

Hot Shots & Old Timers



Old-timers pose on Trinity Street for a group portrait

Although Gooderham & Worts’ is best remembered as Canada’s premier distiller of Canadian rye whiskey, the company changed with the times. By the 1930s, the largest single use of alcohol in Canada was probably antifreeze. G&W developed a new product called “Hot Shot” (pun surely intended). The demand for “Hot Shot” shot-up so much that the company changed from shipping the product only in steel drums to producing sealed gallon and Imperial quart cans (like the one shown below). The antifreeze, along with other industrial products, was canned in a large room on the third floor of Buildings 58 and 59 (appropriately known as The Cannery).

In this rare 1937 photograph, about two-dozen “Long Service Men” posed on Trinity Street, in front of a pair of “Hot Shot” delivery trucks. A full-range of employees is represented, from peak-capped workers to fedora-topped executives. Each man is identified by name (indicating possible family-groupings) and length of service. Five men had worked at the distillery for 50 or more years, having witnessed many dramatic changes since the 1880s when G&W was still the largest distillery in the British Empire.



A can for one Imperial Quart of Hot-Shot Anti-freeze

Please send your comments or questions to Manager of Heritage Services, Sally Gibson, sg@thedistillerydistrict.com.