

## Schweinfurt and the Fichtel & Sachs connection

Messerschmitts and Fichtel and Sachs were well known to each other during the war as vital precision components such as the ME262 jet fuel pumps were produced there. SKF and FAG bearing factories are in the same road as F&S with simultaneous raids targeting them on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1943. All produced precision components essential to the German war effort

Unlike the Regensburg raid, these were initially not successful, and many crews were lost as they made their way back to England. This raid was to force a change of tactics until the introduction of long-range fighters to protect the bombers from unsustainable losses. Bomber Command made many return visits in an attempt to destroy the manufacturing base for precision components – not just bearings but also the F&S products that contributed to the arms industry. Severe damage was inflicted throughout the town with civilian casualties due to the proximity of domestic dwellings. As with the Regensburg raids, historians have questioned the effectiveness of the air attacks on Schweinfurt since they did not seriously affect essential bearing production for any extended period. It is clear however, that the reduced production and loss of key components delayed the production of aircraft and equipment that could have changed the course of the war.



*Later raids by the US and RAF damaged the F&S factory and the chimney has a 'collar' fitted to repair a hole blown out by an Allied bomb. Photo: MFGB archive dated 1966.*



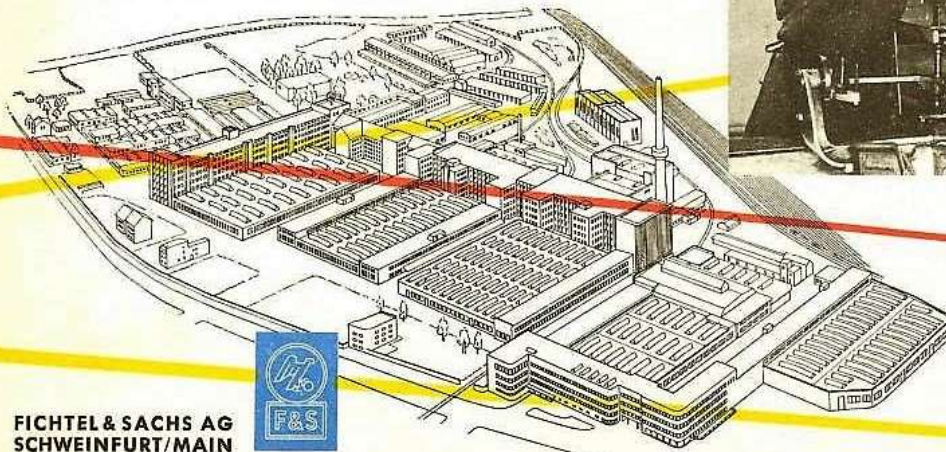
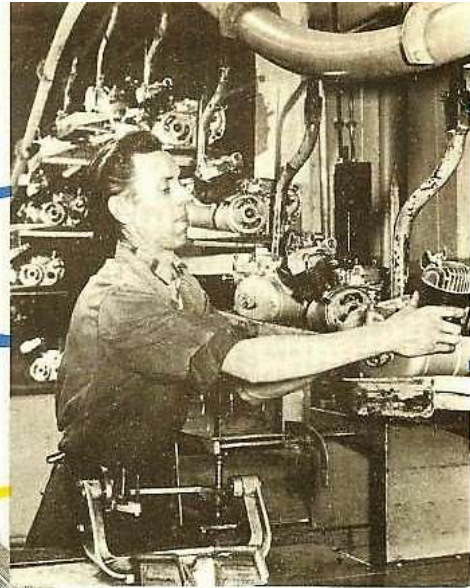
The Sachs 200 AZL-R was a development of the Sachs 175 that was in turn developed from the Sachs 150 that was used to power the Fend Lastenroller delivery trike. With Schnürle loop scavenging system originally developed by DKW, it could be tuned to 15Hp. Messerschmitts initially had the 10.2 HP unit with Silba dynastart, later de-rated in 1958 to 9.7HP with Bosch Dynastart for insurance cost reduction.

Assembly line in 1966 showing assembly process on an engine very similar to the Messerschmitt 200AZL-R. Note that the cases are not matched pairs but are marked with an assembler ID number on completion. Photo: MFGB archive.



## Über 2,5 Millionen

SACHS-Motoren verließen bisher die Montagebänder des Schweinfurter Fichtel & Sachs-Werkes. Mit dieser imponierenden Produktionszahl ist Fichtel & Sachs die größte Zweitaktmotorenfabrik der Welt. Über 100 bedeutende Fahrzeugfirmen bauen SACHS-Motoren in ihre Marken-Mopeds und -Motorräder, -Roller und -Kleinfahrzeuge serienmäßig ein. Diese Unternehmen von Weltgeltung verzichten verantwortungsbewußt auf eigene Motorenfertigung, verwenden lieber alle Sorgfalt auf Höchstleistungen im eigentlichen Fahrzeugbau und bevorzugen den leistungsstarken SACHS-Motor.



FICHEL & SACHS AG  
SCHWEINFURT/MAIN



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*This Sachs brochure picture shows how Fichtel & Sachs was the dominant manufacturing site in Schweinfurt*

Immediately after World War 2 and throughout the cold war era, Schweinfurt became a United States Army Garrison occupying the huge former Wehrmacht barracks and hospital. Proximity to the border with East Germany made this an important strategic centre and American cars were a common sight in the city. Tank transporter convoys were often seen on the roads around the area and could be intimidating when manoeuvring past them in a Messerschmitt KR200s were popular with Sachs factory employees and the service manager, Andreas Vers, had an immaculate pale blue 1960 KR200. MOC established a trade account with the factory in 1968 when the Export Manager, Siegfried Reissmann took an interest in our efforts to preserve the cars. This led to regular imports of large quantities of parts that helped to keep Messerschmitts on the road long after Cabin Scooters had ceased to stock parts. Initially, Industria in London were agents for Fichtel & Sachs offering everything that the factory did – including exchange engines. Despite that agency agreement, F&S continued to help us right up to the final sale of all remaining Sachs 200 parts in 1984. During the period from 1972 to 1984, British Messerschmitts had a better supply of spare parts than ever existed when the cars were in production and it certainly exceeded what was then on offer in Germany. Sachs today remains a significant force in the German automotive parts sector where they specialise in Clutches and Shock absorbers.

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