

Endless Belt Has Proud History

"Endless belt has a unique heritage that has made the people who work here into a tightly knit family." This appraisal came from Edgar Loftis who was Superintendent of Endless Belt back in the 1960's and 70's. Loftis, who retired from Olin in 1982, returned recently to look at old pictures and ledgers and trace Endless Belt's history for PROFILE.

According to Loftis, Endless Belt began in a loft on 23rd street in New York City. Harry Straus, the founder of Ecusta, bought patents for a process and machinery to make belts that the U.S. cigarette makers could use on their cigarette making machines. The belts form the paper and tobacco into the cigarette's cylinder shape. Endless means that the belt has no seam, for a seam would cause a high percentage of defective cigarettes.

Many of the department's traditions were established in that New York loft. Producing the belts was a job that required skill and dedication. An incentive pay system rewarded the most efficient and ambitious workers.

Endless belt moved to North Carolina and was in production before the new plant was making paper. Key executives, including the plant manager, Otto Goepert; the sales manager, Peter Eberle and the engineer, Richard Landeck, moved here with the operation.

The belts made here had the reputation as being the finest in the world. While belts were manufactured in France, Germany and Switzerland, cigarette manufacturers from around the world preferred the belts made in this plant.

By the mid seventies, Endless Belt was producing 100,000 belts a month. Records show that in one single day 5,066 belts were produced. At its peak the operation was working two shifts and employing 187 hourly workers.

Some belts went to other industries. Endless belts were used to shape soda straws, to wrap chewing gum and to transport paper on printing presses.

"I think that the people who work in Endless Belt are easily the hardest working group I have ever seen."

Loftis concluded, "Each day they came ready to work."

Lawrence Watson started in Endless Belt 38 years ago. Belts were at first ironed by hand. Later the machine in the old photo at right was installed. The current machine irons a batch of belts in about seven minutes.

Some were especially remarkable. Laura Paxton probably heads the list. She was a weaver that had an ease and grace that made it look easy. She averaged 150 belts a day—almost double what might be a good day for someone else.

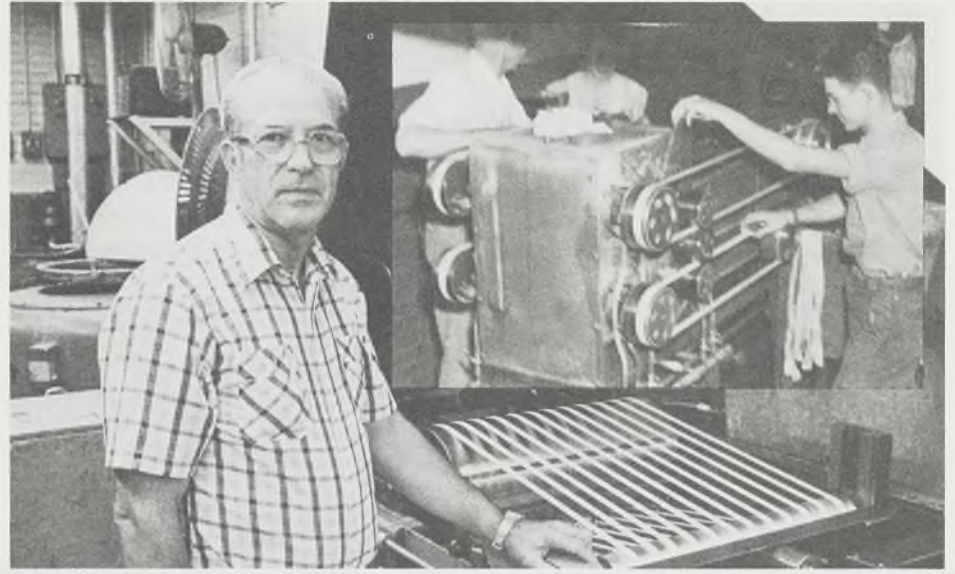
Evellyn Erwin has been in Endless Belt 36 years. She has done about every job and is now an examiner. She remembers starting at 40¢ a hour. Do you recognize any of the examiners from the old photo at right?

Christmas and retirement parties are a special tradition in Endless Belt. Loftis explained that there is no time to socialize on the job so these parties are looked forward to. There is laughing, crying and carrying on. There are so many presents and so much food, it is just like a family party in someone's home.

Clara Stepp is the senior member of Endless Belt with 41 years, 8 months. She is pulling hooks, a job which determines the size of each belt.



Recognize any of these Endless Belt operators or know when this picture was taken? Call Public Relations at 2255 if you have any information.



Olin Awards \$9,600 In Scholarships

Ecusta Paper and Film continues its program of strong support to students seeking higher education. This fall 17 students will receive Olin scholarship funds.

The 1984 scholarship recipients are:

Brevard College: D'linda Patterson, Robert Whitaker, Venessa Fricker, Kenneth Gray

UNC-A: Anthony Thomas, Amy Winterhalter, Chris Betz, Karen Thompson

Asheville - Buncombe Tech: Teresa Eubanks, Teresa Lutz

Blue Ridge Tech: Paul Pressley, James Houston, Melody Arnette.

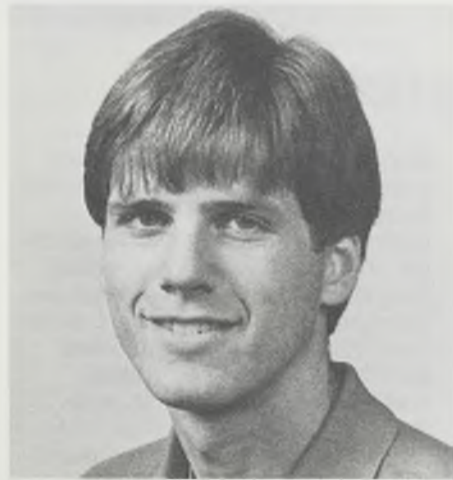
Western Carolina University: Mary Welch

Gardner-Webb College: Laura Bassett

Mercy School of Nursing: Joyce Flynn, Tammy Keller

Information and application forms for 1985 are available at the Public Relations Office. Scholarships include technical grants, dormitory assistance (UNC-A only) and financial aid to approved nursing programs.

Chris Betz - Olin parents - James H. Glazener, Employee Relations; Pat Glazener, Marketing



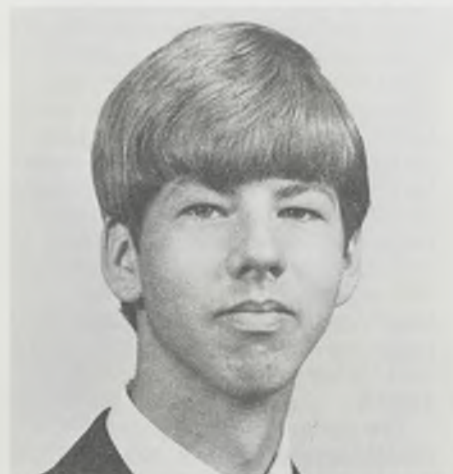
Amy Winterhalter - Olin parent - Al Winterhalter, Olin Works



Paula Pressley - Olin parent - Linda Pressley, Paper Manufacturing



Melody Arnette - Olin parent - Geraldine Burnette, Paper Manufacturing



Anthony Thomas - Olin parent - Charles Thomas, Maintenance



Teresa Lutz - Olin parent - David Lutz, Paper Manufacturing