

Fisher Body Historical Team

10-17-05

Interviewer = Doreen Howard

Interviewee = Dave Karkas

Seniority 8-1976

Married with 2 daughters

4 years at Lansing Community College. (math classes)

First Day = Frightening, 2nd shift start in Body Shop (jungle) hoses connected to welders, then in ~~the~~ floor pans. MS or welding.

Supervisor - Jim Aldrige

Pranks = Fill coffee cups with gas and put them upside down and pop. Weld lunchbox closed, ~~seals~~ in your gloves. (Sealer)

1979 started apprenticeship till 1983. Maintenance Pipefitter. Apprenticeship testing twice a year four points testing to be called.

Worked at Motor Wheel before Fisher Body, also construction. His father was working there at the time and told him to put application in. Changeover (summer shutdown) 2 weeks in July Pipefitter = maintain facility (Body, Paint, Trim and facilities) Take care of all liquids in each dept, bathrooms, all piping with liquids in plant. As an apprentice you had to work a certain number of hours in each department.

Construction was a good area to work in. Also the body shop.

Lines of demarcation = a divider between the different trades, everyone has their own

job description so all trades might work together. safety, personal protection etc.

Through the years the plant has not changed that much but the names of the buildings. He still considers this to be Fisher Body Plant.

Benefits received = most money close to \$100,000⁰⁰_±. Dental and Hospital stays, most have gotten better or stayed the same. Working 7 days a week, some 10 hr days. Family suffers by not spending a lot of time with them. Health is suffers also. Black out period was a few weeks before changeover and a few weeks after the production began you could not get any time off.

In Plant Family = everything done in the plant. On sundays families would come to the plant and have picnics outside the plant. Skilled trades stuck together, all was home cooked food. when the older people retired, but now no home cooked food, just Pizza.

Very little automation when he hired in. all was done manually. Now there is more automation in the plant. Some trades are losing members but electricians are growing. Most of the machines are using electrical power.

There is a division between hourly and skilled trades. hourly work with hourly all day. Trades don't spend a lot of time with hourly people

Being on hourly person before Trades, he knows that you need to take care of the hourly operator until they are satisfied.

Union Activity = Not involved, going to meetings
Sub Contractor and Manner is Jones & Title.

Where he interfaces between union & management to keep all or as many skilled trades in the plant. Skilled trades will be continuing to hire new tradesman. Non core trades will be offered on EIT Program (Employee in training) The idea was to keep as many as possible.

Plant Closing = up to 2 years earlier we were told of the plant closing. But the plant closed 1 year earlier than expected.

Vehicles = all GM always have been GM but one Ford in his lifetime. Trucking your vehicle through the plant was a nice thing to do.

Most favorable moment = accepting the ~~changeover~~ apprentice and graduating from the program. Company gifts, coasters, jackets, pens, posters.

Favorite Bass - Dayl Story ~~is~~ 1st Bass.

Pranks - Telling new hires to go to the Union Hall to get a free Christmas Ham. They weren't given out. Hitting a deputy fan that was blowing on someone.

Words ~~of~~ of wisdom - come to work everyday and remember your families.