

Evolution and History of Kewanee Boiler

1868 – **Anderson Steam Heater Co.** founded; produces boilers for heating hog feed.

1871 – Anderson installs its first boiler for heating homes.

1875 – William Haxtun buys company; changes name to **Haxtun Steam Heater Co.** Company produces boilers, radiators, valves and fittings.

1880's – Haxtun Co. thrives; **John H. Pierce and Emerit E. Baker** join company. Rolling mill equipment purchased as company adds production of pipe (1883).

1890 – Haxtun Co. **employment reaches 1000**, including first “girls” employed outside offices.

1891 – **National Tube Co.** of McKeesport, PA, having invested in Haxtun Co. earlier, acquires remaining interest of William Haxtun and changes name to **Western Tube Co.**

1892 – **Kewanee Boiler Co.** is formed when Western Tube sells boiler plant to E.E. Baker and associates. Kewanee Boiler occupies the existing boiler plant on Main St. while Western Tube continues to produce pipes (tubes), valves and fittings. **J.H. Pierce** remains with Tube Co. as president and is elected mayor of Kewanee in 1897. Western Tube is sold to Walworth Co. in 1917.

1900 – Kewanee Boiler Co. moves to location it would occupy until its closure in 2002.

1917-1918 – During 19-month period of **World War I** company produces “astounding total of 19,410 boilers, heaters and hot water storage tanks.”

1920 – “Million-dollar addition” to plant brings 13 acres under roof on property of 33 acres. During 1920's **peak employment** reaches 1,300.

1928 – E.E. Baker and associates sell company to American Radiator Co., later known as American-Standard, and it becomes **Kewanee Boiler Corporation.** Baker, until his death in 1929, and associates continue to manage local operation. **E.E. Baker's legacy** to Kewanee is unsurpassed. Besides the development of Kewanee Boiler, Baker was the founder of Kewanee Park District and major benefactor of the park district and many other causes.

1941-1945 – Outstanding war production results in reception of **five Army-Navy “E” Awards**.

1959 – Boiler becomes **Kewanee-Ross** as it is combined with Ross Heat Exchanger Division of American-Standard.

1970 – Boiler purchased by **LaCrosse Plumbing Supply Co.** and operates as Kewanee Boiler Corporation, Inc. Employment listed at 465.

1990 – Kewanee Boiler Corporation sold to **Burnham Company**.

2002 – Burnham closes the Kewanee Boiler plant, **ending 134 years of boilermaking in Kewanee**.

2003 – The 103-year-old Kewanee Boiler site purchased by **Dierzen Heavy Industries**, a Newark, IN company that manufactures a variety of truck trailers.