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Sightseeing with a Difference

Often the sentimental worth of some everyday habit isn't realized until it does no longer exist. From this perspective it had to be a bitter loss for the citizens of Wolfsburg when their much-loved "Wolfsburger Bähnle*" was decommissioned in 1976.

A community transportation company had the idea of a unique sightseeing tour through the city of Wolfsburg. The renowned bodybuilder Friedrich Rometsch from Berlin was charged to convert a Volkswagen Beetle for this purpose. The company Hermann Harmening made an additional trailer, as the result of Rometsch; a version of the Beetle with six seats; couldn't meet the enormous demand. From 1958 the 14-meter long train, in tow of a Volkswagen Beetle, carried 48 passengers during a sightseeing tour through the streets. Within a short time the "Bähnle" became an integral part of the Wolfsburg cityscape. Due to the unusual constellation of the vehicle it was limited to a speed of

50 km/h, which wasn't a difficulty for its 30 hp-strong boxer engine.

After 15 years of deep sleep the Beetletrain experienced a revival by the foundation Volkswagenwerk in the museum AutoMuseum. In 2003 the city of Wolfsburg ceded the "Bähnle" to Volkswagen with the target to restore it and to bring it back into service in the Autostadt, the visitor attraction at the Volkswagen factory in Wolfsburg.

*("Bähnle": German dialect term for little train)

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