



Quality | Innovation | Reliability

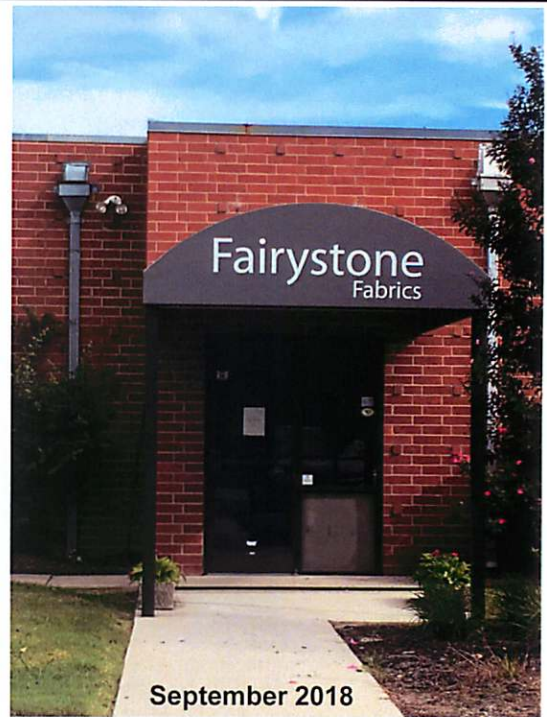
FAIRYTALES

Special Anniversary Edition 2018

We are NOT your “grandfather’s textile facility”.



June 2012



September 2018

We take pride in the way we present our company to others...

“This is the cleanest textile manufacturing plant I’ve ever been in.”

Comment heard regularly from our guests.



September 2014



May 2018

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Angie Shropshire, Editor; Jim Bryan, Co-Editor.
Richard Davis, Wei Du, Chris Rojas and Doug Tate, Staff.
Janet Brown, Photographer.

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A Message from Our President

I hope you enjoy this special edition of "Fairytale", which celebrates our company's 50th Anniversary. I had fun looking back at previous issues and pictures from the past. We are fortunate to have had a lot of really good people work at our company over the years. We had a few characters too!

The first edition of "Fairytale" was issued in 1993. I scanned a few of the older issues. There is a common thread through all of them. Change is always in front of us and our ability to respond has been consistent. Investment in the plant and people occurs every year. We have been able to attract a long list of customers who have supported us over the years. We celebrate the successes of our extended family, not just work-related goals.

Here are a few quotes from Tom Bobo when he wrote his messages in "Fairytale":

1. "Most important, however, the strongest asset we have is our workforce. The knowledge, skills and attitudes we bring together here give us strength for our size, which is as much or more than any in the industry. Without it, all else is just nuts, bolts and bricks. With it, we cannot fail to build a good future." (1st edition of "Fairytale" - 1993)
2. "At Fairystone, we must use the slack in our schedule to train, to find ways to be more efficient, to discard and replace wasteful or outdated procedures, to accelerate maintenance of our equipment and to be fully ready to capitalize on the business which will be coming our way. It is equally important that we maximize the business we do have. We must produce every rack and section yard we can. Every day, every shift. We have enjoyed good times in the past. Even better times are in our future. Let's do it." (Summer 2001)
3. "This is perhaps a good time to re-emphasize that our past growth and modest success has been due not to any brilliant management strategy, but to the efforts and dedication of all of the people who have stuck with us through good times and bad in order to serve our customers as well, or better than, our competitors. We must never lose sight of this as we move into the future. The future not only belongs to us, but it depends upon us. I'm betting that the best is yet to come for us all." (Summer 2008)

You will see that we have updated the history of the company later in this issue of "Fairytale". The update covers the most recent 10 years of our history. After writing and reflecting on it, I am amazed at all we have accomplished together. There is much more to the story than just these highlights. Lots of personal issues and triumphs as well as company failures and successes (more the latter, thank goodness!)

As we enter the next 50 years for the company I am confident that change will continue to challenge us. World markets will change the rules which we cannot affect. New and existing customers will bring new fabrics and yarns to our door. Different machines will be required to make the products of the future and we must make calculated decisions on what is best for us.

Workforce development will be increasingly important to deal with new or higher technologies. We need to develop the younger members of the family as long-term folks decide to retire. Our first step is to offer training to our existing workforce. They have the knowledge now that can be combined with new ideas and methods which will allow promotion to higher technical jobs and higher compensation.

Our participation in AlamanceCAP, our high school apprenticeship program has brought us five apprentices over the last three years. They are all making good progress in learning our business. We will not be successful without the mentors who are teaching them the ropes. I appreciate everyone making the extra effort to insure we welcome them and share your knowledge with them.

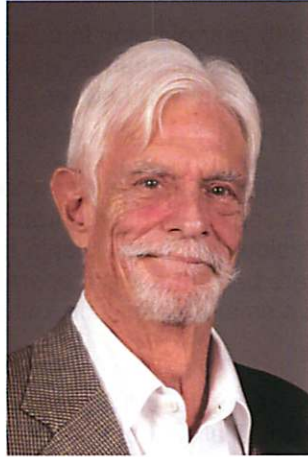
Thanks for being part of the Fairystone Family during this 50+ years. Remember it means you are part of a company that has succeeded to the point where we are in the top three percent of all companies formed in the USA. Let's make sure we stay in that exclusive club for years to come.

Jim Bryan

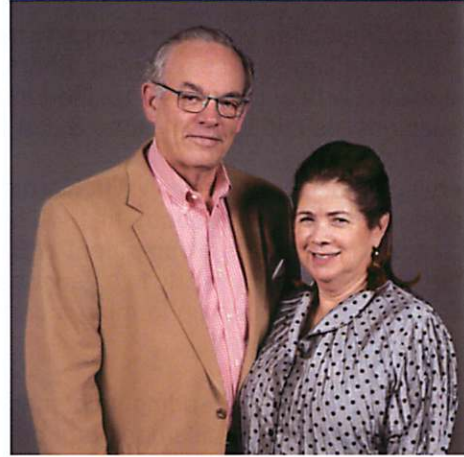
The Faces of Ownership



Harold Bobo,
Founder



Tom Bobo,
2nd Generation Owner



Jim & Nancy Bryan,
Current Owners

A Voice from the Past

Elsewhere in this issue of "Fairytales" are summaries of the Fairystone saga from inception through the ensuing half-century. I found it interesting to note that only 36% of businesses survive for 10 years. Only 21% make it for 20 years. Twitter, Facebook, Google, Netflix? Less than 20 so far. Even E-bay and Amazon have been around for less than 25. Only a tiny percentage make it for anywhere near 50 years, especially without major acquisitions, mergers, etc.

So, how is it that Fairystone has managed to join this small & unique handful of American businesses which have survived strong domestic competition, foreign competition, several recessions, often erratic government trade policies, ever-more burdensome regulations, labor shortages, fluctuating raw materials pricing, customers coming and going, and so on, and arrived today stronger and more competitive than ever?

Well, Jim's recap of the last 10 years illustrates rather well the handful of fundamentals I believe necessary for long-term survival of any business:

- Make or provide something useful for the foreseeable future. Like fabric.
- Find the best people out there. Hire them and make them part of the business. Not just employees. Judge your success at this by your turnover rate and how many of them are there because somebody on your payroll recommended the company.
- Invest in your people. Pay, benefits, the workplace, education, training. Return on this is big and everybody wins.
- Invest in the latest technology. Or your competition will bury you.
- Invest in the latest equipment and plenty of it. Have the guts to put your personal signature on the loans if you have to.
- Don't get greedy or overextend during the good years. Be prepared for a rainy day. Bankers aren't all that friendly in tough times.

If you've been here at Fairystone during those 10 years, or longer, you'll probably have found that most of the above is in evidence. Your company is strong, well-prepared and posed for yet greater success in the decades to come.

I've taken great pleasure in watching the progress you've made since March of 2011. I'll be keeping up as I pursue the "other interests" to which Jim refers (though the fish and gamebirds aren't too happy about it.)

Best of luck to all.

Tom Bobo

History of Fairystone

On February 9th of this year, our company marked its 50th year of being in business as a contractor for warping, knitting, and sueding services, among others. Our history is one of change, adaptation, and luck. For those of us who are relatively new to Fairystone, the following is a brief history of how we got to where (ever) we are now in the textile business, as told by Tom Bobo & Jim Bryan:

After serving in the Air Force in WWII, Harold Bobo came home and went to work for Burlington Industries, which was thriving in the post-war boom. In 1946 he, his wife & son, Tom, moved from Greensboro to Burlington, where Harold served for 20 years as president of BI's tricot division, which had plants here, in Asheboro, and in Pomona, California. After spending nearly two years battling severe back problems, operations and therapy, he did some consulting work and wound up forming a partnership in a small commission knitting operation in 1968 called Jersey Fabrics, which he managed.

Jersey Fabrics owned 24 Reading tricot machines. All were run for JP Stevens Corp., on one or two styles, using high quality 15 denier monofilament yarn on 30x42" beams. Talk about the good old days! Mill efficiency in the mid-90's, about 4 people per shift and one part-time person in the office. The place practically ran itself. In fact, on one occasion, the third shift all went to the beach one Saturday, except for one fixer, who started up the machines on Sunday night. The rest of them showed up at around 7:00 am (not in too good of shape). The only giveaway was that there were three machines standing for threading.

Well, things began to change. JP Stevens and a couple of other heavy hitters needed additional capacity. Harold bought another 20 Readings under their guarantees. More yet were needed. About this time, 1971, Glen Raven had decided to exit the tricot business and retain Park Avenue Finishing as a commission finishing operation. Harold and the Gant family reached an agreement to lease the building to, and to sell the machinery to Harold. Thus Fairystone was born, with a small warping operation and 59 tricot machines, serving several major tricot manufacturers.

In the mid-seventies, Fairystone leased a 3-bar tricot operation in Graham, NC which was called Triple Knit Fabrics. Solid 3-bar business never developed and their deal ended after about a year.

In 1973, Tom decided to get out of the banking business and have a crack at textiles. Harold was approaching retirement age and it looked like a good idea in the interest of keeping things going for another generation, rather than selling out or liquidating in the relatively near future. So Tom got started in late 1973.

Suddenly, things didn't look all that great. The economy was tanking and we were on our way to running about 18 machines. Tom's job quickly became going to New York for 2 or 3 days every couple of weeks to dig up business. The effort slowly began paying off and we recovered to a reasonable operating level.

The late '70's and early '80's were a time of change. With the coming of the Mayer compound needle machine, with the higher speeds, we were able to consolidate the two plants into our current Fairystone location and increase our capacity at the same time. We added space on several occasions (eight, to be exact), expanding knitting, warping and warehousing as well as installing the sueder.

As time went on, we did business with most all of the tricot manufacturers and fought it out with the numerous other commission knitters in the arena. In the late '90's, most of our original customers were gone, as were most of our competition.

The business changed in many ways. The most recent recession 2007 – 2010 was a real test. We made the hard decisions to right size or down size our knitting capacity. This resulted in selling twenty 2-bar machines and reducing our family by 45 people. Those were hard days for all of us.

Even after doing this we stood a large number of machines for many months. In addition, our business was changing, our dependence on apparel fabrics continued to erode. The styling for automotive interiors changed to flat knit 3-bar fabrics. This required buying new machines, which we had already begun to do, but then we had to accelerate our capital spending.

Our machine mix changes all the time. During the last 10 years we have added 18, 20 and 24-gauge knitting ma-

History of Fairystone (continued)

chines. In addition, we brought in several raschel machines for different markets. We partnered with a new customer on two double needle bar jacquard machines that produced a garment instead of flat fabric. We continued upgrading our warping equipment.

Starting in 2010, it was time to make improvements to our plant. We started refinishing the floors in knitting that were showing 58 years of normal wear and tear. That prompted us to repaint the walls and upgrade the corner in the old knitting room. Duke power offered rebates to put in energy efficient lighting. We could have retrofitted the existing fixtures, instead we bought new light fixtures so we could express a more modern feeling for the future. HVAC systems were coming to the end of their functional lives. We were able to procure a new chiller and two air washers in 2012 at good prices. In 2017 and 2018 we added new HVAC in both of our knitting rooms and the warping room.

A change in ownership occurred on March 4th, 2011. Tom Bobo decided to pursue his many interests outside the company. Business was improving so, Jim Bryan the President at that time, was able to buy the company and continue our history of family ownership.

We have since added new customers and new markets. Multi-bar machines have been acquired every year. New creels were installed in the warping department and technology upgrades were installed to improve our warping process.

The business expanded in a different way in 2013 – 2018. We were able to acquire a large group of machines to support our growing business and convinced a new customer to move their machines to Fairystone so they could reallocate their factory space for newer technologies. 2018 has been a banner year as we have purchased five new knitting machines.

Workforce development has always been important. New machines with new technologies brought a new urgency to grow our own technological workforce. We increased our partnership with Alamance Community College to offer courses for existing employees to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Expert OJT classes and a number of electrical classes have been attended by a number of our team members over the last four years. We brought in consultants in 2017 to give everyone training in LEAN principles, 5-S root cause analysis and team building.

In 2015 we became founding members of AlamanceCAP (Career Accelerator Program) which is our High School apprenticeship program. We now have five motivated young people who are “Earning while they are Learning”. They attend school and work part time in a structured 4 to 5-year program that results in an Associates’ Degree from ACC and a journeyman’s license from the state of North Carolina.

As a result of our workforce efforts we have received local and state recognition. Alamance Community College selected us for their 2017 Business Partner of the Year. This was for our 29 years of support and collaboration in workforce development. The North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership awarded us their leadership in Workforce Development for 2017. In 2018 we joined the Eastern Triad Workforce Training Initiative to expand our efforts on a regional basis. Business North Carolina and The Triad Business Journal wrote articles celebrating our 50 years of success in business as well.

Quality has always been a focus at Fairystone. We were certified ISO-9001 – 2008 in 2009. We just passed our recertification for ISO 9011-2015 in 2018 which means we have an up-to-date quality management system that is recognized around the world.

Our history is only the first chapter of our future. We have been through extremes in the past; new technology, new fabrics, new customers and changes in nearly all aspects of our business and in the US textile business in general. Much of the latter is gone for good, and the changes and challenges will continue. We are, however, survivors. The challenges have made us stronger. If we put out the effort, every day, we will be able to write the coming chapters of our future as opposed to letting others do it for us.

The next 50 years will bring more change and challenges. We will continue in our efforts to be prepared for them and look forward to many successful years ahead.

Where Did We Get Our Name?

We are often asked the origin of the name, "Fairystone". Our founder, Harold Bobo picked the name after first selecting "Carousel Fabrics", which turned out already to be in use. As you will see if you read the following legend, the "Fairy" stones are supposed to bring good luck. He figured that it wouldn't hurt to have some luck in starting a new business. Since we are still surviving in a tough world after 50 years, I guess they work!

"Fairy" Stone Legend

In a quiet sunny glade nestled among the rugged foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in Patrick County, Virginia (a section made renowned by the fact that old King Powhatan once held undisputed possession there) was discovered a single quarry of the far famed Virginia "Fairy" or "Lucky" stones.

These little curiosities, which range in size from one-fourth of an inch to two inches, bear in the most unique form some shape of a cross, which has been outlined by Nature's own hand.

In that weird spot, the only known place in the world where the little wonder working gems are to be found, the good fairies flourished and had their workshop many hundred of years ago.

As to the real origin of these crosses of stone, comparatively nothing is known as the leading scientists of the country have failed to throw any satisfactory light on the subject; but in that remote mountain section runs a very pretty legend to the effect that hundreds of years before King Powhatan's dynasty came into power, the fairies were dancing around a spring of water when a elfin messenger arrived from a city far, far away, bringing the sad tidings of the death of Christ; and when they heard the terrible story of the crucifixion they wept. As the tears fell upon the earth they were crystallized into little pebbles, on each of which was formed a beautiful cross. When the fairies had disappeared from the enchanted spot the ground around the spring and the adjacent valley were strewn with these unique mementos of that melancholy event.

Not even in the old world, with its quaint and curious lore, is a more beautiful legend to be found, and just how it originated no one knows; but for more than a century thousands of people have held these little crosses of stone in more or less superstitious awe, being firm in the belief that they will protect the wearer against witchcraft, sickness, accidents and disasters of all kinds. Every stone is in some shape of a cross, and millions of people are now wearing them in various forms of jewelry.



*The Fairystone
Family Album*

Our Culture

Here at Fairystone we treat everyone as family. We make everyone feel welcome here, from the interview process through their work career. We offer a very competitive & affordable benefits package to our employees. We take pride in taking care of one another. We celebrate with one another and we mourn with one another. There is always someone willing to hold out a helping hand to a fellow co-worker & lift them up in their time of need. The longevity of our employees is a true testament to how our "family" holds its own and welcomes new members into the family.

We run a quality-focused work team. We are ISO 9001:2015 certified. We take pride in taking the best care possible of our customer base. We try to accommodate all reasonable requests in a timely manner. We follow our customers' specs & give advice should the style not be performing up to the customers' standards. We work closely with our customers and their suppliers, keeping everyone well-informed in the event of sub-standard performance. We ship out the best quality we can. Our employees are ever-vigilant when it comes to quality. Our low volume of customer complaints speaks highly of our hard work and dedication.

We are highly involved in our community. We have always made a conscientious effort to help not only those in our Fairystone "family", but those in the community as well. We hold food drives, shoe drives, participate in fundraising events for local charities and make donations to several local charities and schools as well.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



*ACC Foundation
AO Elementary PTA
Hillcrest Elementary PTO
Newspapers In Education
Allied Churches of Alamance County
Hospice of Alamance County
Elon Fire/Rescue
Golf Tournaments for Local Charities*

Celebrations

We celebrate everything from expecting moms & dads to employee birthdays to holidays to retirements. Any reason to celebrate & have fun together is a good one!



Our Employees Stay With Us...

10 - 19 years



And Stay With Us...

20 - 29 years



Hattie James

Tina Carden



Curt Nellis



Shirley Love



Rick Smith



Sherry DuBois



John Harmon



Ricky Lipscomb



Jackie Howard



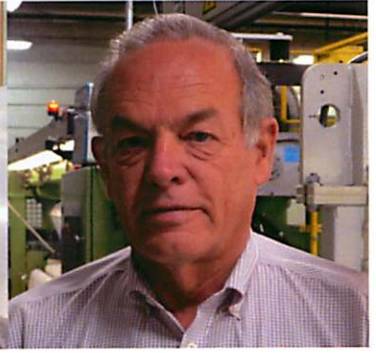
Angie Shropshire



Janet Brown



Gary Swann



Jim Bryan



Jeff Gant



Bernard Love



DJ Guye



Joan Johnson

AND STAY WITH US!!

49 years



Dewey Guye

43 years



Debbie Horner

42 years



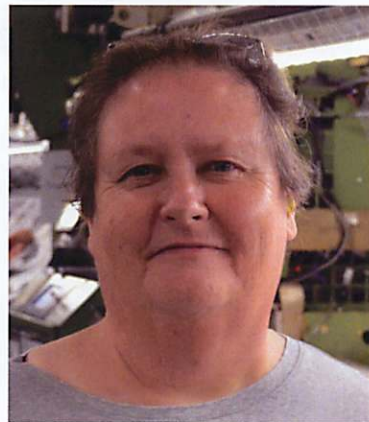
Linda Williamson

32 years



Josephine Echols

30 years



Vickie Riddle

*Thank you ALL
for your many years
of dedicated service to Fairystone!!*

2018 Anniversary Listing

JANUARY

Tina Carden 27 yrs.
Rick Smith 25 yrs.
Angie Shropshire 22 yrs.
Tracy Siler 17 yrs.
Henry Love 2 yrs.
Sharon Teer 1 yr.
Lynn Coppersmith 1 yr.

FEBRUARY

Joan Johnson 20 yrs.
Eugene Alston 4 yrs.
Richard Davis 2 yrs.

MARCH

Marcia Stewart 19 yrs.
Sadie Wheeler 17 yrs.
Lalo Najera 16 yrs.
Nick Allen 12 yrs.
Tina Cates 11 yrs.
Mario Lopez 11 yrs.
Rodger Mitchell 11 yrs.
Patricia Stewart 11 yrs.
Roheem Russell 1 yr.

APRIL

John Harmon 25 yrs.
Sherry DuBois 25 yrs.
Janet Brown 22 yrs.
Gary Swann 22 yrs.
Ruth Williams 17 yrs.
Ernest Donham 14 yrs.
Doug Robertson 13 yrs.
Josephine Smith 12 yrs.
Margarito Guzman 10 yrs.
Jose Estrada 5 yrs.
Maria Sanchez 3 yrs.
Chris Coble 2 yrs.
Helen Enoch 1 yr.

MAY

Linda Williamson 42 yrs.
Bernard Love 21 yrs.
Frances Shoffner 15 yrs.
Doug Fuqua 12 yrs.
Jasper Robertson 12 yrs.
Lisa Hilliard 10 yrs.

MAY

Rigoberto Matias 10 yrs.
Jose Lara 8 yrs.
Sigris Izaguirre 4 yrs.
Desmon Springfield 3 yrs.
David Price 1 yr.
Pam Gordon 1 yr.

JUNE

Dewey Guye, Sr. 49 yrs.
Jim Bryan 22 yrs.
Elton Murdock 15 yrs.
Cristal Guzman 5 yrs.
Kristie Slade 3 yrs.
B.T. Khamvanhithong 2 yrs.
L.B. Jennings 2 yrs.
Justin Padmos 2 yrs.
Cristian Salas 1 yr.

JULY

Debra Horner 43 yrs.
Benson Packingham 13 yrs.
Kenneth Hall, Jr. 10 yrs.
Elgie Bowes II 10 yrs.
Fidel Guzman 9 yrs.
Connie Long 9 yrs.
Randy Lunsford 4 yrs.
Jackie Overman 3 yrs.
Laxton Ramsey 3 yrs.
Tommy Bowman 2 yrs.
Chuck Ruble 2 yrs.
Hector Portillo 2 yrs.
Andres Ponce-Gomez 1 yr.

AUGUST

Curtis Nellis 27 yrs.
Ricky Lipscomb 25 yrs.
Jacqueline Howard 25 yrs.
Monica Griffis 15 yrs.
Laura Massey 13 yrs.
William Aldridge 9 yrs.
Ruben Lopez 8 yrs.
Miguel Cruz 7 yrs.
Tonda Lambert 6 yrs.
Philip Coppersmith 4 yrs.
Jannie Hall 3 yrs.
Chris Rojas 3 yrs.

AUGUST

August Jacobs 3 yrs.
Mercy Vasquez 3 yrs.
Antonio Leath 2 yrs.
Clell Bragg 2 yrs.
Bonnie Shelton 2 yrs.

SEPTEMBER

Shirley Love 26 yrs.
Dewey Guye, Jr. 21 yrs.
Cheyenne Jones 16 yrs.
H'Lim Ayun 15 yrs.
Mariano Lara 15 yrs.
Kim Heng 5 yrs.
Dorian Simmons 2 yrs.

OCTOBER

Josephine Echols 32 yrs.
Hattie James 28 yrs.
Alfonso Guzman 12 yrs.
Richard Moore 4 yrs.
Greysi Vasquez 3 yrs.
Paul Jenkins 2 yrs.

NOVEMBER

Vickie Riddle 30 yrs.
Patricia Rippey 13 yrs.
Guadalupe Guzman 12 yrs.
Brenda Fitzgerald 11 yrs.
Douglas Tate 11 yrs.
Tammy Terry 4 yrs.
James Nance 4 yrs.
Sit Lorvan 3 yrs.
Valentin Santana 1 yr.

DECEMBER

Jeffrey Gant 22 yrs.
Wei Du (Dewey) 3 yrs.
Novette Jones 3 yrs.

Welcome to the Family

Joining the family this year are the following:

Kenny Brandon, Michael Willard, Milton Guzman, Thun Puih, Frankie Rogers, Pedro Najera Suazo, Tanyelle Haith, Cindy Vasquez, Breanna Schmidt, Cody Warren, Nathan Yount, Terry Cain, Julius Lee, Corey Neal, Ray Gates, Wanda Coble, Brandon Scotton, Paula Ragsdale, Diane Moore, Kaylee Vasquez and Michael Torain.

We hope you all have received a warm welcome to Fairystone and will stay with us for years to come!

Annual Family Events

NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Brackets Contest



Fourth of July Cookouts



Limo Rides to Mammograms



Annual Family Events

Health & Wellness Events



Weight-Loss Challenge Winners

August Ice-Cream "Party"



Thanksgiving & Christmas Dinners



Annual Halloween Costume Contest



Annual Santa Party for Kids... Young & Old



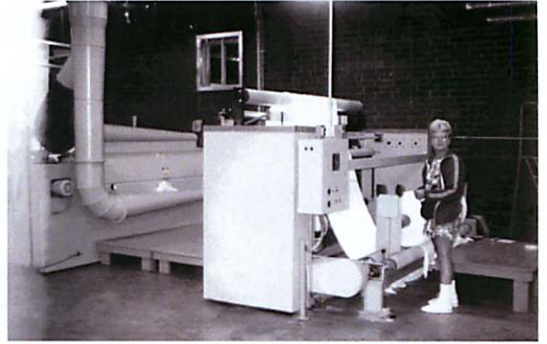
Memories

Remember When...

We ran baseball stripes in warping?



We installed the sueder?



We ran 2500 pound rolls in knitting?



We added onto the beam pad?



The original logo was introduced?



The **supervisors** cooked our steak & chicken meals at Christmas?

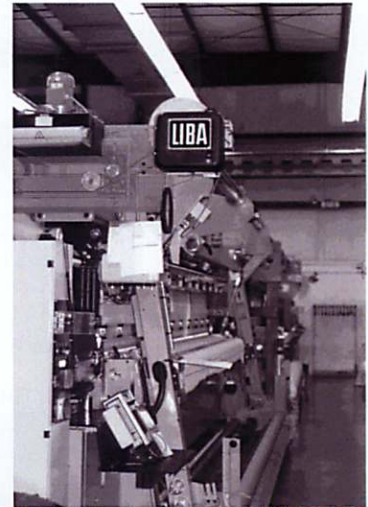


Remember When...

You were allowed to smoke EVERYWHERE in the building?



We bought that LIBA machine?



We participated in the March of Dimes walk annually?



Hospice used to hold its annual Hot Air Balloon Race...
and we sponsored a balloon and raffled off a ride?

Phyllis was
SO EXCITED
to win the balloon ride!!



Pictures from the Past



More Pictures from the Past



Yes, that's a baby skunk hanging out around here!



Company Accomplishments & Recognitions

We are a founding member (2015) of AlamanceCAP, our county apprenticeship program. We are investing in this endeavor to enhance our workforce of the future. We now have five apprentices here. Photos are of our three 2018 selected apprentices, Cody, Nathan and Breeana and their signing ceremony picture, which includes other apprentices in the county signing for this year.



Fairystone was recognized as Alamance Community College's Business Partner of the year for 2017.



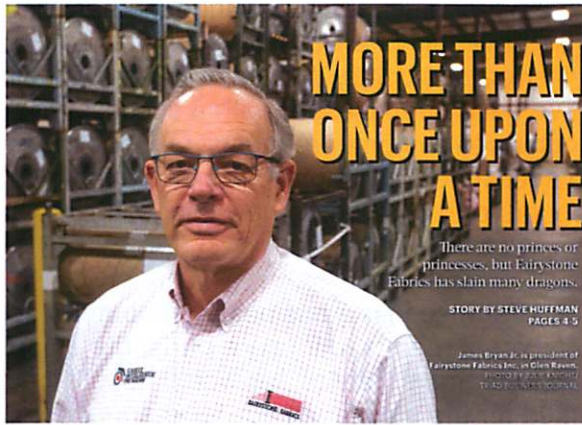
Fairystone was awarded the NC Manufacturing Extension Partnership's Leadership Award in Workforce Development in 2017.



Triad Business Journal 50th Anniversary Article

TRIAD BUSINESS JOURNAL

Small-biz deals in 2017
A snapshot of last year's transactions in the Triad.
JANE LITTLE, 12



MORE THAN ONCE UPON A TIME

There are no princes or princesses, but Fairystone Fabrics has slain many dragons.

STORY BY STEVE HUFFMAN
PAGES 4-5

James Bryan is president of Fairystone Fabrics Inc. in Glen Raven, N.C. He is also a member of the Triad Business Journal's Advisory Board.

WHY THE \$3.2B BUY?
Behind the Lincoln Financial Liberty deal
Lincoln Financial Group CEO Dennis Glass shares why the purchase will help it expand its group benefits offerings. **JESSICA REAMAN, 8**

EXPANDING OPERATIONS
Packaging firm needs a bigger box
South Atlantic Packaging Corp. is moving into a nearly 148,000-square-foot Mountain Station facility. **LUKE BOLLINGER, 8**



BUSINESSES TO SHARE BUILDING
DOWNTOWN GROCERY IN THE WORKS 6

NEAR-CAMPUS Digs
Mill to be converted to apartments
Another Triad mill will be redeveloped into residences, this time near UNC Greensboro. **JOHN BRANDEY, 7**

INCREASED DIGITAL FOCUS
BB&T will invest \$50M in fintech
Chief Digital Officer Bradley Bennett discusses the bank's digital strategy. **JESSICA REAMAN, 8**

THE LIST THIRD-PARTY LOGISTICS FIRMS 14-15

TRIAD BUSINESS JOURNAL

JANUARY 26, 2018

TRIAD BUSINESS JOURNAL

Happily ever after

Adapting is key to this 'fairytale' that refuses to end

BY STEVE HUFFMAN
Contributing Writer

Around 2010, during the height of the Great Recession, Fairystone Fabrics was in trouble. The longtime textile manufacturer, located in Glen Raven, experienced a big decline in business as the economy tanked. It laid off 40 of its 135 employees, and 20 of the plant's three warp knitting machines were idled, then sold to overseas manufacturers as Fairystone struggled to stay afloat.

Prior to the economic downturn, a large share of the company's business was producing fabric for seats and headliners that went into Cadillac, Chevrolet, Ford, Honda and Subaru. Jim Bryan, Fairystone's president and owner, says that at the beginning of October 2009, Fairystone had 27 machines running pretty much full bore producing that fabric.

Within a month, every one of the machines sat silent, the demand for automobiles having ground to a halt because of the recession. It'd be March 2010 before there was a trend to have any of the machines Fairystone used for the work returned to operation.

It wasn't a pleasant time, Bryan recalls, but it taught him some hard lessons. "I made me realize, if we can survive those five months, we can survive anything," he says. Things have improved considerably for Fairystone in the years since, the company bouncing back from those rough economic times with a vengeance.

50 years of adapting
Fairystone recovered by doing what it's been doing through much of its history, by being anything but a typical textile manufacturer. The company, which turns 50 in February, long ago began branching out from the production of traditional textile products.



Knitting operator and trainer Josephine Smith works with apprentice Cristian Salas, training him to be an operator. Salas is a student in the Alamance Community College mechatronics program and is in the Career Accelerator Program.

pete financially with overseas companies when it came to the production of traditional textiles—things like T-shirts, underwear and socks. Fairystone is now known as a "converter," much of the company's work involving converting yarn to fabric. It's part of the computer-driven world of "technical textiles" where plants are big and pristine.

A stroll through Fairystone proves the plants of textiles being a loud, dirty business are a thing of the past. "It's a skilled industry nowadays," Bryan says of the company's business. "Every one of our machines has a computer brain."

While the production of fabric for automotive headliners and seats makes up more than 50 percent of Fairystone's business, the company's work is diverse. Employees produce specialty apparel, industrial filtrations, home furnishings, gaming tables and embellishment apparel. Banners and flags for hotels and trade shows are another part of the company's business.

Bobo was ready for retirement in the mid-1970s, so his son, Tom, got out of the banking business and took over the company's operation. Over the years, the plant that Fairystone occupies has been expanded eight times, making more room for the knitting and warping departments as well as warehousing.

The plant now measures 104,000 square feet and there's another 29,000 square feet of warehouse space. One of Fairystone's customers is Glen Raven

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Mills. Fairystone knits fabrics for Glen Raven's products before they're returned to Glen Raven for dyeing, finishing and coating. Then comes marketing and branding.

It's a process known as a "virtual vertical relationship" where a company (in this case, Glen Raven) focuses on its area of specialization while relying on hired partners (Fairystone) for other aspects of the operation.

Harold Hill, Glen Raven's president of technical fabrics, says the link between his business and Fairystone is more a partnership than one involving client and customer.

"Where Fairystone starts and Glen Raven ends is almost difficult to differentiate," Hill says. "We're very closely meshed."

He says Fairystone is one of the few companies with which Glen Raven would be involved in such a relationship. "They're outstanding, the best in their fields," Hill says. "They're a fine operation and an important part of what we do."

\$1 million in checks
Bryan's association with Fairystone dates back 21 years to when he joined Tom Bobo as the company's executive vice president. He was promoted and served as Fairystone's president for 10 years before being the company in 2011.

Now 64, Bryan admits the volume of work the company's experience of late has surprised even him. He won't discuss Fairystone's revenues, but says the company goes through 14 million pounds of yarn per year.

There's typically a 7 to 8 percent increase in business per year, though 2016 is on track to realize a 10 percent hike over 2015, which itself was 20 percent better than 2014.

Though the company has all but maxed out its available work space, Bryan says efficiency will improve with new machinery. "I've written checks for \$1 million in equipment in December, the 10 new machines to be delivered by March and operational shortly thereafter. "Machines are like people," Bryan says. "They each have their own personality. And some are harder workers than others."

the new world of textiles. Rojas graduated from N.C. State University with a degree in textile management, then spent five years as a process engineer with Milliken & Co. in Spartanburg, S.C., before joining Fairystone.

He jokes that members of his family questioned his sanity when he told them he was going to pursue a career in textiles, many believing the industry was all but dead. Now, they're proud of the path his career is taking.

"There are lots of positive things on the horizon," Rojas says. Getting an even younger generation into the textile business is the aim of a program for which Fairystone has received recent recognition from Alamance Community College. The company is a founding member and leader in the Career Accelerator Program (CAP), an apprenticeship program that steers high school students toward a career in textiles or any number of other area industries.

Fairystone's involvement in the program is one of the reasons the company was just in December named ACC's 2017 Business Partner of the Year. Fairystone also last year received the N.C. Manufacturing Extension Partnership Leadership Award for Advanced Talent Development. The award recognizes firms that provide employees the opportunity to advance their careers through education and training, the CAP program being one example of each.

CAP is still in its infancy, but the aim is to recruit high school seniors into the four-year apprenticeship where they'll be introduced to and work for any one of several industries. In addition to Fairystone, there are six other Alamance County businesses participating.

CAP involves the students working at Fairystone or one of those other businesses while also taking classes at ACC. When students complete the program, they'll have earned an associate degree and be guaranteed a minimum annual starting salary of \$36,000 at the company through which they were sponsored.

Bryan says by the time salaries and tuition costs are factored, the participating industries will have about \$150,000 invested in each student. But he feels it's money well spent. "Our biggest challenge is developing the next workforce," Bryan says.

Cristian Salas, 18, is one of two students apprenticing at Fairystone through CAP. He's a 2017 graduate of Cummings High School who works at Fairystone four days a week while taking classes at ACC. "It's a great opportunity for a young person to learn a career while going to school," Salas says of CAP.



Jannie Hall, a warping creeler, inspects some of the 14 million pounds of yarn Fairystone produces yearly.

Appreciating loyalty
Bryan says he's proud of Salas, but equally proud of Fairystone's longtime employees. The company's quarterly newsletter is filled with notes recognizing employees who have been employed at Fairystone for 20 or 30 years or more.

One of those is 67-year-old Dewey Goye, a 48-year employee. He started with the company the day after graduating from Kellan Sellers, Burlington's black high school that existed in the days before desegregation. Goye is a thresher and noted that both his father and uncle worked for the operation that was to become Fairystone, back when it was still part of Glen Raven Mills.

"I came from a long line of people who stay with their jobs," Goye says, laughing as he speaks. Goye's son, DL, followed in his father's footsteps. He's worked for Fairystone for 22 years. Dewey Goye said no employer is perfect, but noted that Fairystone has treated him well. "They work with you," he says. "They look after their employees." When his association with Fairystone ends is anyone's guess. Retirement isn't on Goye's radar. "I still enjoy working. I still enjoy coming to work," he says. "I don't see myself quitting any time soon."

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Many Thanks to Our Customers & Vendors

We would like to take this opportunity to say a BIG "THANK YOU" to our loyal customers as well as to our vendors.

We have several customers who have "stuck with us" during the hard times and helped us through some of the slow times. We also have fairly new customers with whom we are building a strong relationship that we hope will last for years to come. We are, without a doubt, very fortunate to have the customer base that we have. We have been blessed with a successful business strategy that includes having an open mind when it comes to customer requests. Our past has included several new ventures with customers. Most of which succeeded, a handful of others which didn't quite make it, but from which we learned a lot. We take every opportunity to learn new things, try new techniques and to be the best in our industry.

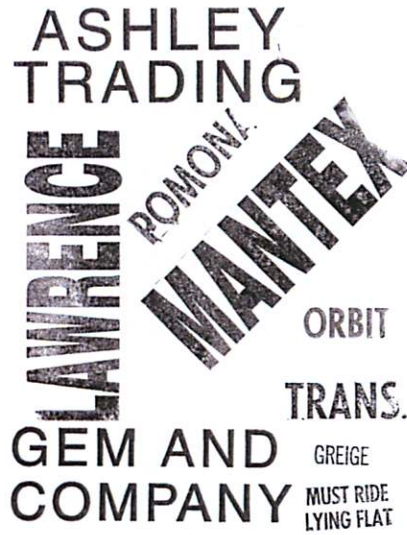
Our vendors have also made a difference in our business. Without the support we have had from the businesses who supply our equipment repairs, our spare parts, our shipping supplies, our day-to-day factory supplies, and our IT support, among others, we would not still be in existence. We have some vendors with whom we've worked for the majority of our 50 years and yet others whom we just recently started doing business with, but with whom we hope to continue working with for many years. We appreciate you all giving us the opportunity to partner with you for our needs.

Without our customers and vendors we would not have made it to our 50th year. You all are the reason we are still here and still strong. We are excited to be in the elite company of businesses who succeed in staying in business for 50-plus years, without any mergers or acquisitions.



Past...Present...Future

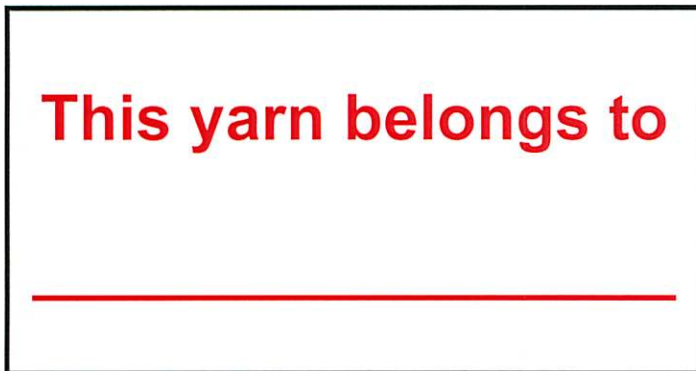
How shipments & customer yarn used to be labeled when going out or stored in the warehouse...



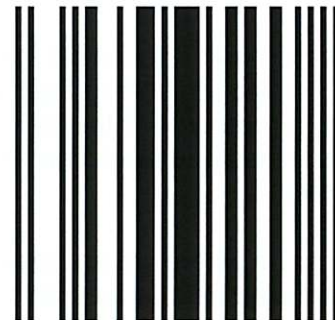
Who remembers the old rubber stamps and ink pad method?

How customer yarn is labeled today (computer generated cards & labels)...

Case yarn



Greige Rolls



Vision of tracking ALL customer goods, from receipt to shipment, in the near future...



Looking Ahead

Even as we continue to celebrate our company's milestone anniversary we are looking to our future. We will continue to strive to be the best in the industry. We are always open to new ideas from our customers and potential customers. If you have an idea, bring it to us. We will discuss it with you & with our team and, if we can't make it a possibility, we will try to help you find someone who can.

We continue to look for new leaders in our company. We have a workforce with long tenure, some of whom will be looking at retirement in a few years. We are challenging younger members of our family to step up and try new things, to volunteer to train on different jobs. We are always looking to enhance our workforce. As technology continues to advance we are keeping pace. We are training employees across the board. From leadership courses to office courses to LEAN & 5S training to expert OJT courses to electrical courses to in-depth on the job training and cross-training, we will continue to educate our employees to keep pace within our industry. Workforce development is a high priority for us. We like to see everyone in our family be successful.

We will continue to stand by our ISO 9001:2015 certification. We recently made the upgrade to this standard and are working hard to implement new opportunities that were recognized when we made the upgrade. Quality is our top priority. We strive to send out the best quality we can with the challenges we face in today's environment. We will continue to improve our techniques & our processes with the input of our customers and employees.

As technology advances so do we. We are in the midst of implementing new ideas and processes to go along with the new custom manufacturing CRM software that we went live with a few months ago. We continue to enhance our reporting capabilities for both ourselves and our customers.

We have partnered with a technical institution along with one of our vendors to enhance our capability to detect certain types of defects at the machine level. This solution is still in the works but we are in the midst of testing a prototype of the new system on one of our machines. We will continue to upgrade and replace our machines and the technology on them as parts become hard to find and repairs aren't capable of being made.

We are happy to be where we are today. We look forward to the challenges that the future will bring. Be assured that we are doing all we can to take on those challenges head-on and to find solutions to them by brain-storming with all involved in the process. Through teamwork we will continue to be successful for many years to come.

Quotes on Success

"Most successful men have not achieved their distinction by having some new talent or opportunity presented to them. They have developed the opportunity that was at hand."

Bruce Barton

"The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary."

Vidal Sassoon

"Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning."

Benjamin Franklin

The staff of "Fairytale" would like to thank everyone who helped to make this special 50th anniversary edition a possibility. We appreciate those who shared their pictures, their time & their stories.

Most importantly, we would like to thank all of our employees, customers and vendors for helping us to reach this milestone in our company history.

We look forward to many more years together!

*Partner
with us
in the years
ahead.*



Quality | Innovation | Reliability