

Fisher Body Historical Team

10-17-05

Interviewer = ~~Doug Robinson~~ - Cheryl McQuade

Interviewee = Chaplain Doug Cross

Seniority Date = 3-25-1981

* First Day = worked in the Trim Dept. Learning the break times, got lost going to the hospital. Wagons were carts that the cafeteria would bring around and ~~sell~~ sell and stop the line.

* Hired in at first in 1979 but didn't start working until 3-25-1981 and then went to work.

* Walking past everyone wanting to apply at Fisher Body and getting hired in was a funny feeling.

* Reason for hiring = Money, Benefits, and a good living by families already at Fisher Body.

* Buyouts = when you are given an amount of money to actually quit the company.

* First Day = Building Cutlass Supreme, 4 door, and station wagon, 1st job, seat belt retractors. Very easy job, best one he had done yet. Didn't like being in one spot all the time. Next job was windshield preparation and install them on the car. Very hard job because of the weight of the glass.

Pranks = put urethane inside his gloves, take someone's cigarettes. (Fishing trips with friends and co-workers) Also camaraderie between his Christian co-workers and eventually led to his job as Chaplain Today.

Bible studies throughout the plant also helped him to better his life.

1984 was a long changeover, then he went to paint shop Finniest things he had ever seen, a long cord unspooling around someone by mistake in Building 213. This building at its peak was 60-70 people.

* Leveling off means a large layoff and calling back in security order to whatever dept is calling back first. It would always work the changeovers or plant shutdowns, working with maintenance or other skilled trades.

* Changeover = is a time when a layoff occurs and change the model of the car. Longer over books in years past for 1-2 months but now they are very short.

Strikes = walk the picket line

Appointed Position = off line job where the union and management pick the most qualified person and then hire them. EAP is Employee Assistance Program since Early 1980's. First started for substance abuse. now it is called Family Care, now this is broader it includes, Elderly Care, Child Care, Counseling etc.

Married - 4 children, (2 adoptions)

Working second shift took some time away from the family and wife.

* Sometimes drove but sometimes carpooled to work. Usually pay 1 person to drive, but drove sometimes, alternately

Before work his group would ~~go~~ smoke a joint and also during lunch and different breaks. Thursday night was party night and they would party at the Union Hall parking lot. Sometimes there was over 100 people there.

Also most of the people were from the plant.

Being a Chaplain = Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms etc. Also a committee to help with this job. Hospital visits, get well cards, visiting people who are sick.

Prison ministries where he visits family members of workers who are in prison. Helping people on critical and stress management team. Talks to firemen & police who are involved in a tragedy. AFI-CIO Church alliance member in the Community.

Most rewarding job = a death in the plant and doing critical and stress management and seeing this work very well and being thanked. He was introduced to Christ by his co-workers and he wanted to change his lifestyle.

He felt that EOP was not as informative back in previous years, now it is much better.

Union Involvement = Very proud of our local. The Executive board cares about each and everyone of us. a big sacrifice for each of them. Block History Program, Community Action Program Christmas Baskets, Adopt a family Community Service Committee etc.

Used TAP to a Bible College for 4 years.
Employee assistance Program & also has to take
classes. Black Lake is Walter + Mary Ruthen
education center is where they are classes
given once a year to help the EAP reps do
a better job.

Plant closing = Sad to see this go. But is
a blessing to go to the new plant with alot
of workers.