

# NEWSLETTER

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Joe Penne, Editor

## MUELLER ACQUIRES CLAMP COMPANY

Mueller Co. recently acquired the H. Y. Carson Company, Birmingham, Ala., a producer of clamps used primarily to repair leaks and to strengthen bell - joints and slip-joints in cast iron pipe found in water and natural gas systems.

The 11 Carson employees are involved principally in assembling and shipping. The ductile iron castings, bolts and rubber products used in the clamps are purchased items.

According to Bill Murphy, vice president-marketing, the same people who would buy this type of clamp are those upon whom our salesmen already have been calling. The company previously sold primarily through manufacturers' representatives and distribution was limited mostly to the southeast, east coast and New England.

This is the first Mueller Co. acquisition since 1963 when it took over Adams Pipe Repair Products, Inc., of South El Monte, Calif. This new subsidiary of Mueller will be known as the Carson Clamp and Fitting Company.

## COMPANY TRUCK SERVICE EXPANDS

The trailer-truck service that began less than a year ago with twice-a-week trips between Decatur and Chattanooga is rapidly expanding and on one occasion five trucks were on the road in one week, going in various directions.

Last January, the company entered into an experimental daily truck rental program to haul castings to Chattanooga from Decatur and to return with boxes and available customer freight. In April, a long-term lease was signed and from April until about Dec. 1, that truck had logged 80,000 miles.

In addition to this rig, supplemental truck service was leased on an as-needed basis during the summer as demands grew for service. One new trip was to Wisconsin to make regular pick ups of plastic valve, curb and meter boxes from our supplier there. General Traffic Manager Joe Fleckenstein said there was no good, direct common carrier service to this city, and, in addition, the type of load made it worthwhile to use a leased truck service.

Regular trips to Mueller, Limited in Sarnia, Ontario, began in October, carrying products from Decatur. The truck returned by way of Chicago where it picked up brass ingot for the Decatur Foundry.

On Dec. 1, Mueller signed a contract for a second long-term leasing arrangement on equipment and two regular drivers were contracted. With these additions, regular service will be initiated to the Mueller plant in Brea. This

will be a two-driver operation and they will make the trip between the coast and Decatur in about 50 hours.

November was the heaviest month for the system with about 1,650,000 pounds of castings, boxes, customer freight, interplant shipments, and raw materials being handled.

"The actual savings for the year to the company by running this service as compared with the same loadings with common carriers have exceeded our first estimates," Fleckenstein said. In addition to the economics, there have been other tangible advantages to the company and improved service to the customer that can't have dollar values placed on them.

## MUELLER, LIMITED ENDS PLUMBING BRASS LINE

Mueller, Limited, Sarnia, Ontario, announced in Mid-November that it would cease production of plumbing goods for the Canadian market and that the gradual lay-off of about 100 employees would begin about the first of the year.

George McAvity, company president, said, "We have decided to concentrate our efforts entirely in water and gas distribution products and therefore to discontinue our manufacture and marketing of plumbing items."

"We have been losing money for the past four years in this division of our business and we are faced today with the continuance of an unfavorable long-term marketing outlook despite the fact that we produce one of the finest product lines in Canada," he said.

On several occasions, management has informed employees through the union and office association of the difficulty the company was experiencing and of steps taken to reduce its product line and to increase its prices to see if this segment of the business could be made profitable. "We deeply regret that these steps have not improved our position as we anticipated and the water and gas divisions cannot continue to subsidize the unprofitable line," he said.

In a letter to employees, Mr. McAvity said, "I fully realize the hardships which will be encountered by many people. However, we are faced with the problem of discontinuing the plumbing line or having these losses eventually jeopardize our basic water and gas business."

Speaking of the water and gas distribution products manufactured by the company he said, "We have been expanding our activities in this area and have had for some time an ambitious research and development program

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underway which already is beginning to produce new products which utilize today's changing technologies through the introduction of new materials and new methods. We feel these efforts will allow us to further enhance our position as the leader in these markets and at this moment we are on the verge of introducing many new products for the water and gas utilities."

Mr. McAvity said everything possible will be done to help affected employees relocate and that the company has worked out a formula to compensate those who are laid off. The cuts include a number of salaried, managerial and clerical personnel, as well as production workers.

"We will do all we can to assist these employees, especially the ones with long years of service, through a period which we realize for them will be very difficult and and probably unparalleled in their lives," Mr. McAvity said. He added that it was a very difficult announcement to make and that he deeply regreted its necessity.

Mueller, Limited, was first established by Mueller Co. in Canada in 1912 when a new plant was built in Sarnia. The company broadened its Canadian operation in 1963 when it acquired a grey iron foundry in St. Jerome, Quebec, which currently employs about 100. No lay-offs or reductions in production are contemplated in St. Jerome. After plumbing lines are phased out, the Sarnia operation will employ about 120, including its salesmen across Canada.

The Mueller plant in Sarnia produces small brass and iron goods, including gas stops, tees, curb stops, corporation stops, and drilling machines. The Canadian operations do not manufacture hydrants or gate valves, but the St. Jerome plant produces pressure pipe fittings and rough iron castings for water systems and municipal use.

Although Mueller Co. at one time also produced a broad line of plumbing brass goods in the United States, that business was discontinued during World War II. As is now the case in Canada, there were too many competitive suppliers, creating an excess of capacity, oversupply and unprofitable selling price levels.

## COMPETITOR MOVES TO CHATTANOOGA

The U. S. Pipe and Foundry Company has closed its hydrant and valve operations in East Orange, New Jersey, and moved them to a facility in Chattanooga.

This plant site is that of the former Mueller Co. operation on Chestnut Street where we made hydrants and valves. U. S. Pipe had adjacent property, including a foundry, for many years, and now they make hydrant and valve castings in the foundry and machine and assemble them on Chestnut Street.

The New Jersey plant was acquired by U. S. Pipe when it took over operations of the former A. P. Smith Manufacturing Company in 1967. Smith was a competitor of Mueller for many years in the hydrant and valve lines.

U. S. Pipe, headquartered in Birmingham, Ala., also announced that seven former Smith Valve and hydrant division sales personnel will be merged into the company's pressure pipe sales organization.

## FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES

### Chattanooga

Dillard Johnson has been promoted from the hourly payroll to a salaried position as products inspector in Chattanooga. He started with the company in 1955, working most of this time in the Foundry Division.

### Decatur

Robert L. Minks, formerly senior draftsman in the Decatur Plant Engineering office, has been promoted to junior construction engineer. Merlin G. Scott, formerly a junior construction engineer, has been promoted to construction engineer. Hartford A. Lewis, formerly a manufacturing project engineer, has been promoted to manufacturing equipment engineer. Daniel A. Ellis, formerly a junior engineer, has been promoted to assistant project engineer. Dave M. Younger, formerly a quality control technician, has been promoted to senior quality control technician. Robert D. Ritchie, formerly an inspector in the foundry, has been promoted to assistant iron foundry foreman. Henry H. Austin, previously a special metals man in the iron foundry, has also been promoted to assistant iron foundry foreman.

### Brea

Harold V. Hassebrock, formerly time study engineer, has been promoted to senior time study engineer. Former Junior Tool Engineer Herbert F. Oest has been promoted to assistant manager of product and plant engineering. Thomas P. Summers, formerly an assistant foundry foreman, has been promoted to shift foundry foreman. F. M. Liebherr, formerly general factory inspector, has been named Brass Assembly Dept. foremen. Al E. Hembree, who was Brass Assembly foreman, has been named general factory inspector.

### Brea-Decatur

George F. Hruby, formerly manager of data processing in Decatur, has been promoted to plant controller in Brea. John R. Buzan, systems and programming manager of data processing in Decatur, succeeds Hruby as data processing manager. These changes are effective Jan. 1, 1972.

## HOUSING RETURNS TO UPWARD TREND

October housing starts ran at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 2,050,000 units, up 5% from September's 1,948,000 rate and about 30% above the October, 1970 rate, according to the Commerce Department as reported in the Wall Street Journal.

The October increase reversed the September decline of about 14% which was the first drop in five months. Except for a slight dip in the spring and the one drop in September, housing starts have shown a steady improvement all year.

Economists expect that total housing starts will exceed two million for 1971, thus finally exceeding the record of 1.9 million starts set in 1950.



Lily and Narayan Saha trim their Christmas tree.

## LILY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS FINDS HER FAR FROM INDIA

When you ask a woman what she wants for Christmas she usually has a long list quickly available, but Lily Saha wasn't sure.

In fact, she wasn't sure she would get anything and she seemed a little uncertain about the season, although a pretty, trimmed Christmas tree stood properly in the corner of the living room.

Her wonder about the season was understandable because this was to be her first Christmas in a Christian land.

Only six months ago she had left her family, traditions and friends in India and joined her husband, Narayan, who has been an engineer at Mueller Co. since July of 1969.

Naran received his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in India and then applied for an assistantship at the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. After receiving his master's degree there in mechanical engineering he came to the United States and did advanced work at Montana State. During this period he made his decision to try to stay in this country and through friends in Chicago and "a friend of a friend" he heard about Decatur and Mueller Co. In July, 1969, he came to work at Mueller Co. but his future wife was still in India, near Calcutta. In January, 1970, he took a six-week leave of absence and returned to India to be married. They were married but it wasn't until June of 1971 that she was able to join him in this country because of details necessary to allow her U.S. immigration. Naran says he is now listed as a permanent resident and as soon as he fulfills the time requirements he wants to apply for citizenship. "Since I am living in this country and enjoying what it offers, it is only right that I become a citizen and assume its obligations," he said.

While Naran was detailing his background, Lily was serving snacks and soft drinks in her native sari which made a beautiful hostess gown. Her charm and warmth left no doubt that she has adjusted quickly to life in Decatur, al-

though she still has trouble with a word or two of English. She said that she attended a missionary school and they read and wrote English but didn't speak it much. She has a bachelor's degree in biological science and in college and at the missionary school, through Christian friends, was exposed to Christmas.

In India, the New Year is a time of festivity and celebration most comparable to Christmas, Naran said. Through invitations to spend the holidays with school friends in Canada and Montana, he has seen Christmas in its completeness. In these two areas of the continent he has also seen plenty of snow - a sight that thrills Lily.

Lily's brother and his wife live in Chicago and the Sahas plan to spend the holidays with them. Will there be a gift exchange at Christmas? She answered with a shrug, a smile and a glance at Naran sitting beside her. The look seemed to say: "Every woman likes to receive gifts from her husband."

Christmas is more than gifts and Santa Claus. It is a time of seeking peace and love, and these aren't necessarily reserved for Christians at Christmas time.

## Retirements

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

### Decatur

Carl Hill, supervisor of tool room, 45 years, 3 months and 10 days, Nov. 26. (80 Plan).

Charles B. Workman, single purpose tester in Dept. 80, 22 years, 9 months, Nov. 30. (80 Plan).

Wilbur B. Tucker, torque adjustor in Dept. 80, 35 years, 7 months, Nov. 30. (Disability Plan).

Leo (Ted) Masterson, finished stock control supervisor, 43 years, 10 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

Marvin Baum, rough and finish reamer operator, 38 years, 8 months and 6 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

Iris Baum, core blowing machine operator, 25 years, 1 month and 9 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

Chester M. Mercer, turret lathe operator, 45 years, 2 months and 9 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

Ruth Miller, time clerk in the core room, 28 years, 6 months and 20 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

Donald D. Curry, Dept. 80 assembler and packer, 25 years and 2 days, Dec. 31, (80 Plan).

Clarence Albert, brass ladleman in Dept. 60, 33 years, 11 months, 26 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

### Chattanooga

Earl Rodgers, core room, 16 years, 10 months and 28 days, Oct. 31. (Physical Disability Plan).

### Brea

Albert Glenn McCoun, 33 years, 7 months, 27 days, Dec. 31. (80 Plan).

## NEW YORK OFFICE CLOSED NOV. 30th

The New York City Sales Office of Mueller Co. closed Nov. 30, ending a company operation that began there in 1905.

The need to provide direct service to customers in the New York area has steadily dropped as they dealt more and more with the manufacturing plants and sales offices directly involved in their transactions.

The office in the Empire State Building was staffed by one person prior to its closing. This is in strong contrast with the operation which opened in 1905 under the management of Oscar B. Mueller, son of the company founder. By 1907 the New York office and warehouse utilized a five-story building and had about 30 employees. Rail carloads of products were shipped weekly for warehousing and distribution in those early years.

## Service Awards

The following Mueller employees received service awards during November.

### Mueller, Limited

20 Years: Tadeusz Grad

30 Years: Donald Cuthbertson, Dorothy Kay, Cyril Matthews

### Chattanooga

10 Years: W. Edward Pierce, Robert L. Cookston

20 Years: Jesse J. Holloway, Willard C. Selvage

### Decatur

10 Years: Roger Drake, George Paxton, John D. Painter, Olive Van Lear, Harold McDade

## 11 COMPLETE KEYPUNCH COURSE

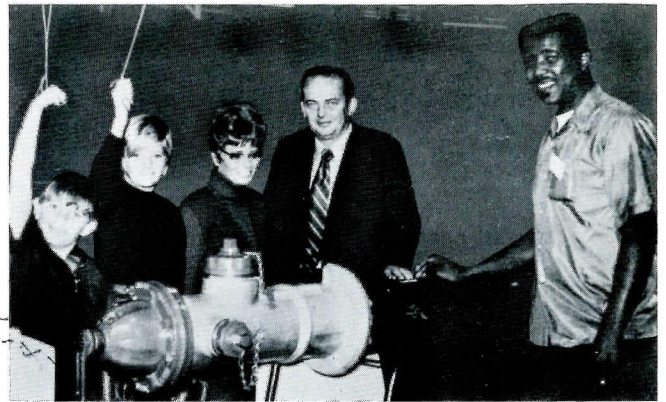
Eleven Mueller Co. employees in Decatur recently completed a course of instruction on the IBM 129 Key punch Verify Machines. The 10-hour course, conducted during the employees' free time, included: operator maintenance, basic keypunch and verifying, making of program cards and related basic data processing information.

Completing the course were: Bertha Abel, Marilyn Burton, Ellen Hanley, Edward Hood, Mary Ann Lutes, Charles McCoy, Fred Monska Jr., Ronnie Romack, Nelson Sarver, Doris Usinger and Nancy Walters.

## WOMEN RETIREES SWITCH LOCATION

The women retirees from Mueller Co. in Decatur will meet at the Scanda House, 1610 E. Pershing Rd., for their January meeting. The group has been meeting at the Elk's Club for several months, but voted to try the new location for the January session, which will be at 12:30 p.m. on the 5th.

The men retirees have permanently changed to the Scanda House and will meet next on Jan. 13 at 11:30 a.m.



Austin C. Harvey, right, assistant iron machining and assembly foreman at Brea, discusses fire hydrants with the Ray Coffield family during their plant tour.



Employees and their children look over favors and candy at the Brea Plant open house.

## BREA OPEN HOUSE ATTRACTS 600

About 600 employees, retirees and their families toured the Mueller Co. plant in Brea, California, on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 17th.

Each department had a display of products produced in its area and supervisors were on hand to explain operations and to answer questions.

This was the first time the plant had been open for such a visit since it was first put into use in the fall of 1963.

Included among the guests were many retirees who took the opportunity to renew acquaintances developed over many years. Harlan A. White, vice president-operations, was also on hand to represent Mueller Co. management from Decatur.

## A NEW FACE IN A FAMILIAR PLACE

Dennis N. Stansifer, a recent graduate of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute, Ind., has been named an assistant project engineer, Decatur.