



*Local Ford Employees photographed in 1915*

## Automotive Industry

The early years of the 20th century were formative ones for Windsor. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler all had early subsidiaries and sister companies located in the east part of Windsor.

The Ford Motor Company of Canada and its associated organizations was one of the largest and earliest of these automotive giants. By 1910, Ford grew to occupy nearly 100 acres in the Sandwich East community in present day Windsor. This area, parallel in stature but different in development to Walkerville, was soon to be known as Ford City.

It mushroomed quickly to a population of 16,000 by 1928. Ford City was also ground zero for the 99 Day Strike in 1945. Ford workers were seeing dramatic changes on the factory floor as Ford moved into automated

commercial production. Workers unionized in 1941-42 and after negotiations stalled in 1945 decided to strike.

In the landmark strike, the union had a list of 24 demands. However, the most important demand was union security and check-off dues (mandatory union dues). This is now commonplace and known as the Rand Formula after Supreme Court Justice Ivan Rand's decision in 1946.

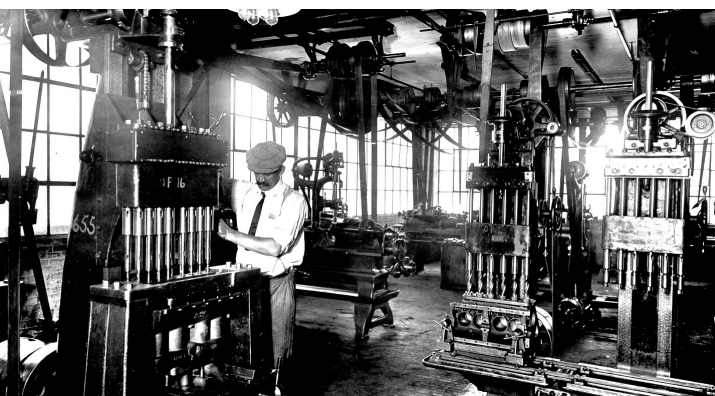
Many women worked in industrial assembly during World War II but many were forced to return home after the end of the war. Women held secretarial, administrative, nursing, and food service positions in this post-war period, but it was not until 1977 that Ford hired women to work on assembly lines.

As traditional manufacturing subsided, the Canadian Auto Workers Union (CAW) in Windsor grew to encompass numerous other industries such as health care and hospitality. After a series of mergers, CAW is now known as Unifor; the largest private sector union in Canada.

While many of the plants (Ford alone had six at one point) are now closed, the legacy of automobile manufacturing is felt not only in Windsor, but across North America through its influence on the labour movement.

Today, the Ford City Business Improvement District continues to build on the strengths of the neighbourhood.

Regular events like farmers markets, weekly community dinners, open mic coffee houses, as well as arts and heritage festivals are actively promoted.



*Ford manufacturing plant and worker in 1915*



*Truck on display in Ford City*



*Arts, Culture & Heritage Festival*