

The 50-year Story of Erickson Machine Tools, Inc.

The EMT Story begins with Ken Erickson, Sr. Ken was born in Story City. In the mid-40's he worked for the Globe Mill supply house in the Quad Cities. His interest in machine tools began there. He became associated with a man named Frank Corry, who sold new and used machine tools at Davenport in 1948. Ken took on a large sales territory in Illinois, Iowa and northern Missouri. When Mr. Corry moved his business to Bonaparte, Iowa, Ken went with him. He learned to fly small airplanes and used several of them over many years to cover his territory.

Ken and Reba Breckenridge met and were married in Texas in 1942, while Reba was attending the American Institute of Business in Des Moines. Their partnership was a "natural." Reba's business administrative skills were important to EMT for many years. They moved to Bonaparte, Iowa in 1955.

He brought his family to Story City, his home town, while still working with Corry's as Sales Manager. Ken was 40 years old, and he and Reba soon realized that they should be in business for themselves. They started K E Erickson Machinery in Story City in 1960, using a spare bedroom as their office. When it became obvious that the business would require an inventory of used machines, they rented a 4,500 square foot building at 623 Garfield. As the business grew, Ken needed help in the shop. Ralph Archeske came to work, and stayed with EMT for many years.

In the mid-60's, Ken bought a large, unused former corn canning factory building at EMT's present address. Remodeling took several years, as the business grew. Early customers included Lenox and Amana and Maytag and Gary Vermeer. EMT sold LeBlond lathes, Verson press brakes, Roselle presses, and many used machine tools. This large facility permitted EMT to repair and recondition machines for resale and for customers. Here the company became involved with tape-controlled and eventually Computer Numerically Controlled machines.

During these years EMT sold machines built by Mori Seiki, Hitachi-Seiki, Summit and many others. EMT's famous Field Service team serviced and solved customer problems.

On June 13, 1976, a powerful tornado struck and destroyed the EMT building. A completely new building was built and occupied on January 2, 1977. With high ceilings, powerful cranes and more than 20,000 square feet of space for shops and offices, this

building has become one of the most capable machine tool display and service facilities in the Midwest.

Kenneth, Jr. graduated from Story City High School in 1962. He learned the machine tool business from the ground up, working with his dad even during his two years at Iowa State University. He did every job in the business, becoming a salesman when he left the University in 1965.

Ken, Sr. and Reba Erickson retired and passed the leadership of EMT to Ken, Jr. in 1980. Ken, Sr. guided his son until he died in 1999. Ken, Jr.'s son, Kurt, joined the company in 1995 after graduating from Northwestern College. Today Kurt is EMT's President and Sales Manager; Ken, Jr. is the company's CEO. Other valuable members of the EMT team in those years included Roberta Olson, Velda Larson, Bruce Swenson, Butch Lage, Ivan Moore, Ted Redling, and Junior Lake. Dorothy Erickson, wife of Ken, Jr., worked in the company's office.

Ivan Moore became a partner in the company in the mid-90's. In 1995 the company was sold to The 600 Group, a British machine tool builder that included Clausing Industrial. In 2007, Ken, Jr. and Kurt Erickson bought the company back from Clausing. EMT still represents Clausing and has sold many of their machines. Milltronics, Hwacheon, MAG, OMAX, Hyd-Mech, and Sertom are among the lines it currently sells. EMT's Field Service Department is among the best in the business.

Looking forward, EMT has ambitious goals for the future. It has committed itself to providing manufacturing solutions to its customers' problems. It intends to be the most customer-focused machine, service and process provider in the area. Erickson is actively evaluating several potential vendors and is building its management systems toward vigorous growth.

The **Core Values** of Erickson Machine Tools, Inc. are these:

Integrity – Passion – Communication – Teamwork – Problem Solving – Growth.

Every member of the EMT team is involved in and focused on these goals, as are business partners Ackley State Bank, Al Kockler Accountants and business consultant Bob Parker. The next ten years will be exciting and rewarding for EMT and for its customers.

For more information, see the EMT Web site at www.ericksonmachine.com.