

[Page 83 - Part One of a Two-Part Story: We Worked for General Instruments](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 49](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1988/8/1

you're supposed to, on an average, it's 30 tuners an hour you're supposed to put out." Like they'd have it--this hour they put out 30, this hour they put out 28, this hour they put out 32. And so they took it on an average. You'd have to do, maybe, 25 to 35-- they'd keep it in that bracket. And if you didn't, well, they'd have to come down and tell you, you know, you were too slow. And they'd try to put you somewhere else if you couldn't catch on to it. (Were they able to slow up or make faster the conveyor belt?) No. It was just at one level. (And they would just ask you to work faster or to work slower.) Yeah. (Was there ever a problem for you?) No, not for us, be? cause when our tuners came down, they were boxed. And then we were set up--the boxes were set up alongside of us. So we weren't taking them, most times--sometimes we were. If we had a good day--like these cores that we put in the machines--sometimes they were too high, sometimes they were too low. And we had to keep changing them. (Too high in frequency?) Yeah. Or too low. If you had a day where you had to change all 3 cores, 4 or 5 times. Like, blue was the lowest you could get. Okay, blue was too low. You took that out, and you tried a red. Still too low. You took that out and you put in a purple. Then the purple was too high. You took that out, and you used to shave down, then, a red, to make it lower. We shaved it down. And then we'd try that till we hit the right one. And some days we could whip through them, they'd all be good. And another day you'd be 10 minutes at one tuner, changing cores and changing cores. When that happened, they were boxing for us. They'd have a girl set up, before the tuners came to us, and taking them off the belt, and putting them in boxes. interesting. It would get a little boring when the tuners were all good. Because you were just tuning them up and flicking the button, and glueing them and putting them on. But when you hit a few bad ones.... And it was kind of good, like, if you found the right core. Like, you would get a whole day, you'd have these same tuners coming through. And then you'd be able to go and say, "Look, I found the problem, eh? You've got to put a purple core in Number 3." And of course, they'd go up the line, and they'd tell the one that was putting the cores in, "Change blue. Put purple in Number 3." (How did you feel when you did something like that?) Great. Just great. Used to feel like they, uh--king of the block. "I fixed it!" And you'd get credit for it, too. (What do they mean by credit?) Well, they'd come down, and they would just let everybody know who fixed it. Next thing you know, the general manager would come in and say, you know, "Good work." They always, I found, complimented you. More than not. They weren't on your back constantly. I thought it was a pretty fair place to work, as far as anything went. Except when they were closing. They refused to tell us they were closing. (Did you have any feeling that it was coming?) Um, about two months beforehand, Isobel (Cooper, head of the union) came one day and we had a meeting. And she said that she heard through the grapevine that they were thinking of pulling out because the government. And then we would be asked to stay all week overtime and all day Saturday to catch up. (That's what boxing them for you did. It wasn't doing you any favour.) Oh, no. (Was this boring or interesting work?) I



loved it. I found it very hosier S Reserve Mines, Nova Scotia Convenience Store Gas Tank Replacements & Repairs For Personal Efficient Service: Call 539-2122 Sydney Radiator 120 Years a Family Business 2 Years Warranty on All Parts \* We Accept VISA & MASTERCARD New Heaters & Radiators or Repairs 121 Prince Street, Sydney We Service and Ship Anywhere on Cape Breton Island w/co USE OUR CONVENIENT LAYAWAY PLAN DEPARTMEnt STORES Woolco will meet any local competitor's advertised prices\* CAPE BRETON SHOPPING PLAZA - SYDNEY RIVER \*OTHERS SAY IT... WOOLCO GUARANTEES IT! Just bring in any Competitor's current Ad. If our price on the identical item isn't already as low, or lower than ttieir advertised price we MAYFLOWER MALL - GRAND LAKE ROAD - SYDNEY will immediately meet ttieir price! We exclude gimmick promottons (Saatch & Save), & entire PORT HAWKESBURY SHOPPING CENTRE Department, entire Store percentage off Promotions. We reserve the rigit to limit quantities. 83