

RF-2, "Bridgeport Business Climate – 1950's"

**Transcript: pp. 16-18**

**Text portion for pop-up/audio alternative**

**Time-line Location: Decade VI, Local and National Events, 1957: "CT changes from majority manufacturing..."**

**RF:** Excellent time to be in business. A lot of people made a lot of money during the war and there were all kinds of technical innovations of every kind. Every product was redesigned and approved and new products of all kinds were affordable and at that time industry was going strong so it was quite easy to make a living actually...

Manual typewriters became electric. What had been adding machines became calculators with additional functions. You could multiply and divide which had been--. With a printing function. You're too young to remember this but at one time if you had an adding machine it was a treasure and all you wanted to do was add and you had to pay extra if you wanted to subtract. Then the Olivetti people came along with one that would multiply and divide and give you a printed tape instead of just a displaying kind of thing. Electric typewriters with the correction feature and then primitive copying machines were huge and became more and more sophisticated. Miniature calculators. The nature of furniture changed. Plastics, for instance. Like people think these things are common place, but at one time if you had a metal desk and a linoleum top and then like the formica came along, plastics and simulated wood finishes so that if you went to purchase a wooden desk you would not necessarily have to pay the price of actual wood like this table, formica top, simulated wood finish was like half the price of most moderately priced furniture made that way. And then there were surfaces made of particle board instead of solid wood so technology changed and made things much more affordable and made the public conscious of what was available and the public wanted at least better looking things instead of purely functional things. At this point we faded out of really specializing in used furniture because attractive new furniture became affordable. So it's the kind of transition that the person wouldn't notice from the outside but to a professional it was very important.