

Linn S. Chapel Celebrates 100 Years in Business!

By Stephen Ciccone, NRLA regional director

At 100 years old, Linn S. Chapel Lumber (LSC) stands proud as a cornerstone business in the Elmira Community. In its fourth generation of family ownership, LSC is the only lumber and building material dealer left in Elmira, outlasting almost a dozen supply companies in the immediate region.

It all began in 1913 when two friends and business associates decided that they would venture into the coal business. Harry H. Hayes, an insurance agent together with Linn S. Chapel, who actually worked for Hayes at the time (at his insurance agency), went into business selling coal. Shortly afterward, Hayes ventured away from the company to pursue a law career while Hayes' son-in-law James R. Beecher was brought in.

In 1925, Linn S. Chapel, as owner of the company, incorporated as Linn S. Chapel and decided with Beecher to go into lumber and built the first sheds at the yard.



The Beecher family picture L to R: Bill Beecher's mother, Joanne Beecher, with Bill, son John, wife Tasha, and son Bryce.

For the next couple of decades, Chapel and Beecher built up the coal and lumber business. In 1929 alone, Linn S. Chapel sold 322 carloads of coal—13,000 tons—while expanding their lumber business.

In 1943, Chapel passed away and James R. Beecher was elected president, with his son John H. Beecher at age 12 beginning to ride shotgun on lumber deliveries. In 1966,

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Linn S. Chapel Company in the early 1930's. Linn S. Chapel standing on porch to left.



Today, Linn S. Chapel Lumber prominently spans 8 acres to supply all lumber and building materials needs of DIY's, contractors, and builders.



Busy Day for Chapel Lumber!

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LINN S. CHAPEL...

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John H. Beecher was elected president after his father passed away. That year, Beecher tore down all the coal silos to focus the company entirely on lumber and building materials, and in 1968 built the store that stands at its current location.

Over the next several decades, LSC grew under the hard work and direction of Beecher, who was a very dynamic person according to everyone who met him. In his time stores were tried in Mansfield, Pa., and Ithaca, N.Y. Beecher also made the critical decision

to join LMC, which LSC credits, along with its great employees, as the key to its success.

In 1983, John's son Bill started working full time at Linn S. Chapel and continued with the company even as he attended college and afterward. Having health issues in 2003, John decided that some organizational changes should be implemented in order to assure continuity and growth of LSC, so he stepped down, making Bill president.

In 2004, John lost his battle with lymphoma. Admiring and learning from his father for more than two decades, Bill continues the Beecher lega-

cy as president of LSC.

Today, under Bill's leadership, LSC services do-it-yourselfers, contractors, and builders in Chemung Counties and surrounding areas out of their original Elmira location. He is proud of the company, his family before him, and the employees who make the company what it is today.

"I can't imagine working in any other industry. It is the people who make it great!" says Beecher.

On May 17, 2013, Linn S. Chapel celebrated its 100th anniversary with customers, employees, friends and family. 