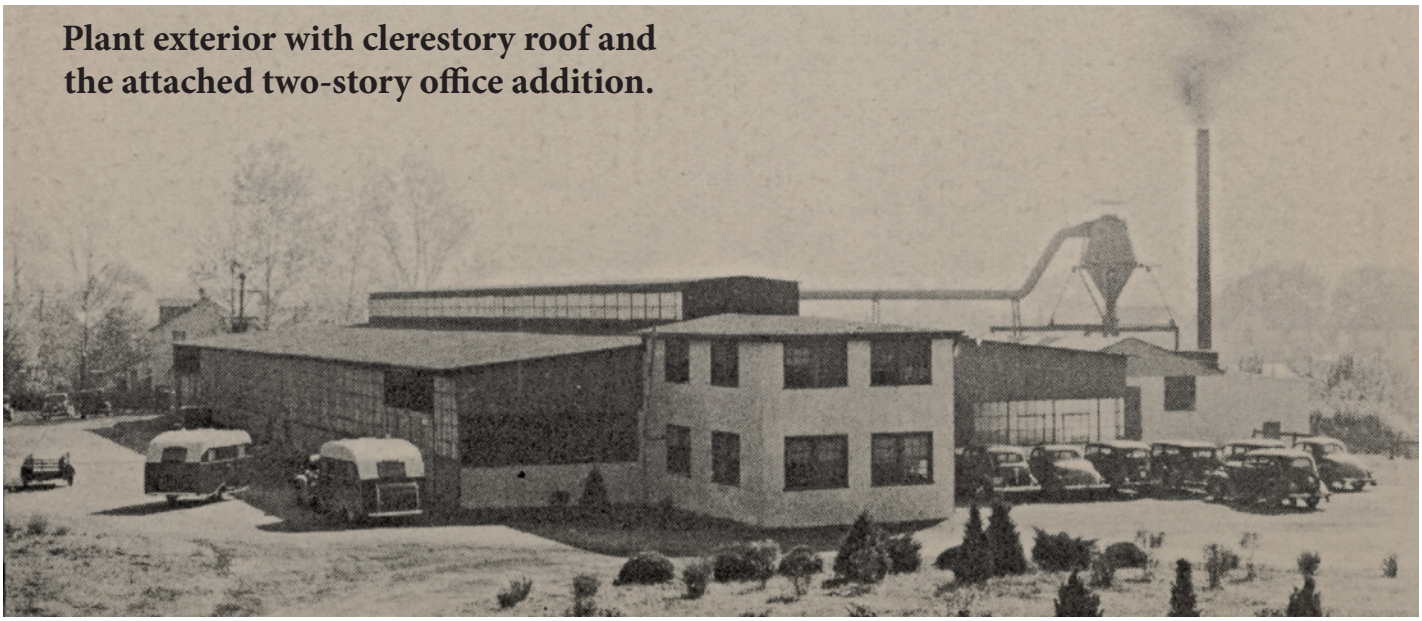
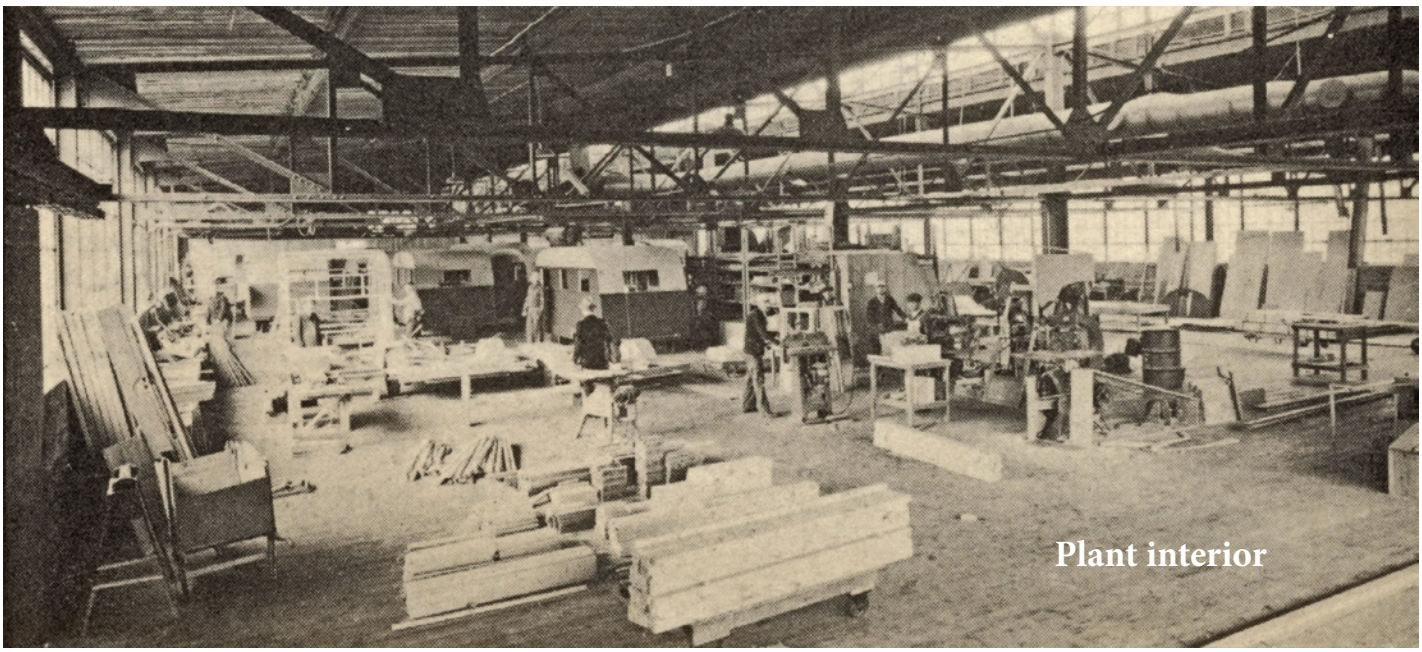


(LEFT) The circular driveway in front of the Display Room building may be viewed in various photos as late as 2009. This area is now occupied by a parking lot and the Fine Wine and Good Spirits shop. *Photo courtesy of Meg Wiederseim.*

(BELOW) Photos from the 1937 Quaker Trailer Brochure. *Courtesy of Meg Wiederseim.*

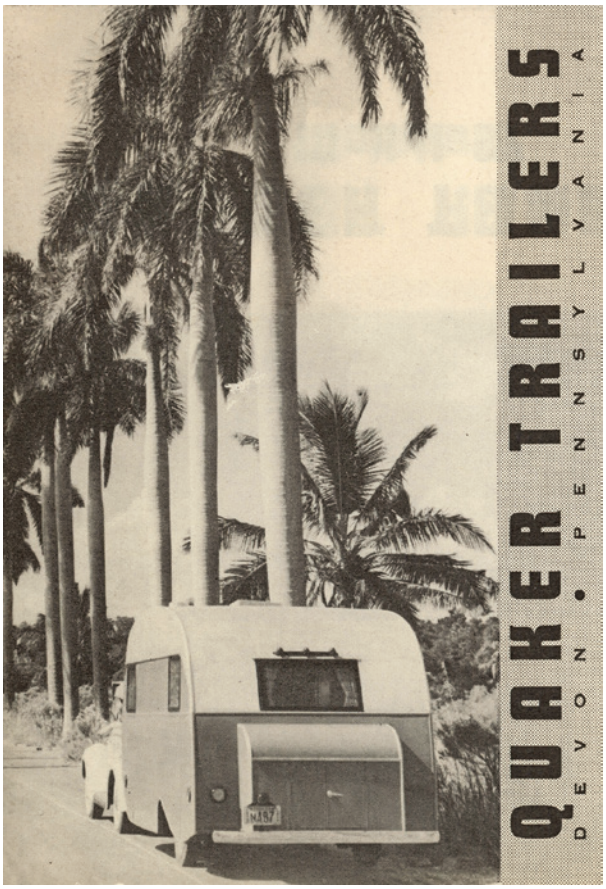
Plant exterior with clerestory roof and the attached two-story office addition.





Plant interior

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(ABOVE) General Office addition, attached to the west end of the Plant building, July 26, 1936. *Courtesy of Meg Wiederseim.*

(UPPER LEFT) Cover of the 1937 brochure.

(LOWER LEFT) A photo taken on April 23, 2023 inside the Whole Foods Market store in Devon showing the original steel structure and clerestory above. *Photo courtesy of John O. Senior.*



Receivership and Sale

It was perhaps an ominous prediction when newspaper ads in May were offering financing for Quaker Trailers at "only $25 a month with a small down payment."[24] Apparently with all the hype, the manufacturers had over-produced, and sadly it led to disaster for many of them, including Sherman's Covered Wagon and Quaker. The market was saturated, and apparently the slow economic recovery was halted by a series of strikes in the auto industry.[25]

On June 30, 1937 the Quaker Trailer Company moved into receivership with assets valued at $65,930.[26] Two months later, Freeman's Auctioneers held an on-site sale of all equity, from name and goodwill to machinery, equipment, and parts.[27] The next day, the Philadelphia Inquirer confirmed the public auction sale of assets for $3,306.[28]

And so ended the life of the Quaker Trailer Company in Devon. In 1939, the land and buildings were sold to the Benjamin C. Betner Company for use as a second plant for its paper business.[29]

Author's Note: My curiosity about the old Quaker Trailer Company was piqued when I found the July 26, 1936 photos and 1937 brochure on eBay. Additional research on young president Robert M. Rakestraw, Jr. showed that by 1940 he had moved to Florida where he passed away in 1979.

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Charles Devaney's August 2, 1936 Aerial Photograph

On August 2, 1936, Charles Devaney, president of the local Main Line Airport, flew his open-cockpit Waco 10 bi-plane over Devon to see for himself the new manufacturing company being so widely advertised. Needing both hands to operate his Brownie camera, he held the aircraft's control "stick" with his knees. Looking southwest from over the four tracks of the PRR's Main Line, Charles photographed the larger main Quaker Trailer Plant with its clerestory roof and to its right, the smaller, white Display Room building, with the circular driveway between them.

In this photo of the east Devon area, looking southwest, we can identify some points of particular interest:

❶ Quaker Trailer Plant with prominent clerestory roof — occupied by Whole Foods Market in 2023.
❷ Small Office Building attached on the west end of the plant building.
❸ The white Quaker Trailer Display Room building with the words "Quaker Trailer Co." over the door, and the adjacent circular driveway.
❹ Additional building, shown in the "More Room for Trailers" photo on page 5, and still in use today.
❺ Walter L. Lobb & Co. lumber yard complex.
❻ The main Benjamin C. Betner Company complex — occupied by BMW of Devon in 2023.
❼ The grounds of the Devon Horse Show.

Photo courtesy of the Devaney Family. Photo background information courtesy of Roger D. Thorne.

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Views of Devon from the Air

1936 and 2009



Roger Thorne's October 9, 2009 Aerial Photograph

This aerial photo taken by Roger D. Thorne roughly 73 years after the comparably-composed image by Charles Devaney, shows the former Quaker Trailer Plant reconfigured as a Fresh Fields grocery store, later to become Whole Foods Market. The Display Room building is no longer in existence, but the additional building close to the railroad tracks is still there.

In this photo of the east Devon area, looking southwest, we can identify some points of particular interest:

❶ Former Quaker Trailer Plant with prominent clerestory roof — occupied by Whole Foods Market.
❷ The site of the former Small Office Building is now occupied by an enlarged annex of the food store, with the present-day Devon Fine Wine and Good Spirits shop adjacent to the west.
❸ The site of the former Quaker Trailer Display Room building and nearby circular driveway is now a parking lot with retail stores and restarurants along the west side.
❹ Additional building, shown in "More Room for Trailers" ad, that is still in use today as part of the retail complex.
❺ Some old structures remain in the area of the former Walter L. Lobb Lumber Yard complex.
❻ The site of the former Benjamin C. Betner Company complex — currently occupied by BMW of Devon.
❼ The grounds of the Devon Horse Show, much more developed than in 1936.

Photo Courtesy of Roger D. Thorne

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