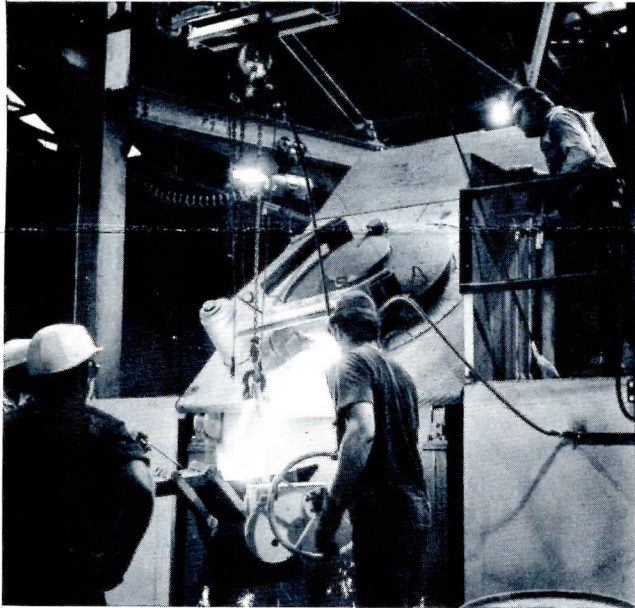


NEWSLETTER

Vol. 3, No. 7, August, 1971

Published by MUELLER CO., Decatur, Illinois

Joe Penne, Editor



One of the first ladles of iron is poured from a new electric furnace.

DECATUR IRON FOUNDRY FURNACES PERFORM WELL

The start-up of the new electric coreless furnaces in the Decatur Iron Foundry went smoothly in early August and production continues to increase as employees become familiar with the new equipment and minor improvements are made.

Just 23 days after workmen began tearing out the old cupolas, iron was being poured from the new furnaces. Around-the-clock work by contractors, seven-day weeks and many extra hours by Mueller men, plus cooperation by everyone associated with the job, made it possible to meet the rigid schedule set down for the \$700,000 program.

Production in the Iron Foundry halted on the afternoon of July 9 and about 9 a.m. on Aug. 2, the first batch of metal was poured from the new furnaces.

During the first few days minor problems reduced pouring operations and molding operations were cut to half days. By the middle of the second week of the start-up, however, the furnaces reached almost 90 per cent of their nominally rated capacity and total casting production improved.

The new furnaces are flexible enough in their operation to allow the production of ductile iron as well as grey iron and on Aug. 14 ductile castings were successfully poured.

Frank C. Hackman, manager of manufacturing engineering, called the switch-over a "smooth installation" but added that there are a number of changes and modifications planned for the equipment and operations before the program is complete.

New lights, bigger exhaust fans, a large skylight and the clean operation that goes with electric furnaces now make the Iron Foundry a better place to work.

2 CHANGES OCCUR IN FIELD SALES

Two changes in the outside field sales organization will occur about Oct. 1 as the result of the recent unexpected death of Mueller Co.'s Sales Representative Richard G. Medick.

Forrest N. Baum, who has been the Mueller representative in Mississippi for about five years, will succeed Mr. Medick in Ohio. Forrest joined Mueller Co. in 1953 and worked in the factory and then the sales office until 1962 when he was named a sales representative, traveling west Texas and New Mexico.

John W. Kirk, who has been with Mueller Co. since 1964, has been promoted to sales representative, covering the State of Mississippi. John started at Mueller in the factory, went into the Decatur Sales Office in 1965 and in March 1970, he transferred into the Advertising and Sales Promotion Dept.

CHATTANOOGA FOUNDRY IMPROVES CONVEYOR

The Foundry Division in Chattanooga was closed the week of August 2 to allow the installation of two oscillating conveyors to replace the apron-type conveyors used to carry castings from the Moldmaster shakeout to the sorting stations.

One of the oscillators is of "stair step" construction which produces a tumbling action along with the shaking motion, resulting in increased removal of sand before the castings enter the cleaning process.

The new system not only improves casting cleaning but handles the castings more gently, so that their quality is maintained.

UNITED WAY CHAIRMEN NAMED IN DECATUR

Electrician Billy Willis and Assistant Plant Manager Charles W. Moore will serve as co-chairmen of the 1971-72 United Way campaign for employees in Decatur. They will coordinate the planning and soliciting of the drive which will be conducted in Decatur the week of Oct. 18.

ELECTRICIAN IS POPULAR WEEKEND DRIVER

Most drivers follow Roger Drake on his weekend outings in his automobile. A lot of fans follow him too.

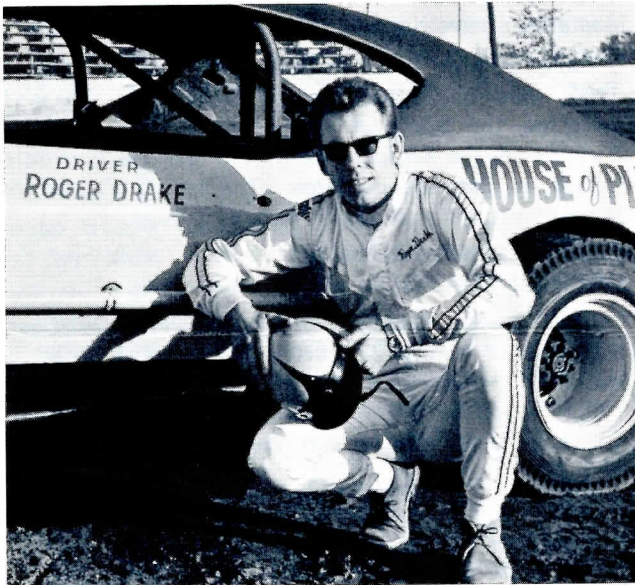
This is no Sunday afternoon jaunt in the country but rather a circuit around Central Illinois that takes him to Farmer City on Friday, Macon on Saturday and Danville or Springfield on Sunday for the late model or super stock car races.

In mid-July Roger had one of the hottest cars in the area and was leading in point totals on two of the tracks he raced on. He claimed top prize in eight of nine feature races on one track and won six of the top races on another.

Roger, an electrician in the Maintenance Department in Decatur, spends three nights racing, three nights repairing and one night on rest and recuperation. "I'd hate to have to earn a living driving cars," Roger confides.

He is young, and single and adds that this kind of racing isn't much good for family life since there is so little time left for anything other than racing or the chores that necessarily go with it.

His successes on the track haven't gone unnoticed by the fans. He says that in Farmer City the fans boo him in favor of the hometown drivers but one person told him not to let the boos go to his head because he really isn't popular or recognized as a big winner until they start throwing things at him.



When Roger talks about being a winner he continually uses "we" referring to the mechanics and crewmen who are such an important part of any successful team. "A driver can't do it alone," Roger admits. Included in his crew is Stan Brookshier of the Maintenance Department at Mueller.

In addition to the crew and driver it takes money. Roger estimates that they have about \$10,000 invested in the car, two spare engines, a truck to transport the car, tools and parts. As much as \$1,000 is tied up in tires, wheels and tubes alone to provide just the right

tires to fit the track condition of the hour. Gears in a transmission are changed as many as four or five times in a night, looking for the best combination to go with the track that night. A mobile garage is needed.

No matter how much equipment or how many parts are carried to the races there is often something else needed to stay in competition. During one major race a pulley broke on Roger's car. They didn't have a replacement and none was available in the pit area. His mechanic ran over to Roger's mother's car, jerked the pulley off, got it on the race car and Roger still finished seventh. Mrs. Drake and Roger's sisters are his best fans. Roger's dad John, by the way, works in the Mueller Test Lab.

A race car of this type takes all winter to build and then it is rebuilt all summer during the racing season. There's an advertisement on TV that says "Plymouth Makes It." In the case of Roger's car, Plymouth made part of it. Pontiac made some, Chevrolet made some more of it, and so did Buick, Ford and others.

Roger and a friend started building his car three years ago, beginning with a frame from a 1966 Chevrolet that was left from a roll-over accident. The body was salvaged from a burned out car and the 427 cubic inch engines they use are from 1969 Chevrolet Chev-elles. The suspension was adapted from a Pontiac and modifications are endless throughout the car. The only restrictions limit the builders to using standard ignition systems and four barrel carburetors.

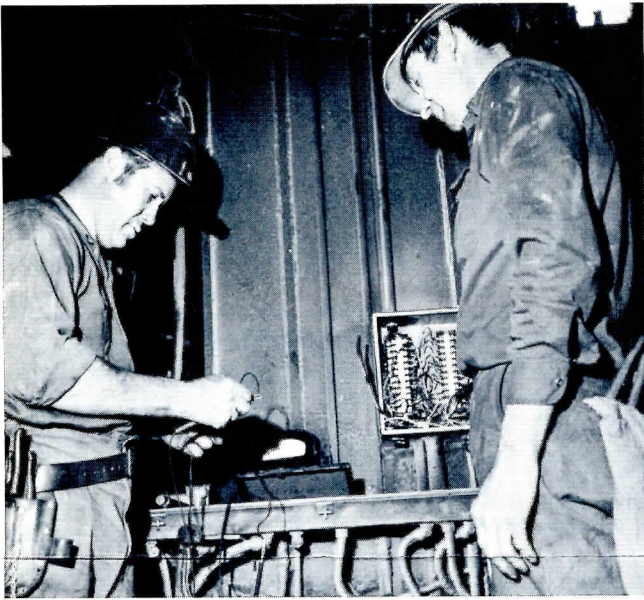
Roger first drove about four years ago when he bought an old Ford from his brother, added roll bars and began driving it in "Fender Bender" races. From there he went into a different class and he hopes that the future includes competition in United States Auto Club sanctioned races against some of racing's biggest names.

"Some guys like to play golf, others get hung up on softball, but I like the sport of racing. Most people can find something they can excel at if they look long enough. I happen to be lucky and do well in driving," said Roger.

Doing well has its financial rewards too. His purses last year amounted to about \$3,700, but most of that went right back into equipment and parts, plus a percentage to the mechanical crew. "When you win you can afford some of the things you need to get better, but I have known guys who have racing in their blood so bad that they have lost their jobs, family and spent every dime they could get to run their cars," he said.

Sitting casually on the seat of a fork lift truck with a long leg propped up hardly seemed like the place to talk about going a 100 miles an hour on the back stretch so Roger ascended his ladder to change the ballast on a light in Dept. 80.

Friday night in Farmer City, clad in his yellow fire resistant suit, Roger will be in a different driver's seat.



Helping to keep the place running are Maintenance Electrician Paul Reneau (left) and Maintenance Mechanic Cecil Morris. Both of these men are assigned to the Moldmaster complex in Chattanooga.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT KEEPS PLACE "RUNNING"

"We keep the place running" was the proud and terse statement made recently by an employee in the Chattanooga Maintenance Department.

Every department or division in a company, naturally, sees itself as having the most important role with all operations revolving around it. Mechanically, however, it is the Maintenance Department that does keep the place "running", although everyone knows that, totally, each is dependent upon the other.

In some plants, janitor service comes under one division, machine repair another and maintenance a third. In Chattanooga, about 100 employees in the Maintenance and Plant Engineering Department handle everything from sweeping the floors to erecting Machinery or moving furniture.

The special skills required of industrial maintenance men such as truck drivers, welders, electricians, laborers, and machine repairmen separate them from regular workmen in these same crafts.

The Chattanooga plant went through a long and agonizing start-up period and now it must be kept running. To help achieve this, an outside consulting firm was called in to evaluate our maintenance program and to offer ways to improve it.

The department is now organized like a small company with a scheduling of work and manpower, budgeting, communication, and approaching problems in a business-like manner. Being a service department, that is, existing to provide for internal needs and not involved in direct production, makes it difficult sometimes to place a dollar value on an operation such as the Maintenance Department.

Organization and scheduling is of major importance and the planner or coordinator is the man responsible

for this. He checks with the work order originator if there is a question. He reviews the job's details to determine what is needed and when. He makes estimates, computes costs, orders necessary material, and sees that everything, such as tools, blueprints and parts, are available when the job is undertaken.

In the case of a machine failure or breakdown there can be little planning, but there is organization.

Important to this organizing is the RIME (Relative Importance of Maintenance Expenditures) program. This provides an established, consistent method of setting priorities for maintenance work, arranged in advance by management, supervisors in production, and the Maintenance Department.

Number values are assigned to machines, work sections and every area involved in the plant's operation and from these, priorities are established. For example, a power failure could stop production in all areas and as a result would have a high priority rating in the system and all necessary manpower would be diverted immediately to correct the problem. On the other hand, a machine on standby that could only marginally contribute to output would have a low RIME rating and its maintenance would be done when jobs of higher priority were complete.

To tear into an unfamiliar machine that is not running properly, find the trouble and then repair it requires ingenuity and determination, as well as a working knowledge of a skill or craft. If a necessary part isn't available, a new one must be made of something re-worked to "make it do" temporarily. And much of this machine repair work must be done in areas that are dirty, dark or hot, and often in an uncomfortable position.

The ideal maintenance program is of a preventive nature. Instead of waiting for a breakdown, a scheduled program of regular inspection and replacement before a mishap occurs is sought by every maintenance department, even though this is difficult to achieve, says Jim Hosto, plant engineer at Chattanooga.

The philosophy behind this is that a preventive maintenance program reduces machine downtime and decreased downtime means increased production time, according to Hosto. This adds up to the original statement that "the Maintenance Department keeps the place running."

FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

Earl D. Tippitt, formerly quality control inspector at Plant 4 in Decatur, has been promoted to Iron Machine Shop foreman. He succeeds Coy M. Butler who retires Sept. 9 with more than 44 years with the company.

• • • • •

THERE ARE NOW available coffee dispensers for the office that look exactly like filing cabinets. They match the untold numbers of coffee drinkers who look exactly like office workers.

News Briefs

The Mueller softball team recently won the Moccasin League Industrial Slow Pitch championship in Chattanooga with an 11 and 3 record. The team advances to the softball city series which brings together all other industrial league champs and runners-up. The team, managed by A.D. Williams, includes: Walt King, Tom Johnson, Jim Kean, Martin Crowder, Larry Christol, Eddie Woods, Jim Clark, Jesse Benn, Walt Smigiel, Jimmy Watson, Fred Wright, Larry Wright, Mike Miller, Tony Bancroft, James Bryson and Mose Adams.

• • • • •

The 40th year for the Mueller Bowling League in Decatur got underway in mid-August with 12 teams and about 80 employees participating. It is one of the oldest company-sponsored leagues in the city. Officers this year are: Harold Whitacre, president; Larry Warfield, vice president; Dale Wilkins, secretary-treasurer, and Bob McCoy, league representative. The company's sponsorship of bowling expanded last year with the addition of a team from Mueller in a league designed for night shift workers.

• • • • •

Men retirees from Mueller Co. in Decatur will hold their next meeting at 11:30 a.m., Sept. 9, in the House of Plenty. Fifty-five Mueller men attended the August session.

• • • • •

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd (Curley) Walton recently returned from a month-long 7,500 mile trip to Alaska and the Yukon Territory. Curley, a sand muller in the Decatur Foundry, retired early in 1970 with more than 41 years of service. On the way north, they went through the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, stopping to visit the Calgary Stampede, Banff and Jasper Provincial parks, Lake Louise, the Columbian icefields, Dawson Creek and on north. Their return trip included the Pacific Northwest, California, Salt Lake City, the High Sierras, and Rockies.

• • • • •

Eugene A.D. Hullinger, manager of industrial engineering in Decatur, recently completed the LaSalle Extension University program of business management. The four major areas of business covered by the course were: profitable management, sales and marketing management, production office management, and business correspondence and legal aspects. It took Gene almost four years to complete about 100 lessons and 54 examinations, studying at home during free time. In addition, Gene has taken a number of courses at Millikin University's night school in Decatur.

HOUSING STARTS RISE TO RECORD LEVELS

Housing starts in July increased 11.2 per cent over June, reaching a record level and continuing to be a bright spot in the nation's economy.

Seasonally adjusted, the annual rate for starts in July reached 2,218,000 units, topping June's upward-revised rate of 1,995,000 units. A year ago, the adjusted annual rate for July was 1,309,000 units.

An assistant commerce secretary for economic affairs said the statistics show that the boom in housing is continuing. The strong demand for housing plus the continued availability of mortgage funds indicate that the surge in home building that began in 1970 should continue for many months, he said.

The chief economist for the National Association of Home Builders predicted that 1971 would be a record year for housing starts, reaching about two million units, and that 1972 will be even better.

The July housing report from the Department of Commerce showed that housing gains were registered in all sizes of housing units and in all parts of the country.

Service Awards

The following Mueller Employees received service awards during August.

Mueller, Limited

20 Years: William Maguire
30 Years: Bruce Preece

Chattanooga

10 Years: Norma Counts
20 Years: Edward Benning
30 Years: Joseph Bartlett

Decatur

10 Years: Harold F. Rout, George Deffenbaugh, Charles E. Ater
20 Years: Coy M. West
30 Years: Orville F. Spencer, Jr., Thomas S. McCoy, Theodore W. Suhomske

Retirements

The following list gives retiree's job at time of retirement, years of service and date of retirement.

Brea

Lillian B. Olson, office employee, 18 years, 7 months and 18 days, August 26.