

# Business

## Computers alter traditional methods of machining parts



ABOVE: "The turmill allows you to turn a part to finish it while it's still on the mill," says owner Steve Kulusic. BELOW: Gary Merkle works on brake housings for the Army's M60 tank. (Staff photos by Mindy Saunders)

By ED BAS

Amid traditional lathes and drill presses, an Avon Township factory has some new equipment that makes the site look more like a space center from which a rocket is about to be launched.

Steve Kulusic, founder and president of Turmill, Inc., said the computers which help run his factory and many other changes have emerged only in the last few years.

The computers allow part after part to be machined to the same close tolerances without constant checking, Kulusic said even the materials have changed, from heavy steel to aluminum.

Turmill opened in January on Livernois, south of Hamlin, after 25 years in Warren. It houses about 40 employees, a half-dozen of whom are newcomers residing in the Rochester area.

Those employees make a number of machine parts, most of them for the military. Kulusic demonstrated a small handle and gear mechanism that one day will be used to raise and fire the machine gun on an M60 tank.

Turmill also recently acquired a \$1 million federal contract to produce transmission parts for a new U.S. Army Gamma-Coat, an all-terrain vehicle.

"We came out here from Warren because I thought it was a lovely area," Kulusic said. "I started out in the business with two partners in Royal Oak. We were the only employees. Then I bought them out. This is a nice area in a lot of ways. You have the M-59 freeway, and a lot of our parts are delivered via that."

KULUSIC SAID the location is ideal in another way because he was able to buy a full two acres, with plenty of room for expanding the present 15,000-square-foot plant.

"We may have to eventually add another 10,000 square feet," the Ortonville resident said.

The factory is adjacent to a field of late-blooming wildflowers, complete with a stand of trees. Landscaping is still under way in front of the Turmill property, and the only factory sounds come out when the loading bay doors are open.

Raw machine castings are delivered to the factory, where they are drilled, milled and checked to tolerances in thousandths of an inch. Brass parts come out with a high luster and some parts are painted after smoothing to remove burrs.

The factory name came from a part Kulusic invented 25 years ago when he was in the Army.

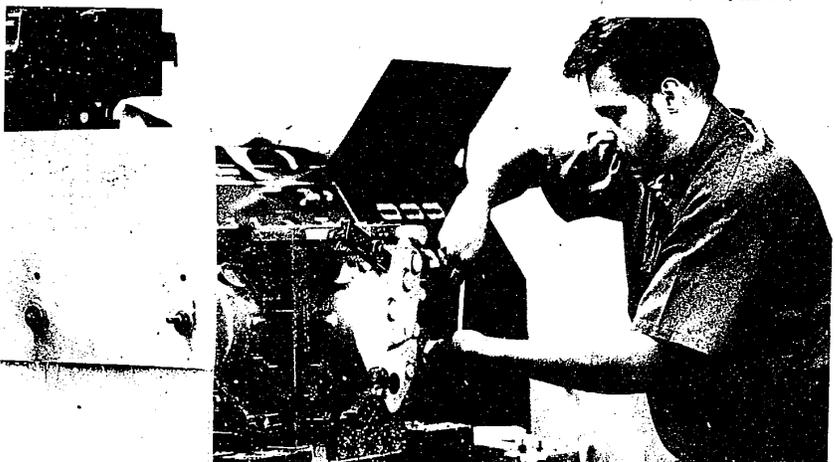
"I had to grant them (the Army) free royalty rights since I was a government employee," Kulusic said. "But I saved them a lot of money. The turmill allows you to turn a part to finish it while it's still on the mill."

fathom until they are connected to other parts.

A road wheel hub doesn't look like much of anything until Kulusic explains it is the drive wheel in a tank made in the United States, Belgium and Israel—and manufactured by Turmill for the last 15 years.

THE FACTORY is full of crates and pallets of finished machine parts. Some are complete, such as the tank machine gun firing mechanism. Others are parts that are hard to

A single piece of equipment can cost up to \$200,000. Kulusic said part of his job is keeping abreast of what is for sale. As the equipment is kept up to date, so is the demand. In the works is a new M1 tank to replace the M60.



### BUSINESS PEOPLE

J. PHILIP LENIHAN has been named assistant vice-president in charge of marketing and customer relations of the Detroit Edison Co. He joined the utility's marketing department in 1974.

A resident of Birmingham, Lenihan holds a degree from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y., and is a registered professional engineer.



Lenihan Johnson

JOHN W. JOHNSON JR., a resident of Birmingham, is now vice-president of finance for the Detroit Edison Co.

Johnson joined the company in 1955 and was admitted to the Michigan Bar in 1970.

ROBERT KIPP, a Troy resident, has been named a vice-president in the time credit department of Detroit Bank & Trust.

Kipp joined the bank as an administrative trainee in 1964.



Kipp Moore

PAUL F. MOORE has been appointed general plants manager for the General Manufacturing Division of Chrysler Corp.

A resident of Birmingham, Moore joined Chrysler in 1956 and holds a degree in Economics from Otterbein College in Pennsylvania.

WILLIAM SCHMID has been appointed loan officer for the Regional Banking Division of the National Bank of Detroit.

A resident of Bloomfield Township, Schmid holds degrees from Marquette University and the University of Detroit.

JOSEPH FARNHAM is now director of engineering technical assistance in the corporate engineering office for the Chrysler Corp.

Farnham joined Chrysler in 1949 after graduating from Yale University. He lives in Birmingham.



Farnham Smith

R. RYRIE SMITH has been named a vice-president of the Zibart International Corp.

A resident of Bloomfield Hills, Smith joined Zibart in 1971 and holds degrees from Queen's University and the University of Toronto.

RICHARD VAN HOUSE is has been promoted to plant manager of the Ford Motor Saline Plant.

A resident of Bloomfield Hills, Van House joined Ford in 1968 as a graduate of the University of Michigan.



Van House Hodges

RICHARD HODGES, a Bloomfield Hills resident, has been named plant manager of the Mt. Clemens Vinyl Plant for the Ford Motor Co.

Hodges joined Ford in 1954 and is an alumnus of Wayne State University.

## Their task: Finding you the person you deserve

By JACKIE KLEIN

Association Inc. sounds like the name of an impressive technical corporation or a solid financial institution. But it's neither.

The president of the Southfield-based company, Shelly Fortuna, 33, is a beautiful blonde. What's her line? She calls it an introduction system, a singles' club and another alternative after divorce.

Ms. Fortuna's clients, however, aren't all casualties of the sky-rocketing divorce rate. Widows, widowers and singles also frequent her Southfield office.

"The connotation of a dating service is poor and that's not what we operate," she said. "Ours is a serious business and our concept is logical and progressive."

Ms. Fortuna retains six consultants who interview clients about their feelings, past relationships and interests. She claims she's selective in accepting members who pay \$50 to \$50 for a two-year, "dual matching" program.

"Based on the in-depth interviews, we find couples we believe are compatible," she said. "We send them introductory letters which include per-

sonality profiles. We have a report system for feedback after the couple has met."

MS. FORTUNA, who's been in the business 15 years, said she has appeared on a number of radio and television shows to explain the program.

"Meeting people is easy," she said. "You can find them anywhere if that's all you want. Finding the couple of person you deserve may take searching through thousands. That's the kind of service we offer."

Mary-Phyl Bradley is a registered nurse. She's also a consultant and public relations person for Association Inc.

Anyone who's been through a divorce or ended a long relationship is aware of problems which occur during the transition period, she said.

"You have to face changes and lay your own foundation for a new and different life," Ms. Bradley said. "The bar scene gets stale and many singles groups are clans for sharing grim misfortunes. There just aren't many choices."

"Many persons are caught in unhappy marriages because they're

afraid to take the plunge and risk being alone. So they settle for less. Others who decide to end the marriage seem to be on a relentless pursuit to establish a new relationship. Our culture doesn't provide easy ways for people to meet and meet."

The concept of meeting people through a programmed system of analysis is becoming more and more acceptable, Ms. Bradley said. She added that Association Inc. has branches in eight states and is going national.

"SOCIOLOGICAL attitudes are changing to logical, honest and independent judgements rather than following old patterns," Ms. Bradley said. "We believe we're part of this contemporary movement."

Persons who are beginning a new life, still in its embryonic stages, must recognize it will grow with the proper nutrition, Ms. Fortuna said. The first step is accepting one's self as a single person with something to contribute.

"We hear hundreds of different stories in our interviews," she said. "People ready to meet others are open, direct and honest. They tell us the way they feel about themselves, the world and the future."



FORTUNA: "The connotation of a dating service is poor and that's not what we operate. Ours is a serious business and our concept is logical and progressive."

## Business Trends

### Economic indexes reflect mixed trends

Today's Business Trends column was prepared by the Investment Research Department of the First of Michigan Corp. Each week, this column will highlight some local business leader and his views on business and industry.

Recently reported government and private indexes of economic progress were the usual mixed bag.

Consumer prices climbed at a seasonally adjusted 7.2% annual rate in August, up slightly from the six per cent rate in July.

The prior three months' prices climbed at a much higher rate, peaking at 10.8%. A modest 2.5% annual rate of gain in food prices in August, and no gain in July aided in reducing the overall inflation rate.

It was a similar story on the wholesale front as producer prices, which had risen 0.5% in July, actually declined 0.1% in August. That was the first recorded drop in two years.

THE TWO-MONTH decline in wholesale food prices—one per cent in July and three per cent in August—suggests the likelihood of fairly

level food prices for the rest of the fall months and could well moderate the overall inflation rate.

That would be in pleasant contrast to the unacceptably high 11% inflation rate experienced in the second quarter of 1978, which in turn compared with a 7.2% annual rate in the first quarter and a 5.5% increase in the final quarter of 1977.

After-tax corporate profits spurred 14.9% in the second quarter, the biggest rise in almost three years.

The high level continued in the third quarter which just finished in September.

RETAIL SALES in August rose 0.8% in sharp contrast to the 0.6% drop in July with half the improvement coming from record auto sales which had experienced a downward-revised 0.6% decline in July.

The retail sales index were 9.4% (10% in metropolitan Detroit) ahead of the year-end earlier level.

The durable goods component climbed a strong 1.5% after declining 2.1% in July, with half of the improvement stemming from record

auto sales which jumped 2.8% from August 1977 totals. General Motors' 14% surge reflected the forward ordering of 1979 models, aiding a 3.4% year-to-year improvement in domestic car sales. The first two 18-day periods in September were about a net standoff from the year-earlier period.

Durable goods orders climbed 7.6% in August after falling 5.3% in July and 1.7% in June—marking the steepest rise in almost eight years. The increase was propelled by a sharp rise in aircraft orders. Machine tool orders also soared 23% in August over July and were 57% ahead of year ago figures.

THE AUGUST trade deficit of \$1.62 billion was the smallest of the year after June and significantly lower than July's \$2.99 billion deficit. Simply, those figures reflected higher exports and lower imports.

A get-tough attitude by the Federal Reserve Board to combat excessive money growth and inflation was reflected in the Sept. 22 increase in the discount rate (the fee charged by the Fed on loans to member banks) by ¼ point to a record tying eight per cent which had been in

effect in the final nine months of 1974.

New residential mortgage interest rates were immediately raised from 9¼% to 9% by federally chartered New York banks. That move maintained the 1% spread permitted by federal statute.

Within two days of this move, the prime rate was raised from 9¼% to 9½% by a number of leading banks.

THE BASIC money supply has grown at an 8½% annual rate in the first eight months of this year—that's far above the 6½% rate the Fed considers desirable for sustained economic growth. That growth occurred despite the fact the Fed increased to 8¼% its target rate on federal funds (up from 6½%) which are the uncommitted reserves banks lend to one another.

The Commerce Department index of 10 leading indicators jumped 8% in August after plunging 1.3% in July with the increase in stock prices contributing the most among in the housing components.

Housing starts declined 5% in August to 2.03 million from July's 2.13 million and were about even with year-ago totals.