saw it not only as a loss to the established industry of the Borough, but also a strategic loss to the country as a whole."

He praied the firm for their "thorough and far-reaching investigation into the implications of the plan which had been carried out at top speed, and which considered every aspect — not only financial but the effect it would have on the community."

Chester second

Chester, winners of the "Best City in the North West" competition, for 1980, were runners up in the same competition this year.

The competition is run annually by the British Tourist Authority and aims to encourage communities to make their area more attractive for both residents and visitors.

It is split into regional sections, with the North West Tourist Board controlling this area. Eileen Averill, organiser for the region, said "Standards have definitely improved, a great deal of work has been done to make the area more attractive and communities are becoming more involved."

Stockport were the 1981 winners.

DOLL WAS STAR OF THE SALE

AT THE Sotheby Beresford Adams sale of collectors' items at the Duke Street Saleroom, Chester, on 16th July, a Jumeau Bisque Doll realised £1,350, the highest price of the day. The sale totalled £22,925.

A Swiss Nicole Freres bells-in-sight cylinder musical box sold for £1,200, A German symphonion disc musical box made £1,100, and a German polyphon disc musical box made £950.

A good Bing gauge one clockwork locomotive with some trucks and accessories achieved £330, and a Bing gauge one electric tram sold for £270.

A collection of approximately 6,500 cigarette cards, including Morris's "Actresses 1898" and Gallaher's "Lawn Tennis Celebrities" sold for £230, and collection of Railway pictorial postcards, c. 1905, made £110.

One small item which attracted unusual interest was a carved softwood toilet roll holder with a clockwork mechanism playing the "Grand March" from Verdi's Aida, which sold for £60.

Sotheby Beresford Adams' next sale of Collectors' Items will be on Wednesday, 18th November, at the Duke Street saleroom, Chester.

CHESTER FLOWER CLUB

Welcoming members of Chester Flower Club to their meeting in St. Mark's Church Hall, Hough Green, on 15th July, Mrs. Jean Smith, chairman, thanked all who had worked so hard at the recent Chester Flower Festival in the Town Hall, and members endorsed a special vote of thanks to the festival designers, Mrs. Jose Phillipson and Mrs. Diane Fair.

Upton Flower Club and Rural Chester Flower Club had co-operated happily, and although attendances had not reached expectations, those who had attended and been highly complimentary in their appreciation of the clubs' combined efforts.

It was announced that five members of the Chester Club are to take part in decorating Lyme Hall — a project which is being undertaken by the Cheshire Area of nafas — and a coach trip has been organised to the festival there on 11th August. The coach will leave the Odeon at 10 am.

Donations to the Jean Taylor Memorial Fund are to be accepted for the next few months, and it was encouraging to learn that NAFAS has already received £6,000 towards the target of £10,000.

It was with considerable regret that Mrs. Smith informed members that vice-president, Mrs. Molly Jones, was unfortunately again in hospital, and members recorded their good wishes on a greetings card to be sent to her.

The demonstrator was Mrs. Pat Taylor, of Welshpool, who had kindly stepped in when the previously booked demonstrator had found it necessary to cancel her engagement.

Taking as her theme, "Flights of Fancy", Mrs. Taylor introduced a selection of "our feathered friends" into her delightful exhibits. The woodpecker in his natural arbor; the heron by the waterside; the peacock and the owl; all were featured in appropriate designs. Her final offering was a beautiful Moroccan bird cage as the setting for doves, with cool lime green and white plant material to enhance the design.

Westminster Entertaining Troupe

The Westminster Entertaining Troupe were again in action recently.

On 11th July, they performed at Weaverham, where both the Juniors and the Seniors won their respective sections, with the Juniors being awarded a cup and the Seniors a shield.

The following day, Sunday, they travelled to Frith, where both troupes finished second in their own groups. Here, however, the Juniors were judged to have had the smartest leader, Micheale Chard collected this individual award.

Brook Street premises sold

Swetenhams recently held a successful auction sale of 1-3 Brook Street, when a price of £59,000 was achieved. The purchasers were Border Motor Company Ltd. of Chester.

This is the first time these premises have been on the market since they were last sold in 1919, and have been occupied in the intervening period by the well known Chester firm, Charles Jones (Chester) Limited, who have now moved to their new premises at Grange Road.

This firm has been associated with Charles Jones for very many years and valued the premises for them in 1924 for the princely sum of £4,500.

Toyota Land Cruiser.

SMOOTH CRUISER

FOUR-WHEEL drive motoring in Britain enters a new era today with the re-introduction of one of the world's most celebrated off-road vehicles, the Toyota Land Cruiser, in its new 1981 five-door estate version.

Filling a significant gap in the market, the Land Cruiser in its latest form is big, comfortable, powerful, versatile — and economical, thanks to a new 3.9-litre diesel engines as the sole power unit for UK customers.

For farmers, doctors, construction engineers, contractors, utility undertakings, boatyards — anyone for whom the most important factor in personal transport is getting there, in rough or slippery conditions, the Land Cruiser offers a unique combination of off-road performance with real, car-type comfort, at a sensible price.

Fully equipped right down to the radio, the stylish, 90 mph five-seater sells at £10,450 including car tax and VAT. And its 20-plus mpg road-going consumption is achieved on DERV.

The foundation stone of Toyota's export business — preceding conventional cars by several years — the Land Cruiser was first shipped overseas in 1954, when production was still measured in hundreds. Since then, total production has followed a parabolic curve; the 50,000th Land Cruiser came off the line in 1965, the 100,000th in 1968, the 300,000th in 1973; this year production is forecast to hit one million.

SPACE TO SPARE

Five people can spread — and stretch — themselves in the Land Cruiser's vast interior, and still leave room for several kitchen sinks. Deep, wide cloth-upholstered front seats have fully reclining backrests (with adjustable head restraints ready to set as pillows); for the driver's added comfort a six-position tilting steering wheel is standard.

With the back seat in place, the five-foot (1520mm) wide load platform is 40in long. Lowering the seat back stretches the deck length to nearly 70in (1770mm), or the lower half of the two-part tailgate can be swung down for carrying even longer loads. The cargo space is 41.1in (1045mm), and the ground clearance is 7.9in.

FRUGAL POWER

Toyota's 2H diesel provides a practical blend of performance and economy. The six-cylinder, ohv 3980cc engine delivers 103 PS (101.6 bhp) DIN at only 3500 rpm; even more usefully, the maximum torque of 24.5 kg-m (177 lb. ft.) is developed at a mere 2300 rpm — idea for the continuous shifting demands of cross-country work.

Call to sustain BBC's foreign news

At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Chester branch of the United Nations Association, a resolution was passed unanimously calling on the Government to sustain the BBC foreign news service and not implement the cuts that have been proposed. The resolution is being sent to the Foreign Office and the BBC.

Another topic of discussion was Belize, Britain's colony in Central America, which is apparently the subject of hush-hush negotiations designed to ease it into independence. It is hoped to discuss this further at the annual meeting on 1st October. Meanwhile, the MP is being asked for information.

FOLK FUN

Local folk fans are all set for a four-hour session of non-stop folk music on Saturday, when a folk festival takes place in Chester's Groves.

Singers and groups from Chester and Merseyside are expected to attend the riverside event, which will get under way in the afternoon.

The festival has been organised by the Cottage Inn Folk Club, Brook Street, who have also arranged a whisky tasting evening.

Theft from car

A cassette player valued at £80 was stolen from a car parked in the Plantation Hotel in Liverpool Road on 16th July.

Husband and wife leave £193,000

Mr. William Owen, of Brookside, Oakfield Road, Childer Thornton, who died on 27th February, left estate valued at £92,362 gross, £91,937 net; and his wife Mrs. Ellen Angeletta Owen, died on 20th February, leaving estate valued at £101,650 gross, £101,334 net.

Mr. Thomas Oswald Manning, of Plas Ucha, Nercwys, Mold, who died on 15th March, 1980, left estate valued at £121,256 gross, £101,237 net.

Mr. John George Caulton, of 912, Chester Road, Great Sutton, who died on 1st October, left estate valued at £49,938 gross, £44,525 net.

Mrs. Constance Elise Hayter, of The Chequers Hotel, Northop Hall village, Mold, who died on 5th February, left estate valued at £45,713 gross, £44,782 net.

Mrs. Annie Waterworth Whittaker, of 15 Victoria Crescent, Queen's Park, Chester, who died on 31st January, left estate valued at £40,178 gross, £39,832 net.

Mrs. Jessie Brown, late of 20 Hough Green, Chester, who died on 28th April, left estate valued at £37,630 gross, £37,289 net.

Mrs. Freda Muriel Pearce, of Stanmore Cottage, Grub Lane, Kelsall, Tarporley, who died on 25th October, left estate valued at £36,000 gross, £35,570 net.

Mrs. Elsie Florence Lily Edwards, of 3 Gloucester Avenue, Shotton, who died on 4th June, left estate valued at £26,188 gross, £25,674 net.

Mr. Edward Sollis, of 6 Marlowe Avenue, Wepre Drive, Connah's Quay, retired steelworker, who died on 13th February, left estate valued at £19,528 gross, £19,509 net.

Mr. George Leonard Woods, of 56 St. Peter's Road, Northop, who died on 13th February, intestate, left estate valued at £12,799 gross, £12,479 net.

Lily Galamore, of 8 Greenway, Curzon Park, Chester, who died on 15th April, left estate valued at £12,425 gross, £12,120 net.

Mrs. Elsie Smith, of 18 Kingsley Road, Garden City, Deeside, who died on 2nd May, left estate valued at £10,571 gross, £10,194 net.

Mr. Joseph Leslie Williams, of The Nurseries, Brook Street, Mold, who died on 29th April, left estate valued at £8,802 gross, £8,439 net.

Mr. Arthur Raymond Wild, of 13 York Road, Connah's Quay, who died on 18th May, intestate, left estate valued at £6,465 gross, £6,099 net.

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