



Weiss Sheet Metal - A History of Excellence

We were looking for a better life for ourselves and our families. That's when we bought the company called Weiss . . .

The company known as Weiss was started, like so many American dreams, by a couple of immigrants. Coming from Russia and Bulgaria, they were blind to the fact that it was 1934 and the middle of the Great Depression! Jack Weiss and his partner, Eli Tappin, worked hard and developed a commercial dishwasher under the Weiss name. Their metal shop became quite successful by building the machines by hand, and they developed a good name in the business community.

George DeLano went to work for the Weiss company in 1947 when he was only 16. The shop employed 10 men at that time. George originally worked putting the electrical parts together for the washer, but quickly took on metal working. Called to duty for service to his country in 1950, he returned to Weiss 4 years later, and continued

learning the metal working field, working with Weiss through ups and downs, good times and bad. In 1962 Weiss was up for sale, and George was an eager buyer. His brother, Ralph DeLano forged his early career in a machine shop, eventually working his way up to foreman. He hated the pull he felt between management and union, so when George asked him to join as partners in buying out Weiss, he jumped at the opportunity. Both now had families to support, and they were looking for a better life for all of them.

By today's standards, it was a steal, only \$10,000, but that was a lot of money in 1962. Both mortgaged their houses and borrowed money from their folks to make their dream a reality. George had told his customers that he was going to buy the business, and didn't lose one customer in the transfer. George and Ralph kept the name Weiss from the former owner because it was a well known name at the time. Unfortunately, the dishwasher that made the name famous was no longer used by the mid-60's, but



other metal working opportunities took its place. Early customers bought mostly custom stainless steel kitchen equipment for the restaurant and laboratory industries. Many of the companies are gone now but included Paramount Restaurant Equipment, Boston China, Silver Restaurant Supply, and Harbor Food Company. Their first job on their first day of business was stainless steel lab work for a local hospital. Today, their stainless steel can still be found in many restaurants in the Boston area as well as hospitals, laboratories, the MBTA, and Logan Airport. They took out only what they needed to survive and plowed the rest back into the company. Typical days were 8-16 hours, 6 days a week. No overtime . . .



Weiss Sheet Metal, Inc.

Custom Stainless Steel & Aluminum Fabrication

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Weiss History

They started out in Roxbury Crossing in a small 1,000 sq. ft. building with a wooden storefront, but shortly thereafter, they began growing and moving. They relocated to Tremont Street in Boston to the Old Chicory Piano Building when the Boston Redevelopment Agency forced them to move to put in a super highway. Ralph particularly remembers a project involving Brandy Pete's restaurant from that time. To install a grease exhaust pipe over 8 stories high, Ralph manned a bowsman's chair lowered from the top of the building. He pulled himself up with a rope to weld the joints resulting in the order, "we will never go over 3 stories again!"

By 1975, when the Boston Redevelopment Agency forced them to move again, they purchased a 10,000 sq. ft. building

at 2570 Washington Street, Roxbury. The next move was their choice. In 1980, they had the opportunity to build in a new industrial park in Avon and moved into their new facility at 210 Bodwell.

George's son, Wayne DeLano, had driven semi-trucks across the country in his younger years but grew tired of that occupation and came to work at Weiss as an apprentice. Likewise, Ralph's son, Brian, had worked as an auto mechanic when he joined Weiss as an apprentice. As George and Ralph tell the story, "they were both under paid to start!" As the business expanded Brian and Wayne developed new customer networks and eventually, they became full partners.

With Wayne and Brian taking a more active role, the company continued growing rapidly. While the first generation of DeLano's were more conservative in business style, the next generation were willing to take



on larger, more challenging projects . . . projects like the million dollar plus entrance canopy to Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut.

One last move completes the story. Like many other things from the 80's, it was time to move on. Weiss had outgrown their plant and desperately needed larger facilities. After massive restoration and additions, the new facility at 105 Bodwell was ready for occupation in 2000. That's where you'll find Weiss Sheet Metal today.

George and Ralph are mostly retired, but still come into the office to keep up with the latest developments. Wayne and Brian are there to meet with you and explain how they can tackle your project to make it attractive and profitable for you. As Ralph explains, "Many customers don't ask for a quote. They know we deliver a **Class A Project** and that's what they want."



Top: The 4 DeLano partners, Ralph, Brian, Wayne & George

Above and Right: Weiss Sheet Metal's current headquarters.



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