



Building a Legacy of Craftsmanship, Character and Commitment

M. Davis & Sons celebrates 150 years in construction **BY MONIQUE JACKSON**

IT IS NOT OFTEN that you hear about a company celebrating 150 years in business. It is even less often that the same family has been running the company, weathering the storms of various historical events and economic downturns. M. Davis & Sons is celebrating our 150 year anniversary throughout 2020, and our success is owed to the five generations of the Davis family as well as our team who are committed to providing a superior level of craftsmanship and dedication to our customers.

M. Davis & Sons was started in 1870 as a tinsmith in Wilmington, Delaware, with Edward Davis as its sole employee. We have grown to five

fabrication shops, and a multitude of customers across the Mid-Atlantic region. Throughout each of our changes in ownership, new ideas have been brought to the table to keep our services and offerings current and on the cutting-edge of technology.

The growth we have experienced was not always linear, nor has it been easy. When we entered the Great Depression, many Americans were out of work but still needed repairs done to their homes and businesses. When work with the larger textile mills and customers slowed, Marcellus Davis Sr. realized small customers still needed roof and furnace repairs and pivoted to focus services on these local customers. It is this resilience



A look back at the first of many trucks for M. Davis, a circa 1975 Ford crane truck.

and dedication with which we serve our customers that has allowed us to continue to provide services throughout the years.

In the 1960s, with Pete Davis leading the company and his son and current Chairman Charles Davis working beside him, M. Davis & Sons once again pivoted, shifting the focus of the company to industrial work. If not for this decision, M. Davis & Sons would not be the company we are today, servicing a multitude of large industrial customers. The work we have done for these large companies led to the introduction of our formal Safety Program in 1974, which we pride ourselves on. Safety proves time and time again to be the most important aspect of our work, not just for our customers but for our team. Our dedication to safety keeps projects running smoothly and our team members attend weekly meetings to learn more and ensure procedures are being followed.

When our CEO Peggy DelFabbro assumed the role of CEO in 2008, she became the fifth generation of the Davis family working for the company. Peggy went on to obtain a women-owned business certification for the company, which has been monumental in helping us obtain new customers, network with large corporations, and grow our own Supplier Diversity program.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, two major capabilities were added, with our Electrical Department opening and Modular Process Skids being added to our fabrication offerings. Looking to diversify services further, we introduced our Boiler Group in 2015, and acquired our own line of Power Distribution Equipment, VTi by M. Davis, in 2017. All these decisions to add capabilities, tap into new markets, and constantly make sure we are advanced in our offerings

has helped M. Davis & Sons service our customers in many ways. We use the tagline “One Source for All” to let our customers know we can complete most aspects of their project ourselves, without the need for multiple subcontractors.

Like we did during the Great Depression, we again find ourselves in yet another uncertain time for not only America, but most of the global world. We are lucky we had a crisis management plan already in place, which has helped us navigate the current global climate with a clearer sense of direction. This plan was put in place during the Recession of 2008, and we are still following guidelines set forth then, today. We are fortunate our services are recognized as essential, which allows us to keep our team working and complete our customers’ projects.

We take pride in our ability to say we have been in business for 150 years, not only because it is a great milestone, but because we have been through unclear times before. Of course there is no way to know exactly what will happen or what the future will bring when faced with this level of uncertainty, but due to the efforts of the generations before us, our management team, and our team members, we look forward to the future knowing that our entire team will work to ensure that M. Davis & Sons will remain a resource for our customers. ■

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