



# As We Grow Older, The Beauty Steals Inward

100 years old, Warfel Construction is as strong, lithe and insightful as ever.

by Joel Cornell

**ABOVE:** Historic Lancaster Central Market, Lancaster Pa. The oldest operational farmers' market in the country, it recently received national recognition as one of the 10 Great Public Spaces in America. Photo by Nathan Cox.

**M**any, many things have trouble surviving for over 100 years. Buildings, styles, trends, even humans have trouble making it that far. As of 2011, Warfel Construction has succeeded and thrived for over a century since David S. Warfel and his partner Harry Peters founded the company in 1911.

"Personally, I've only been with the company for a fraction of its lifetime," Hugh McGettigan said, Warfel Construction partner and Senior Vice President. "I've been here for around a fourth of the company's existence, but that's still nearly 30 years. What has been most unique about leading a company with such a deep history is to look back

at the projects the company completed in our first years and witness firsthand how the dynamics of building have changed over the years across the industry and in our own backyard, as well."

In fact, it's only been in the last decade that Warfel Construction has been without a Warfel or a Peters at the helm of the company. Tim Peters, Harry Peter's grandson, led the company until the mid-2000s. David S. Warfel's son, J. Richard Warfel has also long since retired; and at 92 years old, he still stops by the Warfel Construction offices quite frequently. In 2008, the company structure shifted to where it remains today, led by partners: McGettigan, Executive Vice President Rupert



**TOP:** Historic Lancaster Central Market, Lancaster Pa. Broken down into 19 mini-phases, Warfel was able to allow the market to maintain its operations throughout the entire construction process. Photo by Nathan Cox.

**LEFT AND BELOW:** The Berman Museum of Art at Ursinus College, Collegetville, Pa. Nearly three months of underpinning work was painstakingly done to prepare for the 4,200 sq. ft. radiused curtainwall expansion. Photo by Jim Roese.



Taylor, President and CEO Ralph Simpson and Senior Vice President Matthew Hartzler.

“One major obsession we all share is for uniquely complex projects,” Hartzler said, who has worked there since 1995. “When you look at our portfolio, the project types are widely diverse. But, the one common thread throughout all of them is a unique challenge. With the company being 100 years old, we certainly have the experience, stability and history in our communities which in turn allows us to take on these difficult projects, be it a university campus or retirement village. We understand the underlying issues and have been fortunate enough to have a staff that is strong, sharp and enamored with their ability to engage projects of such a complex nature.”

With such a secure foundation, Warfel Construction has been able to concentrate on the elements of building that are most important to them: quality, consistency and strength. The firm

is licensed across the mid Atlantic — from New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland to Virginia, West Virginia and their home state of Pennsylvania. Today, Warfel Construction is a full-service firm and has extended its talented staff into construction management, design/build projects and general contracting.

“Our strength in a diverse portfolio is wholly derived from the strength of our people,” Hartzler said. “Any company with more than 100 employees will have some turnover, but a majority of our staff has been here for decades. It’s that diversity and our ability to allow each employee to succeed personally and on a team. Our clients can see that passion, that the people here enjoy their job and enjoy fulfilling their clients’ needs and desires.”

When the company’s hometown, Lancaster, Penn. sought a general contracting firm to renovate the Historic Lancaster Central Market, Warfel Construction was an easy choice. Having built many of

the city’s landmark projects that still stand today, even those built as far back as the 1920s, Warfel Construction has been an intimate part of the community — they knew which company would best understand the history of the community.

“Our biggest hurdle on the Historic Lancaster Central Market was the fact that it was an operational market; they wouldn’t be shutting down for renovation,” McGettigan said. “It was a large challenge to phase the project properly. Communication was vital, with the stand holders, the owners and the public. We kept lots of signage visible to keep visitors in the know, and we held meetings daily with the stand holders and the owners of the market so we could outline for them our progress and our intentions, step by step and day by day.”

With Warfel Construction’s extensive history comes an equally extensive list of trusted repeat clients, subcontractors, architects and partners.



## E.H. GOCHNAUER & SONS

Celebrating 75 years in business, E.H. Gochnauer & Sons, Inc., specializes in providing customers in central Pennsylvania with superior plumbing, heating and air-conditioning installation and maintenance services. E.H. Gochnauer helps clients reach their project goals efficiently and cost-effectively.

The company focuses on both industrial and commercial operations, including medical facilities, retirement communities, upscale residences, office and commerce centers, retail operations, churches and schools. They also help in designing, building and maintaining the systems.

E.H. Gochnauer constantly updates their processes and methods as better capabilities become available. From a powerful AutoCAD system and blueprinting to computerized planning and design tools, they are able to ensure successful outcomes regardless of project scope or size.



**ABOVE:** Penn Cinema Theater, Lititz, Pa. Warfel completed this project in only four months to open in time for the premiere of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part I*. Exterior photo by Amy Spangler.

When the owners of Penn Cinema in Lititz, Penn. came to Warfel Construction with a project, the company had to be aware of the upcoming Harry Potter premiere in making their timeline.

“The project was challenging in that we were dealing with rather strict budgeting and scheduling demands,” Hartzler said. “But, our ability to deal with highly complex aspects of any project handily saw to that. We have an appreciation for and dedication to meeting the distinctive budget, scheduling, structural and aesthetic requirements for each project, no matter how much those differ.

“With Penn Cinema, it was all about getting things done on time and turning in the finished project under budget. However, with the Historic Lancaster Central Market, the fact that we were working within a historic structure was their concern. Doing things right, keeping the market open for business, and maintaining a clean and safe jobsite in the center of a busy city were our priorities. Although completely different client needs and project approaches, both projects came

through beautifully.”

“Working for a company with such an extensive history lends us a unique perspective on different elements within the construction industry,” McGettigan said. “This new trend over the past decade towards ‘green’ building has always been a part of our philosophy, for instance. The technology improves every day, but our approach to sustainable building mechanics hasn’t changed one bit.”

From a fantastically talented group of people and a solid foundation from which to build, Warfel Construction has held the standards in building high. Before the economic crisis, the firm’s intent was to come out of it better and stronger for it. As the recession falls away, the company has further enhanced their talented staff and has come through above and beyond.

“We’ve lasted a century, through World Wars and the Great Depressions,” said Jennifer Saltzer, Warfel Construction’s Director of Client Services. “We believe we can handle the challenges of the next 100 years.” *CLT*



## PROFESSIONAL FLOORING SERVICES GROUP

### AFTER 50 YEARS IN FLOORING, THIS COMPANY SAYS THEY'RE JUST GETTING STARTED.

by Joel Cornell

“**H**onestly, there are just two main issues involved with the ability to handle flooring on the commercial level,” said Mike Roser, founder, owner and president of Professional Flooring Services Group. “First, you need the credibility with your clients, prospective or otherwise, so they know that you will furnish and supply the right product to them for the proper application.

“Secondly, there’s the issue of quality control. Our firm has hands on control of our product and services throughout the entirety of the process. My brother and myself really concern ourselves with every end result. It absolutely must be professionally designed, manufactured, fabricated and installed or else we lose.”

Since the early 1960s, Roser and his family owned flooring specialist firm, Professional Flooring Services Group, has been bringing their trade to a new level annually throughout the east coast. From upscale hotels in the heart of New York City, to schools and business as far south as Virginia, the

company has come a long way from their origins as a carpet cleaning and industry trade service.

As the company continued to grow on their simple but strong foundations, the brothers eventually decided their expertise was sufficient enough to market and retail floor coverings in such a way that they could additionally act as vendors or installers for their clients, depending on the needs of the project. This continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s until 1973 when Professional Flooring Services Group opened up their first floor covering store, throwing themselves head first in the direction of a fully fledged flooring retailer.

Out of these endeavors, Professional Flooring Services Group quickly became the flooring experts for many of the area’s general contractors, including the Warfel Construction Company. Professional Flooring Services Group’s ability to work within harsh deadlines and budgets was a huge selling point with Warfel, and has led to numerous successes of varying scope and scale.

The Lingle Elementary School project, one

of many current projects seeing Professional Flooring Services Group partner up yet again with Warfel, saw a heavy emphasis on sustainable building practices. In using only natural resourced and manufactured flooring materials, much of the project saw Professional Flooring Services Group use a unique linoleum that is a LEED-green compliant product.

Additionally, their use of shaw carpet tiles implemented into the classrooms and library were unique in that most schools use hard surface flooring for such an accident prone environment. However, the softness used just in the flooring gave the school a different texture and atmosphere and, being installed by Professional Flooring Services Group, a one of a kind feel spread throughout the school.

Professional Flooring Services Group has been among the most reliable, trusted flooring experts in their region. For more than half a century, the Roser brothers have been working personally on every project to ensure that things stay that way, day after day after day. *CLT*