

1960-1998 Time Flies

Jones

Pontiac GMC

Honda Acura



The Beginning



My Father's first experience in the automobile business was in 1931.

C.C. Cooper Motor Company employed him as a car washer in Harrisburg. This firm was one of two Ford dealerships in the city. Dad did many jobs in the business and soon became the parts manager. When World War Two started he set up an engine rebuilding line and they remanufactured engines since no new cars were available for purchase.

About the time the war ended my Father and a partner of Coopers bought out his interest and it became Barmont-Jones Motor Co. This company thrived and lasted until 1959. At this point Mr. Barmont had become ill and sold his interest to George Jones. Jones Ford Co. lasted only 1 year. Ford Motor Co. decided that they wanted only one dealership in Harrisburg and chose the other.

I had come to work, full time, for my father in July 1959. During high school and college I worked there when I could. We decided to look for an available dealership and found Pontiac in Lancaster. We leased the building on Orange Street from Frank Eshelman, bought his equipment, and hired the employees of his Chrysler-Plymouth agency. On December 1st Jones Pontiac Co. opened for business, with an owner and sales-manager with Ford experience and everyone else had backgrounds in Chrysler products.

The following time line gives a look at how our company grew over the years. We have had a mix of good luck and good management, both of which are necessary for success, but the main ingredient has been our employees, who have made our firm the success that it is today.

Jim Jones

1960's



1960 Jones Pontiac Co. was founded. George Jones was the general manager and owner and his son Jim was the sales manager. We started with about 20 employees. We leased the old market house at the corner of Orange and Pine Streets.

1961 After opening December 1st 1960 we had a snow storm on Dec 11th and had snow on the ground until late February or early March. Our low in sales came in February with 2 new and 9 used sales. March looked good with 29 sales. We struggled and ended the year with a small profit

1962 We leased the used car lot at 1220 Manheim Pike. This lot is now a Meineke Muffler shop.

1964 Bought lot at 1335 Manheim Pike where the Honda and Pontiac buildings are now located 1st mortgage incurred.
Began construction of a used car lot at the Service Road side of our new property.

1965 Our used car lot opened on March first. It was 200' by 150' and held 65 cars. The building was orange and white striped 2 work bays, and 2 closing offices. We sold 55 cars the first month of operation.
1965 was also the first year we sold 500 new cars and a total of 1000 retail units.

1968 Built Pontiac building--included body shop. We moved into the new building in late October.



1970's



1970 We had a GM strike that lasted over 3 months. Not a nice way to have to make our much larger mortgage payments. We recognized a need to get another franchise and a supply of smaller cars to sell.

1971 Discoverer Motor Homes. We all make mistakes! In 2 years we retailed one and wholesaled the other and they were gone. We accepted the Honda franchise and got our first two loads of 600 Sedans and 600 Coupes. They sold rather well and in 1972 we sold 72 Hondas.

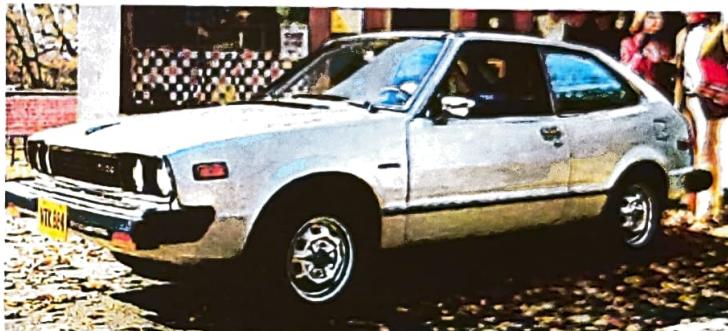
1972 George Jones died suddenly on July 21st and Jim became the dealer and General Manager of the business

1973 Honda introduced the Civic in March and we finally had a quality Honda to sell. When the first oil embargo hit in November we quickly sold out of Hondas. The bad news was nobody wanted the big V-8 Pontiac.

1974-75 The country in general and the auto industry in particular was in a recession. We sold all the Hondas we could get and they helped to ease the pain.

1970's

1976 The first Accord was introduced in June and we quickly had a waiting list. By now Pontiac was building some smaller car's and more 6 and 4 cylinder cars.



1978 We bought the Service Road building. After enlarging the service area we moved the body shop and Honda sales there.

1979 The 2nd oil embargo hit in 1979. Again Pontiac sales dropped, but this time we could get more Hondas and the demand was great.

1980's



1983 We built the present Honda showroom and moved in late 1983.

1984 This was the year that we purchased the lot next door that now is the home of GMC, Used, and Acura. At the time of purchase it was leased to 3 different tenants plus the billboard lease. The leases were gone by 1988 and we finally got rid of the billboards in June of 1998.

Later in 1984 we purchased the GMC franchise and located it in the Service Road building.

Bertone and Pininfarina cars were added to our line of franchises, briefly. (For results see 1971, Discover Motor homes).

1985 Steve Jones was appointed General Manager of the dealership.

Beginning in 1985, and for the next few years we had several opportunities to expand our operations into other towns. These included Acura in York and Honda in the Harrisburg area. We chose to concentrate in the Lancaster area.

1988 We purchased the Grossman's Lumber Building, demolished most of it and built our new body shop

1989 Rebuilt the used lot, installed the "trailers", and moved truck sales to the building that now houses Acura.

1990's



1990 Steve Jones purchased the Acura franchise and leased the building next to Lancaster Toyota where they operated for 3 years.

1992 Acura was combined with the other Jones dealerships and was moved into the building on the south end of the used and truck lot. That building was remodeled for Acura

1992 The Service Road building is leased to Wild Auto parts.

1997 The Pepsi building (Service Works) was purchased to give us room to expand our service operations. Remodeling has begun.

The new GMC \ Used car building was opened in October



The Future



If I was to guess back in 1985 where we would be in 1998 I could not have imagined the growth in the dealership. Therefore how can I predict the future? The future of this dealership has always been that if you have good people, good products, and a good location success will follow. As we prepare for the next millennium with all these parts in place the future could not be brighter.

We are prepared to obtain additional market share in sales, parts, and service for all the manufacturers we represent and are constantly looking for new opportunities. The Service Works building represents our next growth area in both parts and service. Reconstruction of both the Honda and Pontiac buildings are under review. In addition I have met with General Motors and we are a key dealership in their Strategy 2000 plans.

Thank You for your part in the growth we have achieved and I look forward to the future we will enter together.

Steve Jones