

MADE IN
Northeastern
PA

Each month, we recognize one of the region's top manufacturers with the aid of NEPIRC, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center. Since 1988, NEPIRC has been working with manufacturers to improve their productivity, profitability, competitiveness and long-term viability through consultative services.

85
UGL
 CELEBRATING 85 YEARS

UGL celebrating 85 years of manufacturing in Scranton

In 1932, Herbert Hoover was president of the United States, Amelia Earhart made her famous flight across the Atlantic Ocean from the United States to Ireland in 14 hours and 54 minutes, Charles Lindbergh, Jr's infant son was kidnapped, and the Dow Jones Industrial Average hit its lowest level of the Great Depression.

That same year in Northeastern Pennsylvania, a young entrepreneur, Gerald Baker Payne, used his savings of \$5,000 to hire eight employees and rent a building in Scranton where he launched United Gilsonite Laboratories, or UGL as it is more commonly known. He purchased a used meat grinder for \$5 from a junk yard and with that began making cement for furnaces.

Payne had previously worked in sales for another company and decided to launch his own company, in part, because he wanted to improve on the quality of the products he was marketing. That focus on quality remains the number one priority of UGL today.



Gerald Baker Payne, right, meets with George Walker, UGL Treasurer in this 1946 photograph.



In July of 2016, James Tate became the fourth CEO of UGL since it was founded in 1932.

Looking to expand his product line, Payne began manufacturing cement for roofing. Again he used his ingenuity and connected an open vat to a five-horsepower motor and five Ford automobile rear ends and fans that ran the homemade mixing line.

For years, Payne struggled, paying himself only \$25 a week. After 10 years, he had just broken even.

However, 85 years and more than 80 developed products later, UGL is going strong and is celebrating its 85th anniversary.

The company employs nearly 150 people at its plants in Scranton, Pennsylvania; Jacksonville, Illinois; Dayton, Nevada, and Jackson, Mississippi. More than half of the employees work at the Scranton plant.

It was in the years after World War II that the home improvement market sparked the sales of many of UGL's products which necessitated the need to expand the manufacturing facilities in Scranton.

In 1953, UGL introduced its DRYLOK line of masonry waterproofing that would become the company's largest selling product. DRYLOK has twice been rated number one by a national rating company as the best masonry waterproofing product on the market.

UGL has remained a family-owned business and has had three presidents since its founding in 1932 through mid 2016, when a fourth head of the organization was named.

In July of 2016, James Tate took over as Chief Executive Officer. Before coming to UGL, Tate was president of the U.S. West Region & Latin America for the Scotts Miracle-Gro Company.

As UGL looks to the future, the company is working with the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center on its ISO certifications and NEPIRC has assisted them with lighting retrofits to save on energy usage and make the company more green.

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