

A History of My Company

By Henry Massey, Jr.

I have had the pleasure to watch the City of Mount Holly grow and change into the town it is today. As the face and people of Mount Holly have changed so has the business I have headed for forty-two years, the Massey Company.

A.W. Heath, great-great grandfather of current owner David Massey, founded the Company after the Civil War. It was located in Heath's hometown of Waxhaw, NC. The business prospered through the 1920s, under the leadership of Heath and his son-in-law Charles S. Massey. In 1923 the Mount Holly store opened under the management of Charles' son Henry Massey, Sr. The name of the company was the Massey-Clark Company, and in 1926 when Henry moved to Shelby to start another branch, the Mount Holly store was managed by Olin E. Massey, son of Charles and brother of Henry.

For the next forty-five years, Olin E. Massey became one of Mount Holly's most revered citizens due to his hard work ethic and friendly nature. Under his operation, the company continued to thrive in retail hardware sales. The company changed its name to the Massey Hardware Company.

My brother Charles and I joined the business in 1959. In 1975 we gave the company its present name, the Massey Company, Inc. When I first starting working in the 1960s, the Massey Company was a small family-owned retail hard goods store, servicing the several businesses in town that were in need of hardware. One of our main products was pipe valves, or PVC valves. We used to be a building supply warehouse, but later on in the 1970s, after we adopted our corporate image, the Massey Company became involved in the wholesale distribution of

industrial supplies. The Massey Company opened branches in Wilmington, Savannah, and Augusta, but Mount Holly remains the corporate headquarters.

In 1959, a fire destroyed the Massey building located in downtown Mount Holly; many natives remember the Massey fire and its aftermath. The company moved into our current building in early 1971. As time has passed, our company adapted to the changes in technology. E-commerce, email, and the fax machine made our business more expedient, enabling all the Massey Company branches to be tied together. Everything is now computer driven, and work that was once done by hand and typewriter is now keyed in as computer data. However, technology does have its drawbacks. Business is not as personable as it used to be. Business transactions occur through email and telephone instead of face-to-face. However, the convenience of computers, telephone, email, fax, and Ecommerce is remarkable. When I retired as president in 2000, my youngest son David Massey took over the Wilmington branch and CEO Tahd Chesson is in charge of the Mount Holly headquarters.

Mount Holly has always been a wonderful place to raise a family and start a business. The new I-485 beltway and the Catawba River are two resources that Mount Holly must take advantage of in order to revitalize its surroundings. We need to recruit businesses and accept the fact that we can't stand still in time, which a lot of small town people want. They reminisce for times when life was easier and business prospered. Often times I have a nostalgic moment and wish for the Mount Holly I knew when I moved here, self-contained and not commercialized. However I realize that the direction Mount Holly is heading is positive—the creation of new jobs, the revitalization of downtown, and the increase in new families moving to this Charlotte suburb are all beneficial to the future of our City. We are heading in the right direction, but those wanting immediate change must recognize that great change takes time and resources.

The greatest asset Mount Holly has is its people. The Mount Holly community is known for our strong work ethic and an upstanding moral character. That is one aspect of Mount Holly that has not changed over the years. I have enjoyed both my professional and personal relationships within this community, and I look forward to watching it grow and develop in future generations. My company has changed with technology and downtown Mount Holly has changed with time, but one key component has remained steadfast: the quality of life which the people of Mount Holly enjoy.