

Lansing Fisher Body Historical Team # 2-1-06
9:15
ame UAW 602 Frank Dyer Green House

Interviewer - Marilyn Coulter

Interviewee - Fannie Price

Security - 4-22-55

Education - High School - some college.

Military = ~~sergeant~~ Sgt in Army Korea 51-53

Married = yes (2) boys (1) girl

★ Came to Lansing MI in 1955. Went to a store on way to find for a job and spoke to a gentleman who was employed at Fisher, and went to apply at Fisher and was hired the next day.

★ First Day he had to sleep in his car because he came from South Bend IN. Started in Body Shop sanding hoods, this was dusty and dirty work. He actually started at the Studebaker Corp. \$1.85/hr

at Fisher Body the start wage was 97¢/hr

Pranks = shooting sparks at each other and throwing sanding discs at each other. Back then the shifts were rotational, 1 week on days, 1 week on the night shift.

★ Also back then not many african americans in the plant, most jobs were menial and they placed most african americans on these jobs. Then after 10 years he went to skilled trades as a millwright. Also when you were doing this there

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* blood tests that had to be taken for lead poisoning - also not very many black supervisors until later years.

* Going to skilled trades was also a problem because supervisor felt that white employees would not work with him.

He always would treat employees the best he could. And then they would all get along. Getting into skilled trades

* Fonnie Rice was the first African American to be on skilled trades after 1 year in the Millwright trade he was approached for supervision. Fonnie didn't want to be a supervisor, hourly worker (97¢/hr) vs skilled trades over (\$1.00 per) hour, difference. Sometimes they would sleep on makeshift beds in the plant because of 7 days a week work.

* Back to the boarding booth, Even this was an undesirable job, Fonnie and his partners liked working together and making the day go by faster. Supervisors didn't bother them because they all helped each other out.

A. Lunch and breaks - usually would go to the cafeteria for lunch 30 minutes for lunch.

Community - we were the community - it was a very special place to

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works at Fiber Body and Automobile. People in the community would help each other, shoveling snow, neighborhoods barbeques, and everyone would help each other with all different life aspects.

Then looks to the shop when Fonnie was a millwright and got journeyman status, then was asked for supervision. He was supervisor of Body shipping. But had little or no training for this. When this happened some people were behind Fonnie and some people were angry and jealous that he got supervision. Fonnie always believed that he would ask his employees for help and he would always back his employees up when needed. He also got along with his bosses & he gulfed and partied with his bosses. After a little later he was approached to be a General Supervisor, and he accepted this job.

* hourly wage vs management = the mgmt wages were good when they started and they had their own cafeteria for several supervisors by needed a key to get into this cafeteria. The first day Fonnie come into the cafeteria the

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was the only black supervisor in the room and this was hard at first but after a while things would calm down later Fannie was asked to be superintendent of Fisher Body. The job he was offered was superintendent of production between Oldsmobile and Fisher Body and Fannie wasn't interested in this at all. He was 55 years old

Fannie really enjoyed working at Fisher Body. His family benefited over the years from Fisher Body. This was his family and friends. Once he retired on salary ~~this~~ he was told about his pension and benefits. God they have taken away from him over the past years. He was very upset when this happened, after he got his benefits they were all taken away so they all went to pickets in Detroit. Everything seemed to go up in price and their pensions never got an increase over all these years after retiring under salary retirement.

Capital of Quality = Quality of people here in focusing all works together for a great job.
A Plant Closing = sad and an empty feeling like something is missing when its torn down later this year.