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GASTONIA

NORTH CAROLINA

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Bennettsville Plant



•• Most recent aerial photograph of the Bennettsville, S. C., unit of Firestone Textiles Company. Originally part of Marlboro Cotton Mills, the Bennettsville factory has been operated since 1943 as a Firestone company facility producing tire cord fabric—first in cotton but in recent years, all-synthetics materials.

It is a leading producer of specialized textiles in the SC Coastal Plain area. Factory manager is Edwin S. Fuller, who transferred from the Gastonia plant in early 1970.

A framed copy of this photo has been added to the Gastonia plant conference room collection of Firestone domestic and foreign production facilities.

Storm Brochure Distributed

If you know what to do when a severe storm threatens, you're your own best protection of life and property, notes James W. Denning, North Carolina Civil Defense Director.

Through local Civil Defense offices a flyer is being distributed, to acquaint citizens with measures designed to help people help themselves in hurricane and/or tornado emergency.

Included in the flyer are Hurricane Season safety measures, a hurricane tracking chart and a message from Gov. Scott.

"Too few people realize that hurricane damage is not confined to coastal areas," Denning said, recalling the destruction wrought to the Virginias and Kentucky mountains by Hurricane Camille last year, and to North Carolina by Hurricane Hazel in 1954.

'Turn Left' Added To Library

Latest Firestone movie to be placed on permanent loan to the Gastonia plant is "Turn Left to Win", the 1969 coverage of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Memorial Day "500" classic.

Firestone films are available to civic groups, clubs, schools, church groups and for other showings. Loan of films on permanent placement at Gastonia may be had by making request to the industrial relations department.

The 1970 Indy film, "Victory in May" and several other Firestone productions may be ordered through the IR department. Company films are distributed through Association-Sterling Films. Gastonia and Bennettsville are served from the regional office in Atlanta.

A Second 'Career'

"Stick to your bush, if you'd pick the most huckleberries," runs an old country saying. It's somewhat the principle on which Fred Chastain operated during the almost 35 years he was employed at Firestone, Gastonia.

Working his last day in early summer, Chastain became the most recent to retire here. Beginning in early 1936, he spent all his service years in the vari-

FRED CHASTAIN
All in Carding



ous jobs of carding—the earlier days as speeder tender, then drawing-frame operator, and more recently "at the cards."

As a boy, the Brevard, N. C. native moved to Pickens County, S. C., where his introduction to textiles was in a cotton mill at Liberty. He worked at several places in cotton processing, but when he moved to Gastonia and Firestone in the mid-1930s, he purposed to "stay put."

ON HIS retirement day, he reminisced about the field of textiles he knows best: carding. Many changes. Notable progress. Everlasting adjustments to changes. In the News office he reviewed some history of carding, going back to New England and the textiles factory system development.

Mrs. Chastain (Elsie) is an inspector in the cloth room. She, too, has "stayed put," with her 25th work anniversary coming up.

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Continuous Projects FOR GARDEN CLUB

Variety Garden Club of Firestone will join the other nine units of the Gaston Council of Garden Clubs in a project of planting more trees this fall at the Garrison Blvd. entrance to Lineberger Park.

Mrs. Carl Stowe Sr., retired Firestone plant hostess, is current Variety Club president. Mrs. Stowe noted that the club's major project this season has been helping in beautification at Lineberger and other locations within the city.

At the May Day Festival in the Park this spring, the 10 participating garden clubs sold potted plants, crafts and other

items, proceeds going to beautify the Garrison Blvd. Lineberger Park entrance and erect a memorial plaque for the Avenue of Trees.

The trees have been donated by individuals in memory of deceased relatives and friends.

Garden Clubs over the past three years have spent more than \$7,000 for planting trees, shrubbery and flowers. The clubs, working with the City Council, have helped to provide improvement in the parking areas at Lineberger, building a concrete skating rink, and doing conservation work on the creek banks.

'Golden Days' Of Sports Recalled

"Remember the good old days of the Firestone Sports Banquets when Ralph Johnson — back then, plant recreation director—ramrodded the annual spring get-togethers?" asked one of a 'great moments in sports' features in a July issue of The Gaston Independent.

The newspaper story recalled some of the lingering glory of Firestone sports history, harking back to the days when Firestone's girls' softball teams were nigh-invincible, over a 70-game period spanning several years.

Johnson, now a third-term City councilman and manager of employee relations here, "remembers those events well,"

said the story. HE COACHED the girls' softball team that was unbeaten in 70 straight contests, and counts this period of recreation life as one of his high spots, along with the renowned banquets at which such greats as "Swede" Nelson, Earle Edwards and Harry Grayson were speakers.

The story quoted Johnson as saying "But I guess the biggest thrill I ever had was coaching and watching my son Buddy pitch a perfect baseball game when he was 12 years old."

Buddy, now with the Gastonia Fire Department, erased 18 consecutive St. Micheal's batters, **More on Page 2 •**

FIRESTONE PLAYGROUND Doug Was 'First'

For best aim and follow-through with horseshoes, the prize was a blue ribbon for Douglas Cloninger (right) who participated in the tournament at Firestone playground in the early part of the recreation season which continued into August.

The horseshoe playoff was part of a variety of games competition at parks and playgrounds operated in summer by the Gastonia City Recreation Department.

Doug won first place in the 11 to 13 division. He plays left field and sometimes pitches as a member of the Noon Optimist Club team in the Harold Mercer Little League. Doug's grandmother, Maude Bryson, works in spinning at Firestone.

The Firestone wading pool and other facilities along with 16 other units within the City Recreation system operated this summer, offered a wide assortment of activities and special



events. The closing week was observed as "Back to School," with a farewell party.