

Kerr's - One Stop Shop for HVACR Jobs

By Maurice Rees

Kerr Controls began operations in 1949, when Dave Wilson, an energetic 20 year old entrepreneur decided he'd follow his own dream rather than continue working with his father at Wilson's Fuel Oil Co Ltd.

Now 70 years later Truro based Kerr Controls is a leading wholesale distributor of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) materials for residential and commercial markets. Kerr offers technology that enhances home comfort, saves energy and protects the environment.

In business since 1949,

Kerr's business has grown over the years from a humble beginning with the founder (and current chairman David Kerr Wilson) selling and servicing out of a milk truck. Since the beginning Kerr has changed its product offering to reflect the best HVACR options on the market for customers and to stay ahead of industry trends.

Kerr offers a wide range of home comfort solutions including complete central heating systems (boilers and furnaces) and all parts, geothermal systems, solar systems, refrigeration, air quality, etc. The company also offers training, advice and expertise on

the products they carry. Essentially, Kerr is a contractor's one stop shop for all HVACR jobs - both residential and commercial.

Kerr operates 9 locations in Atlantic Canada under the Kerr Controls Limited and RL Fulton Equipment brands with

branches in Truro, Halifax, Dartmouth, Sydney, Charlottetown, St. John's, Corner Brook, Fredericton and Moncton. Kerr operates 3 locations in Ontario under the Kerr Smart Energy Limited brand with branches in London, Sudbury and Owen Sound.



Dave Wilson, founder of Kerr Controls, turned 90 this year and he's still involved. He's getting ready to have lunch as he joins staff and customers at a BBQ lunch. (Rees Photo)



Before cutting the birthday cake, Dave Wilson, who founded Kerr Controls in 1949 takes a moment to explain he chose the name, "Kerr", because its his middle name, plus a great Scottish name prominent in Atlantic Canada. (Rees Photo)



Truro's Deputy Mayor Tom Chisholm presents an appreciation certificate to Kerr founder, Dave Wilson, who is flanked by son, Stephen on left and daughter, Leslie right, for the company's 70 years of business residency in Truro. (Rees Photo)



Dale Madill, left, manager of Peppereka, a Wilson's Fuel café in Burnside was in charge of catering at Kerr Controls 70th anniversary celebrations in Truro on May 31st. (Rees Photo)

Founder Still Active for Kerr's 70th Anniversary

By Maurice Rees

It's not often a company celebrates its 70th anniversary with the founder present and still active. However such is the case with Kerr Controls, Truro. At celebrations held May 31st at the distribution centre in Truro Industrial Park, Leslie Wilson, daughter of the founder made the comment during brief formal ceremonies.

As a young ambitious 20 year old, Dave Wilson decided in 1949 he'd sprout his own wings rather than continue working in his father's growing company, Wilson's Fuel Co Ltd. Dave's father didn't think much of the idea so, he went to his mother.

As Leslie told the customers, suppliers and staff present, through family connections Dave was able to borrow \$1,000. He set off down the USA eastern seaboard peddling his idea to set up an equipment supply company for the ever growing furnace oil business. Either through good timing or a good sales pitch, Dave was able to line up a number of suppliers.

Back in Truro he set about working on his dream, which from 1949 to today has grown to become a leading of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) materials for residential and

commercial markets with nine branches in Atlantic Canada and three in Ontario.

During the May 31st 70th anniversary celebrations Dave was presented with a certificate from Deputy Mayor, Tom Chisholm, Town of Truro, in recognition of 70 years in Truro; Norman Caissie, founder of Imperial Manufacturing Group, Richibucto, New Brunswick and a special framed collage of photos from the staff.

Catering for the BBQ for the event was handled by Peppereka, a new Wilson's Group business, which started operations in January 2019, at the Wilson's Fuels location on Wright Avenue in Burnside Industrial Park, Dartmouth.

Dean Madill, food services manager with Wilson Fuel Co Ltd., is also manager of Peppereka, and was on-hand in charge of the catering to Kerr's 70th. Attending the celebrations in Kerr's distribution centre were several suppliers, several staff and a large contingent of plumbing and heating contractors from the Truro area.

The 70th anniversary celebrations will continue with several Kerr executives travelling to branches in Ontario and throughout Atlantic Canada.



Some Kerr staff take a moment to enjoy BBQ luncheon catered to by Peppereka, a Wilson company based in Burnside. (Rees Photo)

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