



PHOTO PROVIDED  
 Foley Foundry and Machine Ltd. was destroyed by fire Dec. 10, 1960.  
 The blaze, determined by police to be arson, cost owner Frank Foley \$100,000.

became known as Walker's Foundry. During the Walker's ownership, the building was equipped to manufacture agricultural machinery, among which one won worldwide fame for its efficiency. It also became well known in the area for its production of threshing machines, straw cutters, saws, grain crushers, water wheels and stoves.

In 1917, the business became known as Fruit Machinery Company Ltd. after Frank B. Foley and R.J.Graham bought it from J.C. McCarthy to manufacture a line of evaporating and dehydrating machinery, which was invented by Foley. Then, following the First World War the nature of the business changed from straight manufacturing to custom machine shop and foundry and the repair of machinery.

During the Second World War, Foley acquired Graham's interests and following the former's death in 1947, his son Frank became president and general manager. In 1948 the name of the company changed again to Foley Foundry and Machine Ltd.

Before the fire, the business employed about 20 people and Wayne Alyea, a former welder at the foundry, recalled working at the welding shop which was located at the back of the building.

"The building had cutters for heavy metals, lathes and welding equipment and there was a chap — we called him Big Ivan — in there who worked on springs for heavy duty trucks. If someone was to bring in a truck wanting to make it a heavy duty truck he'd redo the spring system on it, putting in extra ones."

The office, he added, was located at the front. At the time one big part of the business, he said, was welding steel materials at building construction sites.

After the fire in 1960, the business moved to a new building on Wallbridge Crescent in Belleville and began operating there in 1961. Here, the company did not continue its foundry business but diversified into other businesses doing general repair work and steel fabrication.

You can reach Benzie Sangma at [bsangma@cogeco.ca](mailto:bsangma@cogeco.ca) with comments on or story ideas for Remember When.