

# Merc Commment

Special issue



Mercury Mark 10 outboard, 10-hp, 1957.

**40th anniversary Mercury Marine**

# "Thanks, Mercury Marine"

For 40 years, you and Mercury Marine have been building products that make a lot of people happy. Just about every day, owners from all parts of the world write to say how pleased they are with Mercury, MerCruiser, Mariner and Quicksilver products.

Some of those letters are reprinted below, as a way of letting you know that your work is appreciated by many, many, satisfied customers. Your efforts, combined with those of thousands of other Mercury employees, prompt these many testimonies of excellence. You can feel good about that, because that's what good business is all about in the first place, isn't it?

The power tilt and trim on my new Merc outboard is just super. I sure get a lot of looks from other people at the boat ramp when they see it go to work. I just sit back and grin.

Thanks for reading my letter, and say "hi" to Black Max.

**Donna H., Houston, Texas**

The Merc 7.5-hp outboard is without question the finest piece of machinery I have ever used. Effortless starting speed when you need it and excellent performance during trolling.

**Neil C., Oakland, California**

My parents have a 35-hp Mercury engine that has not given us one bit of trouble in ten years. After hours and hours of pleasure boating and skiing, the old Merc still runs well.

When it recently came time for me to purchase a boat and motor, it was obvious that my choice would include a Mercury motor. I have been complimenting Merc for ten years anyway.

If you need me for any sales promotions, don't hesitate to give me a call.

**R.M., Hamilton, Ontario**

I love my new 228-hp MerCruiser. I have always had faith in Mercury products and that's why this is my third. I wouldn't use any other kind.

This past weekend was the first outing for my new motor and it performed like a champ. It pulled five adult waterskiers on slalom out of the water. The total weight of the skiers was 800 pounds. That speaks for itself.

If you ever need to convince anyone that a Mercury product is the best that money can buy, give the customer my name and address.

**P.S., Bonaire, Georgia**

Your engine mounted on a new Glastron SSV-176 hull is just too impressive to explain in words. In this age of bad products, cheap manufacture and cutting corners to make profits, all I'll say is "congratulations," because you have built a real fine product.

Please keep it up.

**J.P., Sioux Falls, S.D.**

I just love the way my new Merc 110 handles and operates. So do all my fishing pals. I have it mounted on a new 14-foot Alumacraft.

I cannot at this time suggest any improvements on your motor. I can only say that I am 58 years old, have a heart condition and live on Medicare. With the electric start engine, boating and fishing are now my favorite hobbies. Thanks.

**Ronald B., Reedsburg, Wisconsin**

**Congratulations, you have built a fine product.**

Great little engine (20-hp). After 1000 hours, I have yet to put a wrench to this one. My next engine will be another Merc 20, if this one should ever give out. I have three brothers-in-law, and they all own Mercs, too. Wouldn't have it any other way.

**R.F., Jeanerette, Louisiana**

(cont'd on inside back cover)

# "She has no bad habits"

"She's got no bad habits," an early advertisement said of the first Mercury model engines. "Choose a Mercury," another brochure urged, "if you want a real faithful pal, a motor that will add to your fun and eliminate annoyance."

Over the years, the ad slogans have changed, but the basic themes have remained constant. The company offered dependability and recreational pleasure to boaters 40 years ago as well as it does today.

Through the years, however, product advertisements shifted emphasis as trends developed and later faded. At various stages, Mercury ads heralded engineering firsts, marathon racing stamina,

long term reliability and other salient features of the fearless outboards.

Early drawings depicted the Comet and other "Buck Rogers" inspired engines that offered three-horsepower of ultra-streamlined performance for as low as \$59.95. During World War II, Merc engines became "fighting motors" built for Uncle Sam's forces and used in pumps, generators, chain saws and compressors. These Mercury engines, the advertisements said, might have gone fishing had it not been for the war.

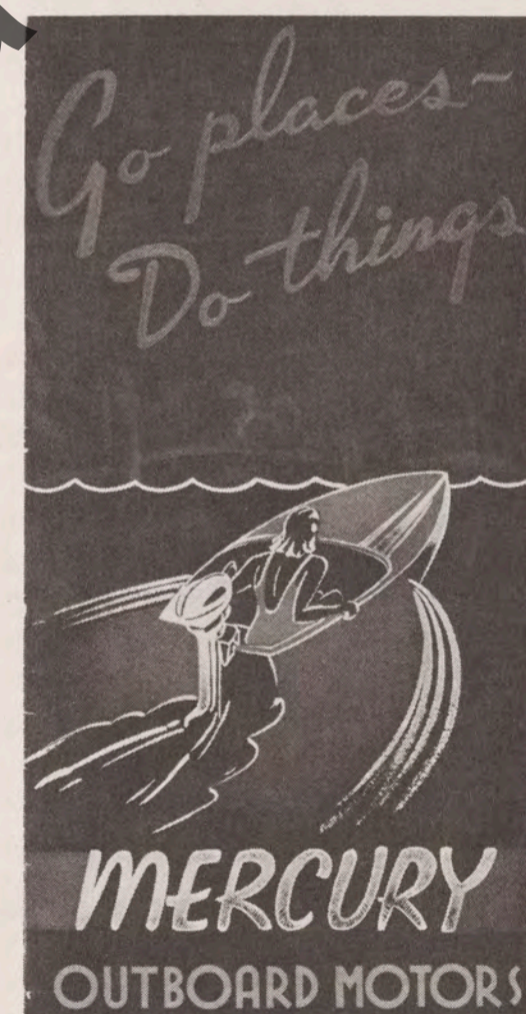
When production of outboards resumed on a scheduled basis during the 1946 model year, ads touted the advantages of full-jeweled power and offered readers a wealth of information and trivia on engine performance specs. For the buyer who wanted detailed information, one brochure carefully defined the term "horsepower" by saying that term is the standard unit of power measurement for rating "electric motors, diesel engines, steam engines, aircraft engines, Mercury outboard motors and any other prime movers." The largest Mercury "prime mover" at the time bristled with six horses of brute power.

By the mid 1950's, the Mercury reputation as a reliable outboard had been established and advertising copy paused long enough to assume a new slant, the luxury of outboard power. Merc engine portraits during the period were taken with Cadillac cars as backdrops. As soon as Detroit started growing fins on cars, boat manufacturers did the same. And the

parallel between cars and boats was etched all the more clearly by the admen.

Testimonials were solicited from well-known celebrities as diverse in appeal as Cameron B. Waterman, inventor of the first outboard, and Roy Rogers, saddled in a Merc-powered boat and wearing his ivory-handled six-shooter and ten-gallon hat.

Mercury ads have a history as colorful as that of the engines themselves. Ads appearing here and on page 17 of this issue give you a glimpse of that many-sided history, which is now 40 years old and today includes MerCruiser stern drives and inboards, Mariner outboards and Quicksilver accessories as well.



1940



1941

## You could buy a pack of cigarettes for 10¢ in 1939

Forty years ago there were just a few workers who built engines in the newly-established Kiekhaefer Corporation in Cedarburg, Wisconsin. Through the years, the employee ranks have increased as plants were built in other U.S. locations and in Canada and overseas as well. At the same time, Mercury branch organizations were established to serve as a link between the manufacturing plants and the dealers and boatbuilders who sell Mercury Marine products.

The company has grown substantially from the handful of workers who began with the young corporation headquartered just outside of Milwaukee in 1939 to the many thousands of people who work at locations around the world today, each of them a Mercury Marine employee, wherever he or she may work.

### FIRST 40-YEAR MEN

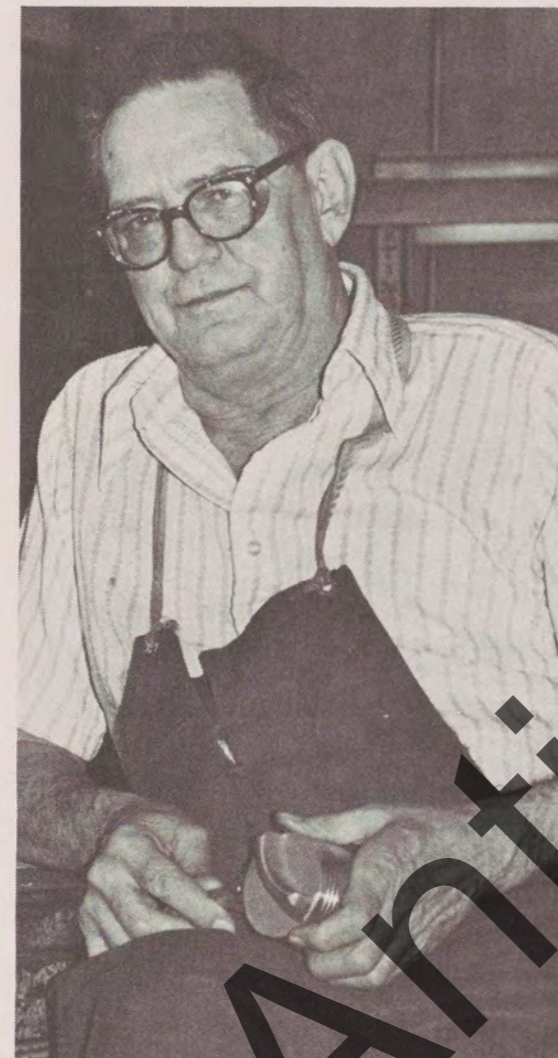
Through those many years came two employees, Ed Dehling and George Sekas. Both men have been with the company since the first days, and both men continue in their jobs at plant 1 in Cedarburg today. These two are the first employees to reach the forty year service mark with the company, and both recalled those earliest months and years with the corporation in an interview recently.

### THOR OUTBOARDS

Dehling and Sekas had worked for the company that manufactured Thor outboards in Cedarburg before it went bankrupt in 1938. Both men stayed on when Carl Kiekhaefer purchased the assets of that defunct company and returned it to operation in the first

months of 1939. Before long, Dehling and Sekas were helping Kiekhaefer rebuild the remaining stock of Thor engines in what marked the preparation for the yet unknown Mercury outboard, which was to be born just a few months later.

Kiekhaefer had organized his young business with the confidence of a successful engineer. Before long, he parlayed his \$25,000 investment into a thriving manufacturing concern. What were those beginnings like? Dehling and Sekas remember those days clearly. Both of them recall Carl Kiekhaefer's exhortation, "Stick with me fellas." And stick with him they did.



ED DEHLING

For the 40-year veterans, the year 1939 brings to mind memories of a time when cigarettes like Marvel and Cavalier, for example, sold for a dime a pack. It was also a time when wages were thirty cents an hour and when fifty cents of gas was more than enough for a Saturday night on the town, the two men said.

"We had a good crew in those days," Sekas remembers. The longtime veteran recalled a simple, yet efficient assembly operation where some of the machines used in production were powered by belts driven from a large overhead shaft.

### ATTACHING PROPS

One of the first tasks Sekas recalls during his early days with the company was cleaning gas tanks after their seams were soldered. Dehling said his first duties in the new Kiekhaefer corporation included attaching propellers and test-running the freshly-assembled machines.

Were outboards popular in the late 1930's? "Sure they were," Sekas said. "Just about anyone who ever rowed a boat across a lake against the wind wanted an outboard. By 1947 there were many outboard brands available," he said. Kiekhaefer entered an industry that soon became abundant in competitors, many of whom did not make it successfully through too many years of production.

### \$42.50 OUTBOARD

The first Kiekhaefer-produced Thor outboards offered customers a single cylinder 2.4-hp engine for \$42.50. A twin cylinder engine sold for \$82.50 and a three cylin-

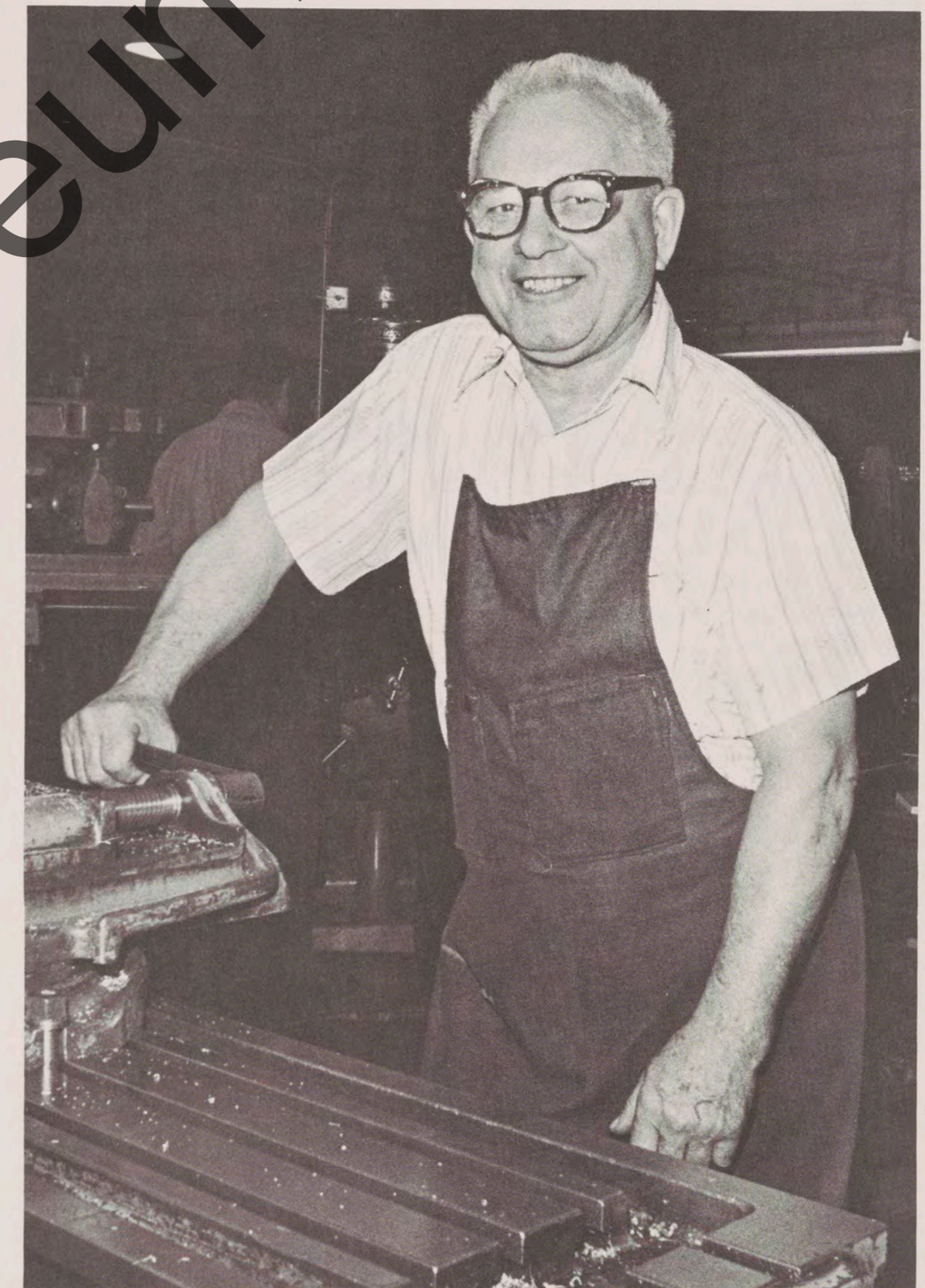
der 6-hp engine was available for \$110 F.O.B. Cedarburg. Advertisements for the first Kiekhaefer engines promoted outboards that were strong enough to power a boat "regardless of wind, weeds, waves or weight." The earliest engines were sold to the boating public with the promise of "more power for less money."

Production runs of the "Have-more-fun-in-1941" outboards marked the last full year of outboard operations before the war intervened, turning the company to other manufacturing pursuits. During the war, Dehling spent time overseas with the military, but an injury kept Sekas at home and at work in Cedarburg. The Mercury employee recalls the many overtime hours that dedicated company employees put in to assist the war effort. A limited supply of outboard engines was manufactured for Navy use, but most energy was concentrated on production of engines for use in target drones, chain saws and air compressors.

### WAR EXPERIENCE

"The war experience really gave us a boost in engine technology," Sekas said. Soon after the war, the company headed full tilt into outboard production once again. Many of the old machines are still in service today. Sekas himself operates a 1953 Merc 7.5-hp engine, which he says still runs just fine.

What is it like to spend 40 years in one company? "I hadn't planned it that way," Sekas said. "In fact I couldn't even envision 20 or 25 years in one place when I started."



GEORGE SEKAS

But he and Dehling both held on throughout the years.

This special anniversary issue of MerComment is dedicated to

the efforts of George and Ed and to all longtime workers and retirees, for without them and you, there could be no Mercury Marine.

**Part 1****The demand grew rapidly for Kiekhaefer engines**

When Carl Kiekhaefer purchased the assets of a defunct outboard motor plant in early 1939, the inventory included about 300 outboard engines that had been rejected by a mail order firm because they wouldn't work satisfactorily.

Kiekhaefer didn't know it at the time, but he was about to enter the outboard manufacturing business. For 11 years previously, he had served as chief engineer for a company that manufactured magnetic clutches, brakes and other

similar devices.

He fully intended to continue building magnetic and electrical products when he purchased the outboard facility with the help of his father and other Cedarburg locals who pooled \$25,000 for the venture.

But it had taken \$23,000 to pay the creditors for the bankrupt company, leaving only \$2,000 in working capital. Regardless of his long-range plans, Kiekhaefer saw

welded together.

To test the first two-banger, engineers took it out onto a small lake near Cedarburg on a cold and snowy November morning. The weight of the heavy snow slowed the craft, forcing engineers to haul the boat out of the water periodically, turn it upside-down and bang the ice off it before testing could proceed.

After determining that the engine was workable, Kiekhaefer's crew packaged it for traveling and drove all night to keep an eight a.m. appointment with the company that expressed interest in purchasing two-cylinder outboards.

Ten people greeted Kiekhaefer's

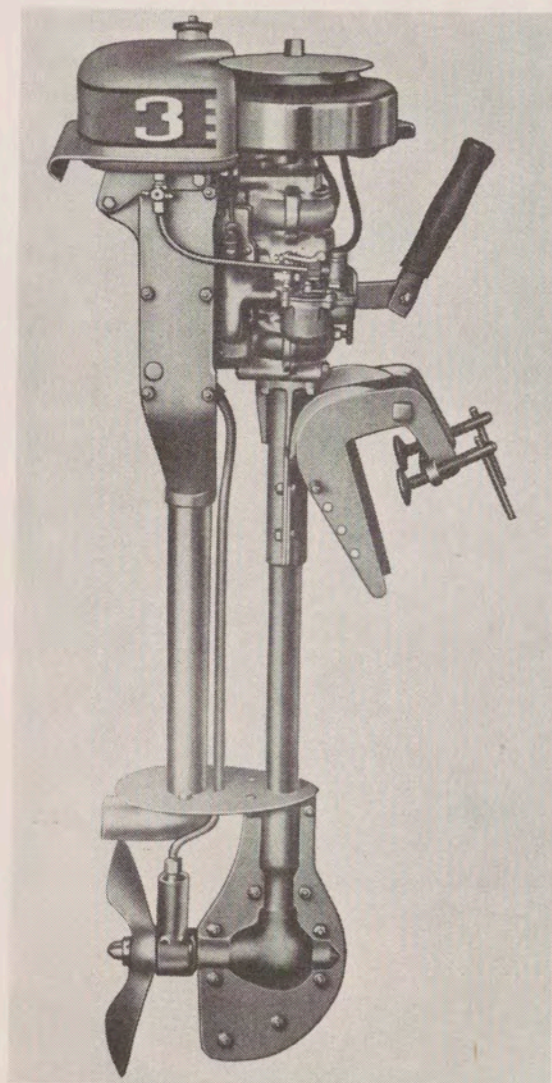
**Outboards were in short supply prior to WW II**

the 300 defective motors as an opportunity to quickly raise some desperately-needed cash.

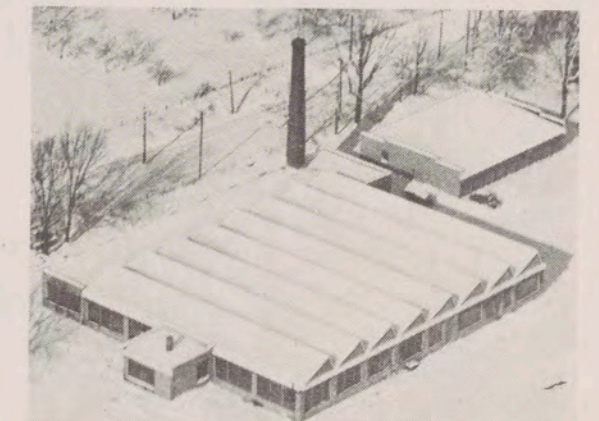
**ADDITIONAL ORDERS**

Rebuilt and improved, the rejected motors performed so well that the original purchaser not only accepted them, but ordered more. Outboard motors were in short supply, so Kiekhaefer soon found himself with an additional order for 500 motors. By August of 1939, three more orders raised the total to 2300 engines.

Before long, a second firm asked the young corporation to design and produce an alternate-firing twin-cylinder outboard. As the story goes, the twin prototype was fashioned from two singles

**1939 KIEKHAEFER THOR****1940 MERCURY STANDARD**

Left: E.C. Kiekhaefer supervises boxing of Thor engines rebuilt in 1939 for distribution as Sea King outboards by a mail order firm. Below: Original Cedarburg production plant facilities.



crew that morning, and each of them took turns driving the welded-together twin. The engine passed the day-long inspection, and the fledgling corporation was given an order for 2500 twins.

Although demand for the engines grew rapidly, Kiekhaefer decided that he did not want to become dependent entirely on secondary sales outlets over which he had no control. So he laid plans for an entirely new and more advanced outboard design and set out to build his own dealer organization. Earliest records show a roster of six employees on the payroll by the end of 1939. A year later the ranks had increased to 37.

Kiekhaefer's new engines were introduced under the Mercury name for the first time at the New York boat show in 1940. The entire display was transported from Wisconsin to Grand Central Plaza in the trunk of a Plymouth coupe.

**FIRST MERCS**

The first Mercury outboards in one and two cylinder versions incorporated a number of engineer-

ing design innovations that were later adopted by the entire outboard motor industry. Among their revolutionary features were

-- A rubber rotor water pump which ended the days when a single grain of sand could cause water pump failure. The new pump could tolerate sand, silt, vegetation and suspended solids without damage.

**The Mercury name debuted in 1940 at the New York Show**

-- A one-piece streamlined housing which enclosed the driveshaft, cooling water line and exhaust system. Previously these parts were mounted separately and exposed to view and to damage.

The industry's reaction to the 1940 Mercury line indicated that

there was a tremendous market for truly new outboard motor designs. Production jumped to more than 16,000 engines that year, up 13,000 in just one season. Requests for Mercury dealerships were too numerous to be accommodated by planned production volume.

**GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS**

In March 1941, the government restricted the use of aluminum to military projects. A few months later, the Mercury News published this information for its dealer organization:

"These are rather disturbing times--most of us engaged in business have plenty to think about these days. This is particularly true of manufacturers like ourselves who have been experiencing considerable difficulty this year in obtaining sufficient materials due to the requirements of the National Defense Program.

"For the past several months, we have been hoping against hope that the situation might improve. But today we are faced with the inevitable . . . government restrictions on aluminum are now

KIEKHAEFER-POWERED TWO-MAN CHAINSAW, WW II



such that it is simply going to be impossible for us to obtain sufficient quantities of this metal to produce our motors according to original specifications. We are therefore compelled, to our great regret, to announce revision in our line of motors at this time. "To begin with: We are forced to withdraw the Comet Standard, the Streamliner and the Rocket DeLuxe. And our supply of the Comet DeLuxe is about exhausted at this time. It definitely is advisable for you to order whatever motors you will require for the balance of this season or even for the next season if you can possibly carry over an inventory. It is a fact that outboard motors will be mighty scarce next year, if available at all.

"We know that you will believe us when we say we are doing the very best we can! Bear with us,

won't you? Remember, we are moving heaven and earth to get motors into your hands."

Such heroic efforts notwithstanding, military requirements soon put a stop to recreational outboard production. So when the War Department publicized a need

### War needs halted general outboard production plans

for lightweight air-cooled engines to power chain saws for the Corps of Engineers, the small Kiekhaefer staff designed, built and tested a completely new engine within five weeks.

The design was accepted over

six competitive entries. Before long the corporation became a major producer of lightweight, two-cycle engines used in a variety of applications.

The war production board encouraged chain saw demonstrations to show loggers the new mechanized method for felling trees.

#### ARMY/NAVY "E"

By the end of the war, the company was the largest chain-saw engine builder in the world and a recognized authority on gasoline-powered engines for radio-controlled target aircraft. Its military production record earned the corporation an Army-Navy "E" flag with four stars for excellence in meeting production schedules. Post war outboard production resumed late in 1945 with 3- and 6-hp Mercury engines readied for introduction in the 1946 season.

## Part 2

# The higher-hp quest begins

In the spring of 1947 Mercury introduced the famous Lightning, a two-cylinder alternate-firing engine with a 19.92 cubic inch displacement. Rated at 10 horsepower, it outperformed competitive motors rated twice as powerful. Among other features it had anti-friction ball, roller and needle bearings in all major bearing locations including connecting rods, crankshaft, driveshaft and propeller shaft.

Called "Full Jeweled Power," this feature was incorporated on all engines in the Mercury line for easier starts and longer motor life. Four of the Lightning engines were exhibited at the New York boat

show that year, each with more than 75,000 miles of boat testing logged during endurance tests.

From that point on, plant expansion was rapid. A new plant, which became the home office, was built on the Corium Dairy Farm site in Fond du Lac, and a year-round saltwater testing station was set-up at Sarasota, Florida.

The company's first official service training center was established in 1948. Before that time, training had been conducted in the service repair area for one to three students per week. The original service effort expanded quickly through the years, with 17

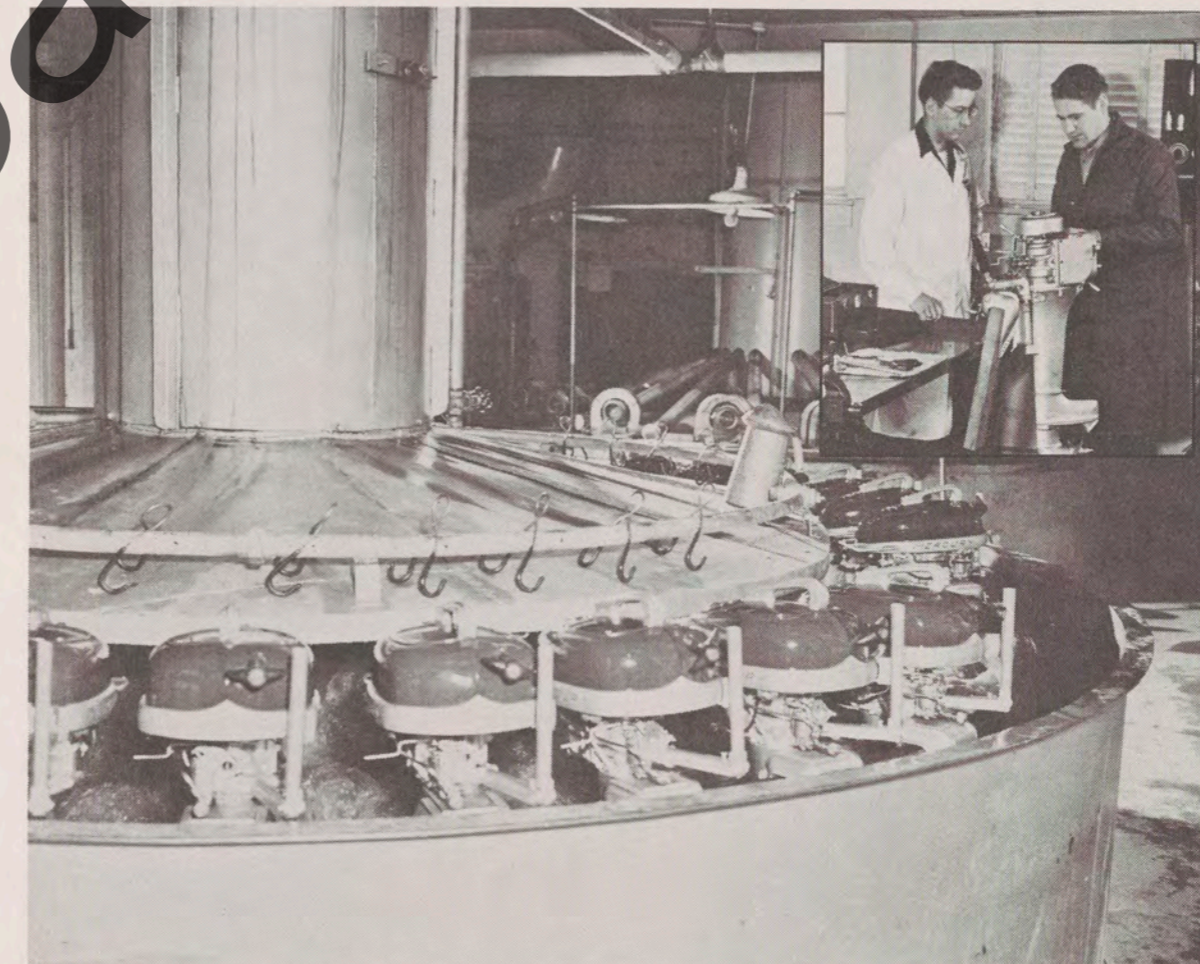
service centers today in the U.S. and Canada alone and more than 4,800 students enrolled in service courses each year.

That same year the Mercury art department was established in the east wing of the Corium barn, formerly the milk house. Company artists were enlisted to hand letter artwork on race boats, ski boats and race cars for the corporation. Lettering conditions were not always ideal -- after dark in a snowstorm, for example, or hanging over a boat which was rocking on the waves or applying an illustration to the side of a race car while the mechanics were raising and lowering it on a hoist.

#### FOUR-CYL. THUNDERBOLT

The company moved with speed into development and testing of higher-powered engines. This research led to the 40 cubic inch Thunderbolt, the industry's first four-in-line, two cycle engine, introduced in 1949. The Thunderbolt was the first standard production outboard to deliver one horsepower per cubic inch.

By 1950, the Kiekhaefer Corporation employed more than 850 people in the Fond du Lac and Cedarburg manufacturing plants. The Korean incident brought restriction on aluminum again, and the company developed and produced an 85-hp V-4 target drone engine with fuel injection. With propeller and all accessories, it weighed only 103 pounds, and was so compact that it fit into a 14-inch fuselage.



MERCURY OUTBOARDS in early test tank set-up. Inset: E. Behnisch, first service school instructor and current worldwide service director with C. Lepinski, current Mercury sales manager-distributors. Picture circa late 1940's.

Cont'd.

## Putting Mercs together in cattle stalls

In this period came continued facility expansion in Wisconsin, with a parts and service division at Beaver Dam, a boathouse, production plant and research center in Oshkosh, and new production plants in Cedarburg and Fond du Lac.

In 1952, the American Power Boat Association (APBA), the governing body controlling boat racing in the United States, approved for competition several hydroplane classes for stock outboard engines. Already in total command of all stock runabout classes, Mercury immediately became dominant in all stock hydroplane classes. During the period 1952 to 1957, APBA's roster of stock racing drivers swelled to more than 5000, nearly all of them using Mercury engines.

The famous Quicksilver lower



CRATING A MARK 5



FIRST FOND DU LAC PLANT

unit assembly, introduced before the Korean War, was also a major factor in Mercury dominance in outboard marathon and competitive events. Affectionately nicknamed the "Quickie" or the "Quick sliwer" because of its thin side-to-side profile, these lower units became popular for their ability to boost outboard speeds 20 to 30 percent or more on planing hulls.

The company continued development work in higher-horsepower outboards following the Korean conflict, introducing the industry's first six-cylinder outboard, the 60-hp Mark 75, in 1957.

### 50,000 MILE RUN

Two Mark 75 engines played a memorable role in the inauguration of the Florida Lake X proving grounds in 1957, each propelling a family-sized runabout 50,000 miles in 68 days of continuous running. The test boats attained an average speed of 30.3 miles per hour during this record-breaking endurance run. Both boats ran day and night through varying weather conditions, including heavy fog, below freezing temper-

atures, 40 mph winds and seven-foot waves.

Also introduced in 1957 was the two-cylinder, 10-hp Mark 10, which incorporated such outboarding firsts as underwater exhaust through the propeller hub and slanted lower-unit design to help eliminate snarling on vegetation.

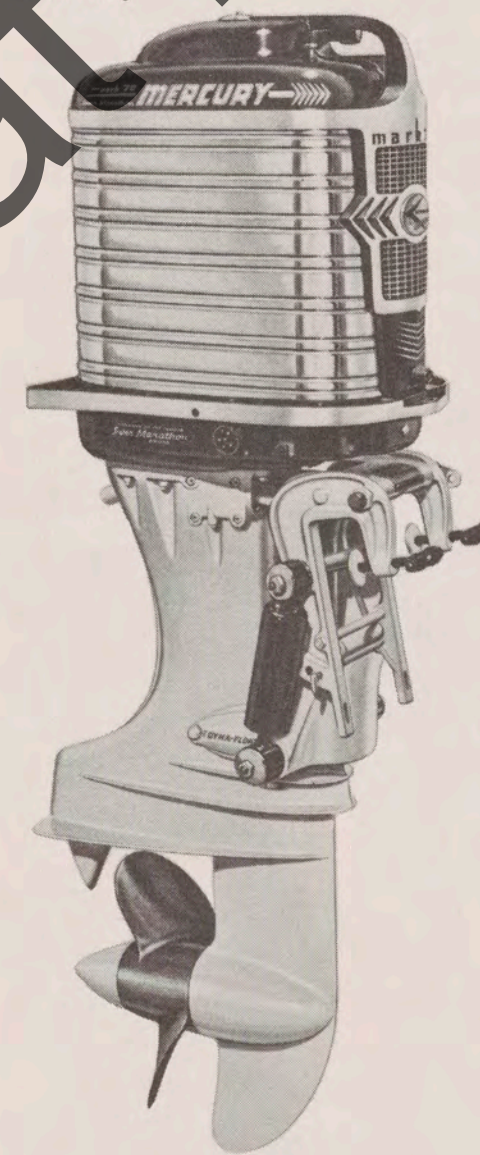
The Mark 10 and the 22-hp Mark 28 introduced automatic transmissions to outboarding, a first for the industry in 1957. The new tiller handle provided single



AFTER THE RACE

lever shift and throttle control. Advertising copy called it a new twist in outboards. "Smooth, quick-responding one hand control . . . just twist the tiller handle for forward, twist further for more speed; twist in the opposite direction for quiet, effortless reverse."

A standard production Mark 75 made news when it became the first outboard to exceed 100 miles per hour, achieving a two-way average of 107.821 mph over a kilometer course, certified by the American Power Boat Association. This high-performance run marked the return of the top outboard speed record to the United States. It had been held by European racing enthusiasts for many years previously.



MARK 78

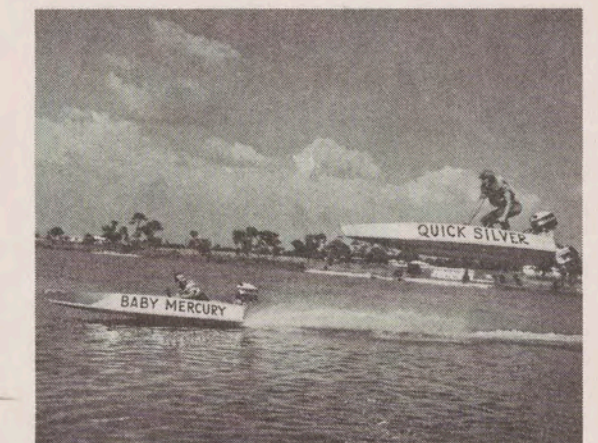
Among the engineering features introduced during 1957 were automotive-type shock absorbers for the new 45-hp Mark 58 and the 70-hp Mark 78. These shock absorbers cushion impact and control the kickup and return cycle of the lower unit when it strikes a submerged obstacle or



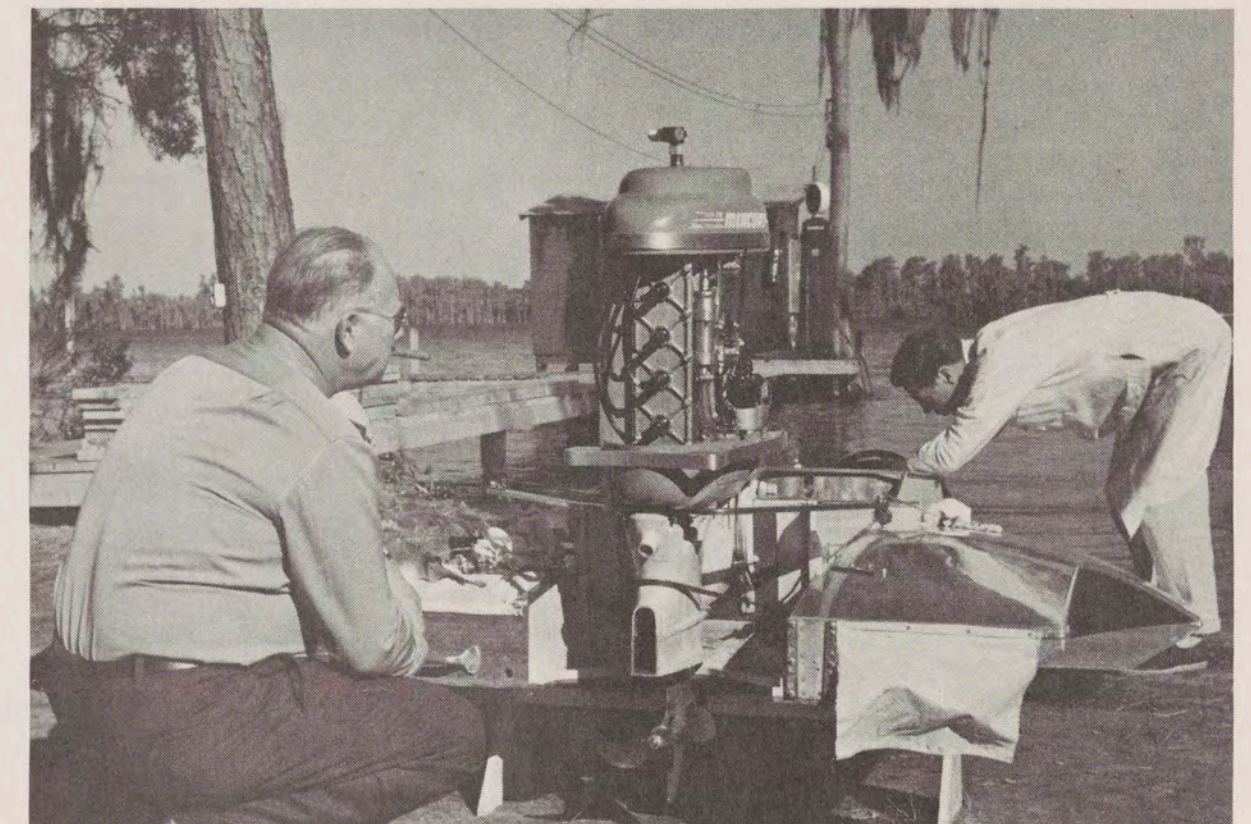
MERCURY KF-9

heavy floating object.

Continuing with many major engineering firsts, the company was able to point to many advances during this period. They included single-lever operation of throttle and shift controls on the entire Mercury line; the application of alternators instead of generators on outboards even before many cars had them; automotive-type fixed-jet carburetors on all Mercs; and Jet Prop exhaust, originally introduced on twin-cylinder engines in 1957 and 1958.



MERC LIGHTNING



CARL KIEKHAEFER (left) and an assistant prepare for a test run at Lake-X in 1958.

**Part 3**

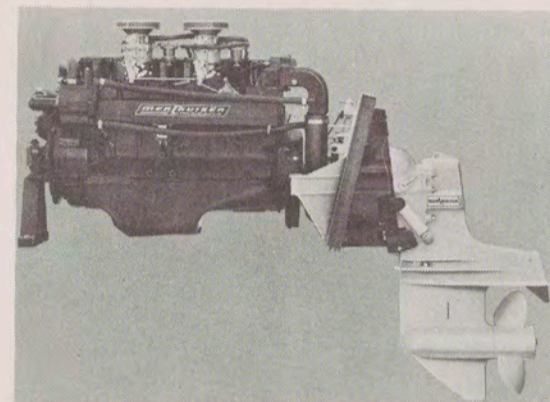
**Merc joins the Brunswick team**

In 1960 the company built a large plant at St. Cloud, Florida, to house its special products division. Today this plant specializes in sub-assembly of plastic and electronic parts for Mercury and Mariner outboards and MerCruiser stern drive engines.

**BRUNSWICK MERGER**

The Kiekhaefer Corporation merged with Brunswick on August 1, 1961. The announcement was made jointly by Brunswick president B. E. Bensinger and Mercury president E. C. Kiekhaefer. Also in 1961, an assembly plant was opened in Toronto, Ontario, and Kiekhaefer employment passed the 2000 mark. At the same time, Mercury demonstrated its confi-

dence in the continued strong role of higher-powered outboards by introducing the first production 100-hp outboard that year.



**EARLY MERCUISER**

During 1962, the first MerCruiser stern drive power packages were manufactured by Mercury. The MerCruiser units were first intro-

duced at the Chicago National boat show. The stern drives were marketed to give larger boats the outboard's advantages of flexibility, maneuverability and trailerability.

Factory branches were opened in Santa Ana/Hayward, California, and in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1962. Construction work in Atlanta was completed in less than two months. Tinted skylights in the Georgia facility provided "blue-sky" lighting whether the skies were blue or gray. The skylights were manufactured by the Kiekhaefer plant in St. Cloud.

During 1963, assembly of MerCruiser 110 and 140-hp stern drives was added to outboard production at the Toronto plant. At



**Quicksilver stainless steel propellers for Mercury Marine products are cast using a method similar to one created thousands of years ago by the Egyptians to make jewelry.**

the same time, Quicksilver "Formula 2" outboard oil production was also initiated at the plant for distribution to Mercury dealers in Canada. "Formula 2" is the forerunner of the current Formula

50-D oil which is produced and packaged in Fond du Lac and in Canada.

In 1964 Mercury celebrated its 25th anniversary by breaking ground for a multi-million dollar

expansion program in Fond du Lac. The first phase of the expansion included the administration building and a 160,000 square foot distribution center which was begun in mid-July and put into operation five months later.

In 1965, Mercury announced a new silencing system which achieved a 50 per cent reduction in outboard noise levels. Outboard motor horsepower advanced to 110 in 1966 and to 125 in 1968.

**\$9 MILLION EXPANSION**

The second major phase of the company's \$9 million expansion program was completed in 1966 with the construction of 370,000 square feet of plant area. Construction also began on a major manufacturing and assembly facility at Dandenong, Australia, near Melbourne.

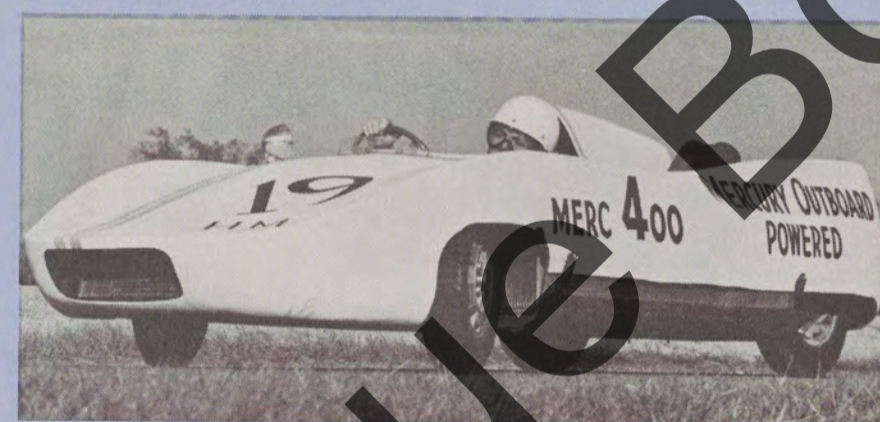
In 1967, the former Secaucus, New Jersey, branch moved to new



**MERC-POWERED HELICOPTER**

And all this time you thought we were making outboard motors and marine engines for recreational boaters, right?

Not always. Thanks to the ingenuity of various inven-



**CLASS H SPORTS CAR**

tors, Mercury Marine products have wound up in a lot of different contrivances.

Back in 1960 the Bensen Aircraft Corporation of Raleigh, NC, designed a one-man helicopter which was powered by a 60-hp Mercury outboard engine. The 450-pound craft had a maximum speed of 80 mph and was available in kit form to any handyman with \$2,000.

If a customer wanted more speed he could have followed the lead of John F. Bryan, Jr., of Montgomery, Alabama. He put his 45-hp Mercury powerplant inside

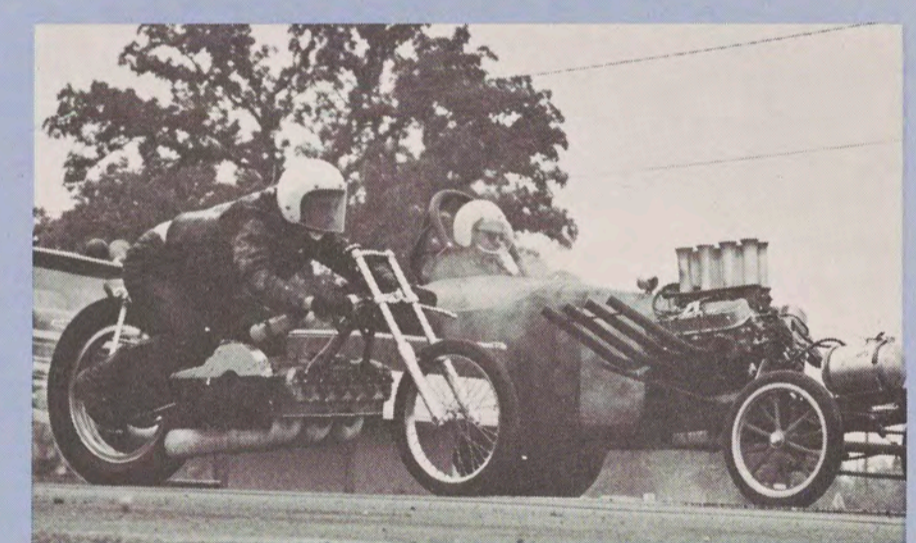


**MERC-POWERED MIDGET RACER**

an H Class sports car and toured the track at a crisp 115 mph.

Another race enthusiast proved the durability of a Merc 50 powerhead during a midget auto race in July, 1961, at the Aguora Speedway in Southern California. Driver John Stainer of San Bernardino, at the wheel of a Mercury-powered midget, flipped his car in a heat race. Later in the afternoon he came back to win the main event.

Not to be outdone, Dick Sana of Hinsdale, Illinois, re-



**MERC-POWERED DRAG BIKE**

moved the powerhead from a 110-hp Merc to power his drag bike. Using gasoline he reached speeds of more than 130 mph. Later, he converted to alcohol and increased his top speed to 152 mph. He competed 100 times in 1968 and won 60 per cent of his events.

Apparently Mercury's winning tradition is not limited just to boat racing.

## Expansion continues with Brunswick

quarters in nearby East Brunswick, where the branch remains today.

A Mercury-powered 40-foot houseboat named "Miss Sunshine" made history by towing a five-girl water ski team from Florida to Expo '67 in Montreal, Canada, and on to Wisconsin. The houseboat returned to Florida via Lake Michigan, the Mississippi to New Orleans and across the Gulf of Mexico. Powered by four 160-hp MerCruiser stern drives, the entire trip covered 6,600 miles.

In 1969, branch operations in Warwick, Rhode Island, were shifted to new facilities in Auburn, Massachusetts. The Capitol Engineering Company of Brookfield, Wisconsin, was also acquired by the Kiekhaefer Corporation. The engineering facility helped speed tooling and production of Kiekhaefer products.

A new distribution center was opened in 1970 in Orlando, Florida.

In 1971, MerCabo, a new salt-water test base, began operations in Placida, Florida. New distribution centers in Denver, Colorado, and Mississauga, Ontario, went into operation.

MerCruiser also introduced a 302 cubic inch V-8 matched with its #1 drive in 1971. This combination, called the 888, propelled MerCruiser into the big boat market for the first time.

**QUEENIE THE ELEPHANT** took to skis at Ft. Lauderdale one year to demonstrate the power of a single Merc 90-hp outboard. The pachyderm's skis measured 21 ft. long and three ft. wide. On another occasion, a 34 ft. houseboat powered by three 200-hp MerCruisers became the world's smallest aircraft carrier when a small airplane was launched and landed from its roof.



### Part 4

## Producing for world markets

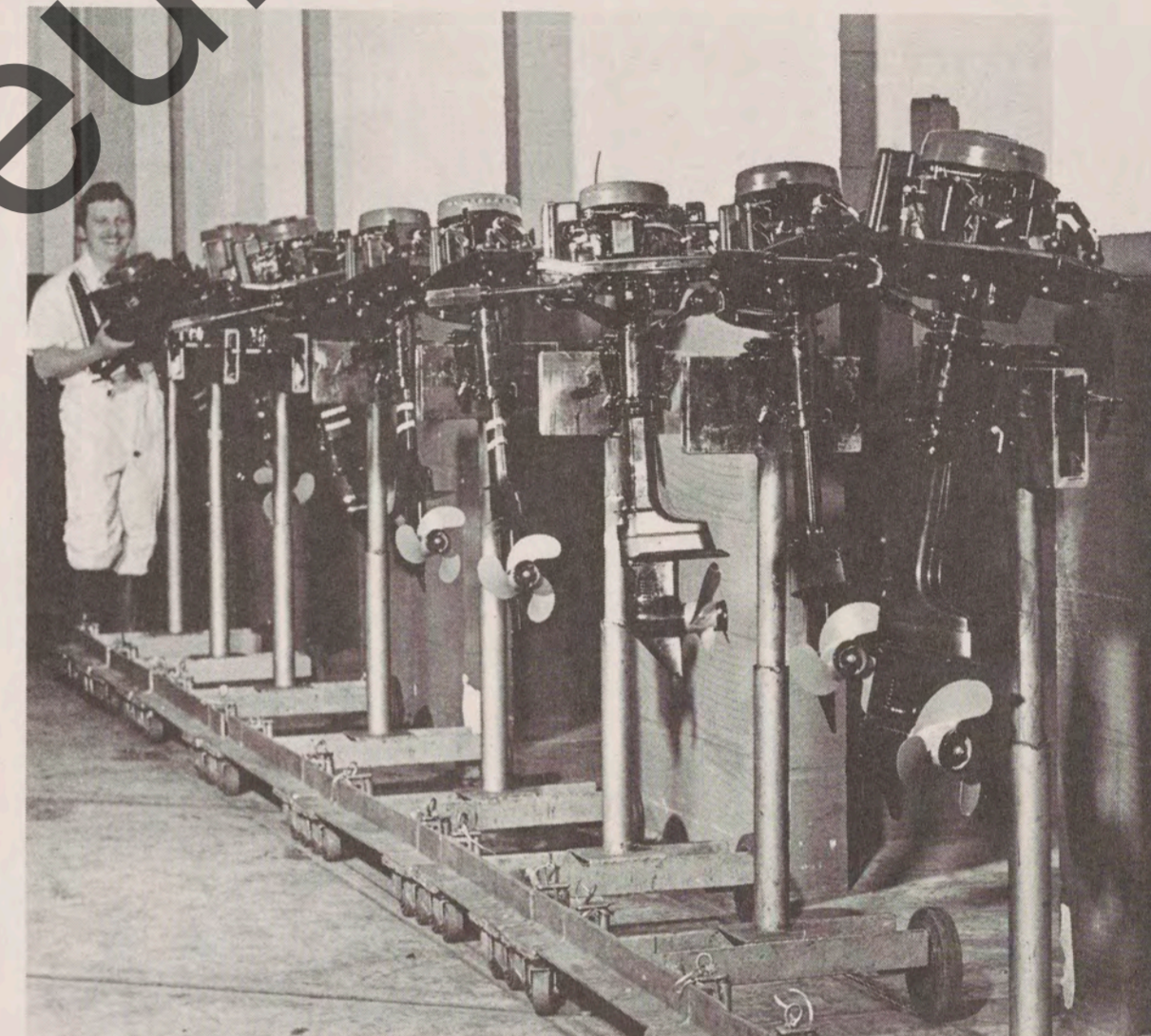
Mercury's first plant in Europe, at Petit-Rechain, Belgium, began producing outboard motors in 1972. The company also built a fully-equipped distribution, training and service center on the Meuse River in Belgium as a support facility to the production plant. But Europe wasn't the only place where Mercury was growing. Canadian assembly operations also moved into a new home in Mississauga.

Back in the States a new distribution center became operative in Fort Wayne, Indiana. A new overhead conveyor system was installed in the main assembly building in Fond du Lac and a warehouse was added to the machining facility. In Oshkosh, an engineering test facility was under construction on the Fox River just west of the company's manufacturing facility.

With the appointment of K. B. Abernathy as president and chief operating officer of the Brunswick Corporation, J. F. Reichert succeeded him as Mercury division president. When Reichert became president, the division employed 4500 people worldwide.

In 1973, the new year brought new construction. A 50,000 square foot addition neared completion at the company's manufacturing facilities in St. Cloud. Construction also commenced at Atlanta on a new \$1.25 million distribution center. The new branch facility encompasses nearly three times the area of the facility it replaced.

In Cedarburg a 40,000 square



**OUTBOARD ASSEMBLY--BELGIUM**

foot addition was constructed for greater manufacturing capacity at the company's machining facility. In Fond du Lac, construction began on a new \$3.5 million distribution center. Consisting of approximately 300,000 square feet of floor space, this structure serves as the main distribution source for Quicksilver parts and accessories sold throughout Mercury's national and international network of factory branches, distributors and dealers. The complex features a computer-controlled, highly mechanized system for warehousing and order-picking of parts

and accessories.

In August of 1973, a Mercury Twister II racing outboard set a world outboard speed record of 136.381 mph, breaking the old mark by more than 5 mph.

During 1974, a program initiated two years earlier made its first major move into the marine retail market when Mariner outboards were introduced in Australia with development of new distributor and dealer outlets. The new line of outboards originated as a joint venture between Mercury and Yamaha Motors of Japan to produce and market the outboard line.

# Staying on top of the marine propulsion business

**We Are Mercury Marine**  
**MerCruiser stern drives and inboards**

major market: boatbuilders

**Mercury outboards**  
 major market: marine dealers

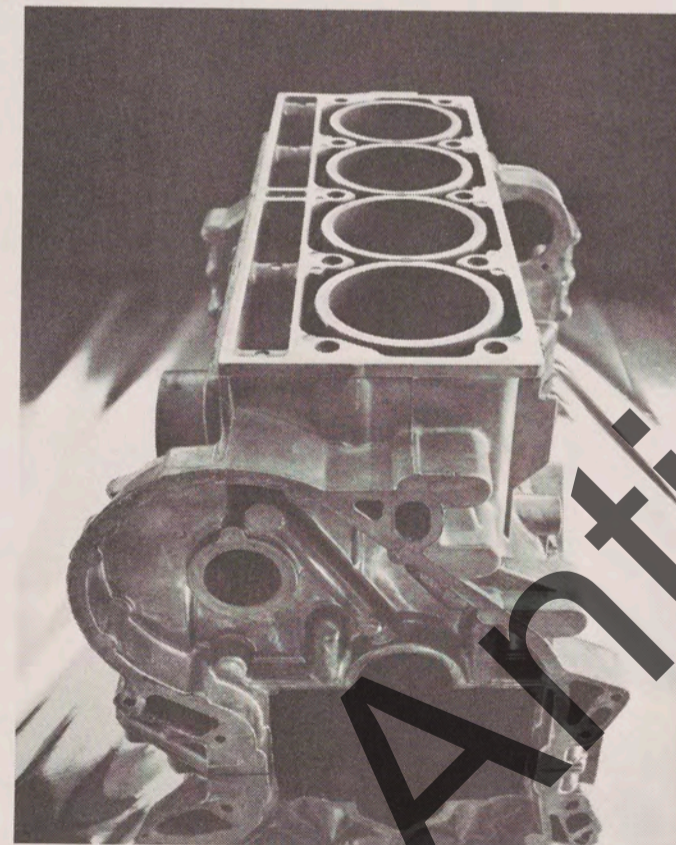
**Mariner outboards**  
 major market: marine dealers

**Quicksilver parts and accessories**  
 major market: marine dealers, boatbuilders, marinas






Right: MerCruiser die-cast aluminum block for 470 stern drive engine and a view showing a Mariner-powered workboat in action.



In 1974, MerCruiser stern drives were instrumental in establishing a new Miami to New York speed record of 22 hours, 41 minutes, 15 seconds, powering a deep-vee offshore hull.

Mariner-powered boats set a new endurance speed record in 1975 during a 546 mile run from Sydney to Brisbane, Australia. An actual 18-hour running time slashed more than nine hours off the previous record. That same year the first stage of a multi-million dollar plant expansion at Stillwater, Oklahoma, was also completed.

In 1976, Mercury opened factory branches in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Curacao and Singapore. The Stillwater plant was also expanded with plans to produce the Thruster electric outboard and MerCruiser stern drive units.

In 1976, Mariner outboards were introduced in Europe and the United States. In conjunction with the American debut, Mariner motors powered three boats up the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Chicago for a total of 4500 boat-miles. Another

adventurer used Mariner power to pilot his craft through four South American riverways for an amazing 7,000-mile, 100-day run.

MerCruiser engineers pioneered the first stern drive designed exclusively for marine use in 1976 with the new four-cylinder aluminum block 470 engine. The popular engine is die cast and assembled in Mercury plants.

When C. F. Alexander succeeded J. F. Reichert as Mercury Marine president in 1977, the company employed well over 6000 people. At the same time, Reichert was named president and chief operating officer of the Brunswick Corporation and K. B. Abernathy continued as Brunswick board chairman, a position he had held since 1976.

New factory branches were opened in Montreal and Halifax, Canada, and Mercury's branch in Santa Ana, California, expanded its warehouse and training facilities with a 10,000 square foot addition.

Expansion at the Stillwater plant continued in 1978 with a \$10 million addition to house engine

block machining and assembly operations for MerCruiser 470 stern drives. Two new V-6 outboards were also introduced, including the 150-hp Black Max and the most powerful production Mercury outboard, the 200-hp Black Max.

Mariner outboards continued steady expansion in U.S. markets with a dealer network and distribution center facilities established nationwide.

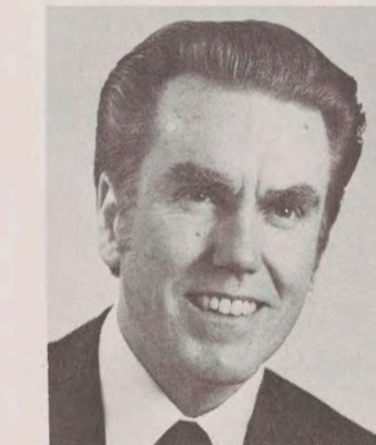
Team Mercury race drivers finished the 1978 season with a 11-2 record, posting victories in outboard competition that spanned the North American and European continents.

In 1979, Mercury engineers developed an idle stabilizer for V-6

outboards that electronically senses drop off in engine power by advancing the spark. Powerboat magazine also awarded the Mercury V-6 200-hp Black Max engine the outboard performance award for the year and the MerCruiser 260 received the stern drive performance award for 1979 as well. The awards are presented annually to honor outstanding achievements in hull and engine design as demonstrated in the magazine's annual performance trial evaluations.

At the Miami boat show, MerCruiser also introduced two new diesel-powered stern drives and two diesel inboard engines which will be made available during the 1980 model year.

C.F. Alexander



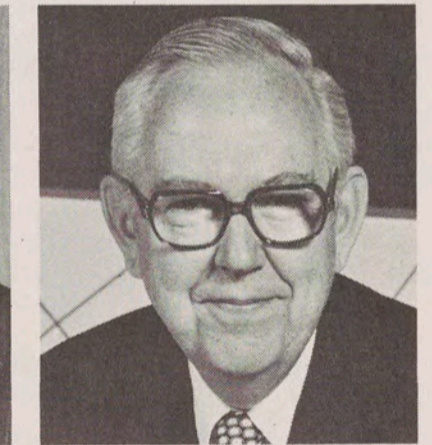
Mercury Marine President

J.F. Reichert



Brunswick President

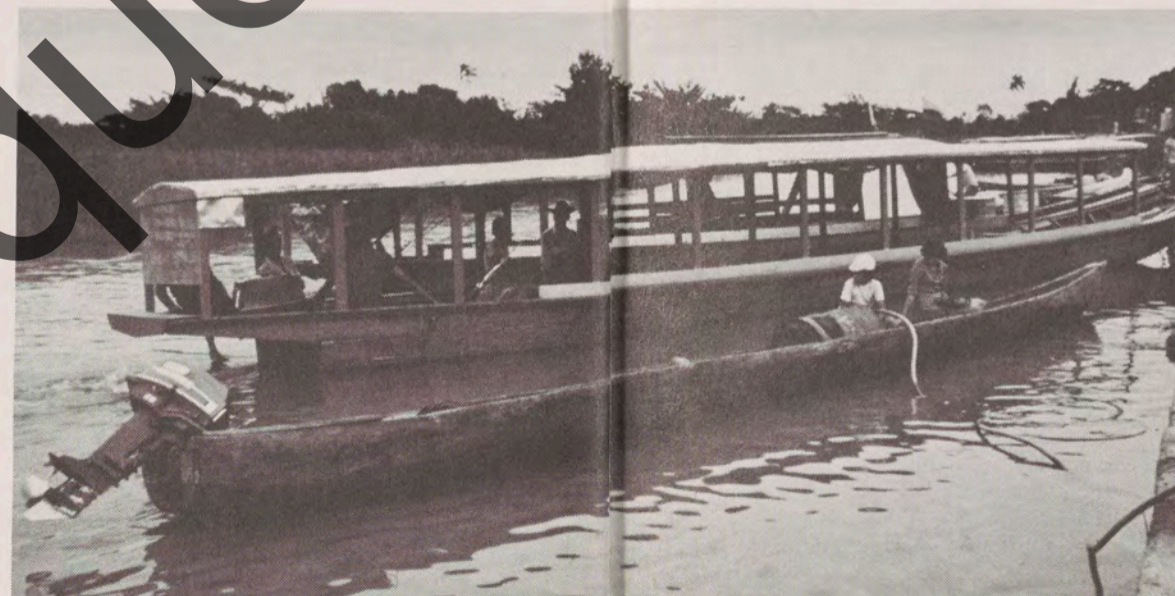
K.B. Abernathy



Brunswick Chairman



E.C. Kiekhaefer  
 Mercury Founder



For additional examples of Mercury Marine advertising in history, see story on page two of this issue.

1961

**NEW FORMULA 2 QUICKSILVER OUTBOARD MOTOR OIL**

**30% MORE LUBRICATION SAFETY!** Formulated with new "space-age" chemicals, new Formula 2 is specially compounded and processed FOR outboards BY an outboard manufacturing specialist. It is formulated to meet the exacting lubrication requirements of today's high-precision, high output, 2-cycle engines. Added "space-age" organic detergents and special chemicals produce a lubricant which provides 30% more lubrication safety. It mixes readily with gasoline and stays uniformly mixed, even when the mixture stands idle for long periods... minimizes carbon deposits, which clog engine ports and foul plugs... and inhibits varnish formation, which causes piston ring sticking. Keeps your engine cleaner, runs your bearings and piston rings many times longer. Buy a handy carton... 30-oz. or 12-oz. cans... for jewel-smooth outboard power! Boat tested and proved over a million miles at Lake "X". Nation-wide or world-wide, one quality, one grade, one base stock — exclusively yours in Formula 2. © Kiekhaefer Corporation, Fond du Lac, Wis.

1964

**New power for MerCruisers**

**POWER TILT**

**POWER SHIFT**

**POWER STEERING**

1943

*Fishing or Fighting*

**... AMERICANS KNOW THEIR MOTORS**

America did not ask for this war, but modern, mechanized warfare is America's kind of war. Our men are more familiar with the operation of a motor and the feel of a gun than the men of any other country.

**MERCURY**

**Merc Comment**

**Special Issue**

MerComment is published 10 times per year by the Public Relations Department for Mercury Marine employees and their families.

Dave Brukaradt, editor.

Communications concerning the content of this publication, can be sent to MerComment, Mercury Marine, Public Relations Department, Fond du Lac, WI 54935.

**Member International Association of Business Communicators.**

Printed by the Mercury Marine publications department.

(continued from inside front cover)

**"Thanks, Mercury Marine"**

Enclosed is a picture of me with my KF-5 Mercury motor which was purchased in August 1951. It still purrs like a kitten. The only thing I've ever had to do to it is change spark plugs.

The motor looks like new and still starts on the second pull every spring. I'm really happy with the performance of this fine 5-hp motor.

**E.J. Isle, Minnesota**

**My 1951 Merc still purrs like a kitten.**

Let me say that I have never been more impressed by any troll motor I've ever used. The smoothness and power of the Thruster is something no other troll motor could offer, and I've used every brand on the market.

Your product gives me 100-percent satisfaction, and the battery drain is unbelievably low. All my friends will hear about this Black Beauty. You have one more satisfied customer.

**J.H., Groves, Texas**

What can I say to you except that you are still the leaders in stern drives. I own a Nova 250 offshore Wellcraft with twin 470's and Quicksilver stainless steel props. I can't get over the way those MerCruisers move 5700 pounds of boat. Power and fuel savings are great.

All I can say is thank you.

**Allen S., Staten Island, New York**

Thanks, Mercury, for making a great motor. I'll never own anything else.

**Dave M., Arkansas**

I just put my Mariner 48 through a test I'm sure you don't recommend at the factory. I had the motor just three weeks when I lost it in Mobile Bay. After six weeks in salt water, it came up in a shrimp trawl.

I took it to the marina where I bought it, and they went right to work on it and had it running the next day. The thing that amazed me was that they didn't have to put one new part on the motor. It runs just perfect.

**H.M., Robertsdale, Alabama**

This Merc 650 outboard had its carburetor adjusted the first week I owned it. I haven't turned a bolt on it in the 700 hours since, except to change the lower unit grease. The engine has never failed to start, even after sitting all winter.

Next outboard... you guessed it... Mercury.

**Jerry S., Parsons, Tennessee**

I am writing to tell you that I am very impressed with the performance of your Kiekhaefer Mercury 35A outboards. I bought one over 20 years ago and it's still working excellent. Even though it is very old, it still does better than 28 mph with 500 pounds (four passengers) in our boat.

I am a very satisfied customer.

**L.D.H., Tonawanda, New York**

This 1500 ELPT outboard being my fourth Merc speaks for itself. Thank you.

**R.J.R., Melbourne, Victoria, Australia**

My V-6 formula 2.4 liter is a fantastic motor, worth owning just to crank it up and watch the folks stare.

You could make the back of the engine more attractive to gaze upon, as that is all my competitors ever get to see. This is my fourth Merc, all of them 100-hp or above.

I do not race professionally, but just like to run every fast rig I see. I'm a sincere Mercury fan.

**H.H., Houston, Texas**

Our new Merc outboard? Love it.

**Harry G., Charleston, West Virginia**

**As long as I own a boat, it will be Merc-powered.**

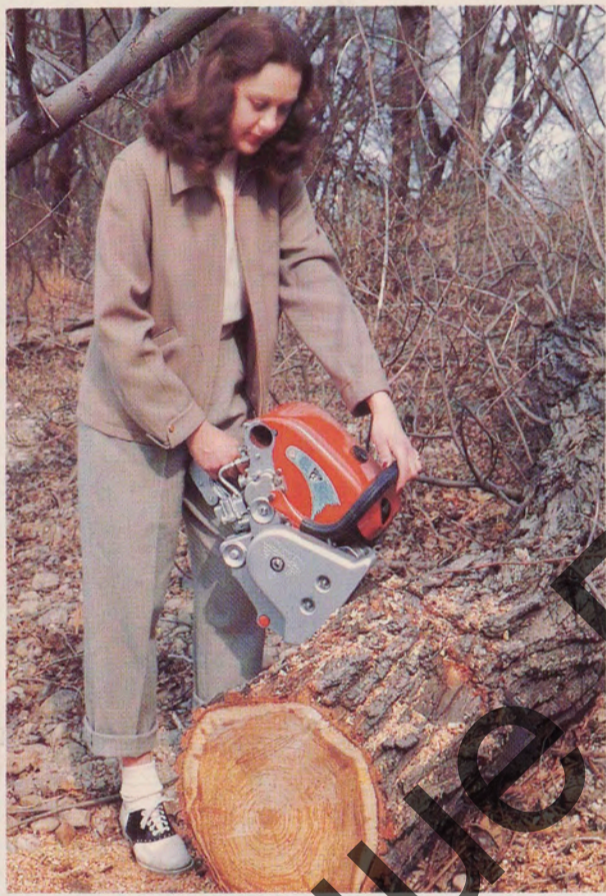
The two motors I have owned for ten years are the seventh and eighth Mercs I have owned and used in fresh and saltwater under all possible conditions for many thousands of accumulated trouble-free hours.

My only purpose for writing is to say thanks for a very good product from a completely satisfied customer.

**Lloyd J., Marietta, Georgia**

Left: Mercury KG-9 25-hp Thunderbolt. Right: KG-4 Rocket Hurricane, 1951.

**1939-  
1979**



Mercury chainsaw, WW II.

**40 years  
of  
progress**



Mercury outboard, 6-hp, 1961.