

a toy story

Author Frans Fourie, who grew up in Stanford 1943–1965, set us on the trail of an old toy truck.



The toy truck pictured at left, built about 55 years ago, brought childhood friends Sakkie Swart (above, left) and Kok Swart (no relation) together again in the village of Stanford. Kok built four such trucks, modelled on the Leylands then in use by the South African Railways, when he was still in primary school, using a big hand saw, a hammer and a chisel. Materials were limited: planks from paraffin cases that Nico de Bruin supplied because his family owned the general dealer shop on the corner of Queen Victoria and Long Market Streets; the springs came from an old gramophone; the wheels from wheat cutting-machine rollers. Coca Cola bottle tops became headlights.



Kok, retired from the Police, now lives in Vredeklouf, Durbanville and Sakkie lives in Stanford. They used to play in the very same street where the picture was taken, with the old DR rectory in the background. At left Kok's granddaughter Jané admires the craftsmanship.