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Stork Herron Testing Laboratories celebrates 100 years supporting Ohio industry

The Cleveland materials and product testing laboratory, Stork Herron Testing Laboratories, is kicking off a year-long centennial celebration beginning January, 2011. Employees plan to honor the business and its history in a number of activities and events throughout the year, including creating a historical display in the Schaaf Road facility, inviting speakers from the Cleveland Historical Society and the Herron family, and winding up the year with an oversized Pig Roast / Open House event that will take place on September 16th at the lab.

General Manager Mike Gaydos said, "In 1911, James Herron built a company that would outlive him by 60 years and is still going strong in 2011. We are very excited to have the opportunity to recognize Mr. Herron and his family for 100 years of service to the industries of Ohio and the surrounding region. Today, Stork Herron has global ties and provides services all around the world, thanks to the strong foundation and culture of service that he established. We owe him a lot and we hope everyone will join us in celebrating his accomplishments."

About James H. Herron

James Hervey Herron, Jr. was born on January 7, 1875, in Girard, Pennsylvania, a descendant of Scottish, English, and Irish immigrants who arrived in the United States in 1790. Young Herron showed mechanical aptitude at an early age and earned degrees in Mechanical, Electrical, and Civil Engineering after only two and a half years of study at the University of Michigan. Later, a thesis on steel carburization earned him a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the same institution, and in 1943, he received an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree from Case School of Applied Science (now Case-Western Reserve University).

After engineering and management positions with Cambria Steel Company, Bury Compressor Company, and Detroit Steel Products Company, Herron opened his own testing laboratory, the James H. Herron Company, in 1911. He served as metallurgist, and with chemist Edgar T. Holmberg, he steered the new business through two World Wars and the Great Depression. While at Detroit Steel Products, Herron sold parts to Henry Ford and developed a lifelong friendship and business relationship with the automobile tycoon.

At various times in its history, Herron's company provided power plan design (including the Hoover Power Plant in North Canton, Ohio), forging, wire hardening, tempering, and consulting services to a range of industries in and around Lake Erie. Herron met the demands of the market—supporting W.P.A. projects, military manufacturing, and the post-war construction boom. The lab's core capabilities—materials and metallurgical testing and analysis—were always central to the organization and are the main services offered today.

A part of industrial and civic life in Ohio

James Herron participated heavily in the scientific and community organizations of his day. Some positions he held include:

- ζ President of Cleveland Heights Board of Education
- ζ Chairman of local activity of the President's National Fuel Efficiency Program
- ζ President of the Cleveland Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers
- ζ National President of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers
- ζ President of the Cleveland Engineering Society
- ζ First President of the Cleveland Technical Societies Council
- ζ Fellow of the British Iron and Steel Institute
- ζ Membership in American Institute of Electrical Engineers, American Concrete Institute, American Chemical Society, and the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce
- ζ Membership in various other civic organizations

Notable projects and accomplishments

James Herron's achievements include a number of "firsts" and industrial milestones:

- ζ Helped develop one of the first "pig casting" machines, to handle pig iron, the product of smelting iron ore and coke.
- ζ Provided testing for such Cleveland landmarks as the Cleveland Terminal Tower Complex, Cleveland Stadium, the Detroit-Superior High-Level Bridge, and Carnegie Medical.
- ζ Acquired the first metallurgical microscope brought to Detroit in order to conduct a failure analysis on automotive springs.
- ζ The James H. Herron Company made the first scientific study of atmospheric pollution.

The Herron Family

James Herron had no children of his own. After his death in 1948 at the age of 73, his nephew, metallurgist Lewis F. Herron, assumed leadership of the laboratory and held the post until his retirement in 1976, after which he continued to serve as Chairman of the Board. John L. Herron, Lewis Herron's son, another mechanical and metallurgical engineer, served as President until his retirement in 1997.

From Herron to Stork

In 1997, Stork Materials Technology, a member of the Stork group in The Netherlands, purchased Herron Testing Laboratories.

From Stork to 3i

January 1, 2011 Stork sold the Stork Materials Technology Group to a private equity holding firm called 3i based in London. 3i is listed on the FTE 100 and has holdings in excel of 13 Billion Euros.

Celebrating a century

Stork Herron invites the general public to visit [The Herron Legacy website](#), opening January 1, 2011. The website will include photos of James Herron, Henry Ford, early Cleveland landmarks, a timeline of Cleveland industry, and other historical information and links. For more information about upcoming centennial events, please contact info.herron@us.stork.com.

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