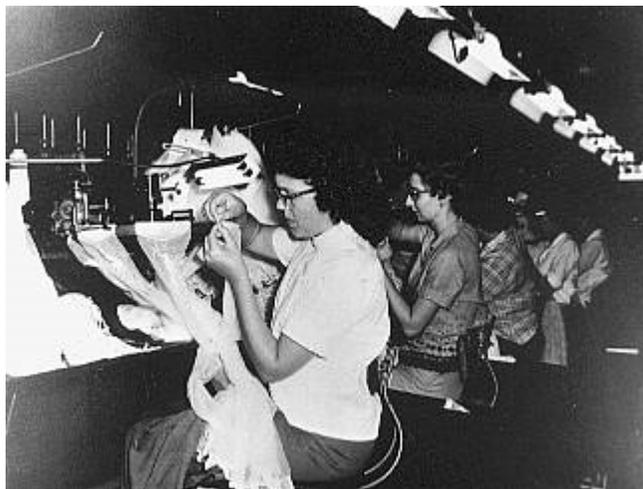


Photo of the Month

Munsingwear



The Rogers Munsingwear plant, 1950s. (Neg. #N007884)



Workers at the Rogers Munsingwear plant, circa 1960. (Neg.#N010014)

Munsingwear, Inc., was a Minneapolis-based clothing manufacturer founded in 1886 as the Northwestern Knitting Company. The company became famous early on for its union suits, and for several decades it was a major player in the lingerie business. The Munsingwear name was branded in 1919 and the company began to produce silk hosiery in 1923.

Munsingwear opened a hosiery plant in Rogers in 1947 at Fourth and Olrich Streets; while the plant was being built, manufacturing equipment was set up in the National Guard armory. The plant produced all of

the hosiery bearing the Munsingwear label. By 1956 it had about 200 employees.

With the help of its sister plant in Bentonville (started in 1953), Munsingwear locally produced 250,000 dozen pairs of nylon hosiery each year.

Nylon yarn, purchased from the Dupont Company, was threaded into knitting machines which created stocking "blanks." Operators inspected each blank, which were then sewn. Early seamed stockings were knit flat and then seamed up the back; seam-free stockings were knit to shape but were sewn at the toe. The stockings were then sent to the finishing plant to be washed, dyed, inspected, and mated for boxing and shipment.

Munsingwear closed its Rogers plant in 1966. In 1968 the building was purchased by the Bear Brand Hosiery Company. That company, founded in 1893 in Ohio, was a pioneer in the U.S. hosiery industry and manufactured a broad range of women's hosiery. Bear Brand closed its Rogers plant in 1976 due to consolidation for efficiency. The plant was purchased by Tyson Foods in the 1980s and now serves as a distribution center.