

13,000 Tour Plant During Celebration



REPRESENTATIVE of the employees who were honored at the 20-year service banquet is Mrs. Eula Wilson, Payroll Supervisor, the first person to be employed in Gastonia by Firestone. Left to right as she received her 20-year watch and service pin were: Harold Mercer, William A. Karl, Raymond C. Firestone, Mrs. Wilson, J. E. Trainer and Nelson Kessell.

Executive Vice-Presidents Speak at 20-Year Banquet

J. E. Trainer and Raymond C. Firestone, Executive Vice-Presidents of The Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, were the main speakers at the banquet honoring employees with 20 years of service Thursday, May 5, in the Recreation Center.

The speakers commended the employees for their loyalty and reviewed the progress and prospects of the Company in general and particularly of the Gastonia plant.

General Manager Harold Mercer presided at the banquet and introduced special guests Ben E. Douglas, Director of the Department of Conservation and Development for the State of North Carolina, who brought greetings

from the Governor, and the Hon. Leon Schneider, new mayor of Gastonia, who gave a short talk.

After reading congratulatory telegram from Harvey S. Firestone, Jr., Chairman of the Firestone Company, and Lee R. Jackson, President, Mr. Mercer introduced William A. Karl, President of Firestone Textiles. Mr. Karl spoke briefly and then introduced Mr. Trainer and Mr. Firestone and also James W. Maples, Director of Manufacturing for Firestone rubber products plants in the United States and Canada.

At the end of the program Mr. Trainer, Mr. Firestone, Mr. Karl and Mr. Mercer greeted each hon-

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Firestone Textiles Marks 20th Anniversary With Five-Day Program of Special Events

FIRESTONE TEXTILES rounded out 20 years of operation with what was probably the largest celebration ever held in Gastonia.

Thousands of people crowded the plant and its grounds each day from May 3 to 7 for special events for employees and their families and open house tours for families, school groups, civic organizations and the public.

During the five-day program more than 13,000 persons toured the plant, prized by the Firestone Company as one of the most modern and complete textile operations, and largest under one roof in the world. The visitors saw the plant's extensive facilities for producing rayon and nylon cord for Firestone tire and cotton yarns and fabrics for commercial sale, and then were treated to refreshments by the plant staff.

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AN ESTIMATED 5,000 employees and members of their families toured the plant on the opening day, Tuesday, May 3. A total of 3,200 school children and their teachers were guests on Wednesday, 900 members of civic organizations on Thursday, and 4,000 others, including the general public and representatives of other firms on Friday.

In the beautifully decorated lobby and throughout the plant were hundreds of bouquets of flowers sent by other firms and individuals for the occasion. Many congratulatory telegrams and letters were received.

One of the top events of the week was the banquet on Thursday, May 5, honoring 100 employees who will have completed 20 years of service during April, May and June.

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PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS at the banquet in the Recreation Center were J. E. Trainer and Raymond C. Firestone, Executive Vice-Presidents of the Firestone Company, who also presented Firestone 20-year watches and pins to the honored employees. Other top Company executives were present as General Manager Harold Mercer presided.

These officials and other state and local officials

OPEN HOUSE tours attracted thousands of school children and their teachers, employees and members of their families, members of civic organizations and the general public the first

were guests at an informal luncheon preceding a tour of the plant Thursday afternoon. In the group were Ben E. Douglas, state Director of Conservation and Development; David Q. Holton, state Director of Purchases; the Hon. Harrelson W. Yancey, retiring Mayor of Gastonia; City Manager James Carter; R. G. Cherry, former Governor of North Carolina, and B. T. Dickson, executive secretary of the Gastonia Chamber of Commerce.

The celebration was climaxed Saturday, May 7, with a barbecue served by Red Bridges to 6,000 employees and members of their families in the afternoon and a square dance in the evening at the new plant parking lot.

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Messages From Company

Mr. Harold Mercer, Firestone Textiles

Your invitation of April 26th to attend luncheon on May 5th during the celebration of the Twentieth Anniversary of Firestone Textiles in Gastonia and the dinner that evening honoring 20-Year employees is much appreciated. I deeply regret that important engagements previously made for that day and involving the plans of others will prevent my having the pleasure of being with you. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your organization of loyal men and women whose devotion and skills have made our Gastonia plant an integral and important manufacturing facility in our constant objective of producing the finest tires in the world.

Harvey S. Firestone, Jr., Chairman.

Mr. Harold Mercer, Firestone Textiles

Thanks very much for your invitation to attend the open house and banquet celebrating your 20 years of successful operation in Gastonia. I wish I could be with you, but I have commitments and appointments this week that make this impossible. I do want to congratulate you and your organization, however, on your splendid operation and performance in Gastonia and ask that you extend my very best wishes to your entire organization.

Lee R. Jackson, President.

four days of the anniversary celebration. Left below—Students crowd the entrance under the "Welcome" sign. Right—Families entering the plant gate.

