



Celebrating Our Heritage

Quality Oil Company, a family-owned, local business since 1929 began as a distributorship for Shell Oil Company. Today, we've grown to become a regional company offering a diverse range of products and services, including propane, convenience stores, hotels, trucking and real estate development.

Our philosophy remains the same as it was in 1929: provide superior customer service with quality, respect and good value. Thank you for allowing us to serve you for 80 years.



Please Support the Childress Pediatric Trauma Unit at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center by contributing \$1 at your local Quality Mart, Quality Plus and Participating Hampton Inn and Sleep Inn Locations by December 6.

1929 - 2009

80

YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Quality Oil
COMPANY LLC



Quality Oil

COMPANY, LLC

By Heather Spivey

In 1929, Quality Oil Company was founded. Shortly thereafter, partners Joe Glenn and Bert Bennett, Sr. acquired the company. At that time, 80 years ago, gas was only 19 cents per gallon. There have been remarkable changes in the oil and gas industry since that time and throughout, our hometown family-owned company, Quality Oil, has flourished and grown from its roots in oil and gas.

Quality Oil has been a family business since its inception, with Glenn and Bennett family members owning and operating the company for three generations. Graham Bennett, current President, heads a multi-conglomerate company with approximately 1100 employees. The company has had a series of particularly significant areas of growth over the years.

- (1) Quality Oil originally began as a provider of gas and home heating oil, offering fuel oil and burner service to residential communities. There was an old saying from the 1930s: "If a farmer bent down to tie his shoe, when he looked up he would find a Quality Oil pump in front of him." Their partnership with Shell was important for each company. Quality Oil developed and designed a "shell"-shaped gas station in 1932 to promote the Shell Brand. There were originally eight, and now only one remains at Sprague and Peachtree Streets and has been named on the National Historic Registry.
- (2) In the 1930s, most oil and gas sold in this region was transported by rail. Quality Oil established Quality Oil Transport (now Reliable Tank Line) to more efficiently transport oil and gas from Wilmington, NC to the Triad via truck instead of rail.
- (3) In the 1950s and '60s, Quality Oil embraced the service station concept, having a convenience store coupled with service bays and waiting areas for repairs.
- (4) In 1973, Quality Oil began to acquire real estate holdings and to develop shopping centers and hotels. Their first hotel venture was with the Howard Johnson's franchise. This would later lead to the construction and operation of 8 hotels throughout the southeastern United States. Quality Oil currently owns and operates Hampton Inns, Hampton Inn and Suites, Homewood Suites and Sleep Inns in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.
- (5) In 1979, the first Quality Mart (QM) was built in Rockwell, NC, offering consumers what we now consider today a full-service convenience store.

Bennett credits the success of Quality Oil to the approximate 1100 employees and the diversity of the company. Bennett believes that it is essential for a company to take on the responsibility of training and developing its employees to grow their capabilities, and thereby to remain as a competitive industry leader. He feels passionately that employees should train to be leaders.

There are four points to which Quality Oil holds steadfast—these form their core ideology. Bennett states, "There is a strong belief in core ideology: success, the vision to be the best." The employees not only work by these principles, but they live by them, too. These points state who Quality Oil is and what their heritage represents.

(1) Do it because it's right. (2) Treat others as we would like to be treated. (3) Be financially responsible. (4) Be better today than yesterday. Bennett says that his employees keep the company honest. "We work hard to create an owner-operated program through profit sharing. The best return is investing in our people," says Bennett, "thus establishing PRIDE in ourselves and our company."

Quality Oil has grown by leaps and bounds over the past 80 years, particularly by merging their roots in oil and gas with the real estate industry, from the development and design of the first Shell-shaped station (1932); to the "gas house" retail concept (1971); to the development and ownership of hotel properties including Howard Johnson, Hampton and Hampton Inn and Suites, and Sleep Inn (1973); to the emergence of Quality Mart convenience stores (1979); to the purchase and development of Greenbrier Farms (1994) and Brookberry Farm (2007). A common denominator through all of this is real-estate. As Bennett elaborates on this, he explains, "Other than people, real estate is the most important and most critical part of our business." One thing that hasn't changed over the last 80 years is the quality. The Quality Oil Company motto sums it best:

QUALITY – OUR WAY OF LIFE

As our area has lost some traditional industry leaders, Quality Oil has remained strong and committed to Winston-Salem and the Triad. We would like to say Happy Anniversary, Quality Oil, and here's to another 80 years!

To learn more about this impressive business you can visit their website at www.qualityoilinc.com. You'll also discover many more things about this family-owned and -operated company.

