100 Years of Construction Excellence

1906 - 2006

PCL

CONSTRUCTION LEADERS
Ernest E. Poole was just 19 years old when he and several friends joined a ‘harvest excursion,’ a train loaded with able-bodied young men from central Canada and the Maritimes, all seeking summer jobs in the new West. So began a journey that ultimately led to the building of one of North America’s construction giants.

In the spring of 1906 he formed a partnership with James Martin and they commenced contracting under the name of Martin and Poole. During the summer of 1906 Martin and Poole recruited two brothers, Silas and James Lamont, to help them as carpenters. As the successful building season drew to a close in the small farming community of Stoughton, Saskatchewan, James Martin returned to Prince Edward Island to retire, leaving Ernest to commence business under his own name – E.E. Poole General Contractor.

“We specialized in building brick schools, town halls, banks and stores throughout Saskatchewan and into Manitoba. Over the next few years the work was fairly profitable because the local small contractors could not handle it and the larger contractors in Regina did not pay it any attention,” explained Ernest Poole.

Poole constructed buildings that were typical of the prairie landscape at the time. Branch railway lines were still being built and towns were growing up around them every few miles. The change from steam to diesel locomotives and from horse-drawn carriages to motorized vehicles later caused many of the little towns to dry up and disappear.

MAKING EDMONTON HOME

Having constructed several landmark buildings in Alberta, Ernest Poole was well positioned to relocate the company’s head office to Edmonton in 1932. Poole was a big operation in Regina, with a significant number of employees in both the office and an equipment repair facility, but Ernest liked Edmonton and had long thought it would be a good place to build his business. Once he made up his mind, he pulled up stakes and made the move.

Even when there wasn’t any building work, Ernie Poole would find something to keep his superintendents going. “He was very strong on the idea of loyalty, and it went both ways,” recalled Harry Ellenwood, a carpenter who had followed Ernest from Regina. “Mr. Poole acquired many of the really good tradesmen in Edmonton by going out and finding jobs. I used to chase the fire engines. Mr. Poole gave my phone number to the fire department. I kept a half-ton truck at home with nails and plywood sheathing. I’d follow the sirens and board up the damage and most of the time the insurance company would give us the repair job.”
WEYBURN HOSPITAL (1921)  Weyburn, Saskatchewan
- Approximate cost: $3 million
- Over four million bricks and 1.25 million feet of rough timber
- Our largest project undertaken up to that time

THE RIGHT TIME: EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP
On June 27, 1977 John and George Poole and Bob Stollery signed the closing documents to execute the sale of Poole Construction Limited to PCL Construction Holdings Ltd.

The set of months leading up to June 1977, have become known in PCL history as the “right time”. It was those set of months that would change the course of PCL ownership history forever and offer the opportunity of ownership to many PCL employees in the years to come.

In the early 1970s leading up to 1977, Bob and the Poole family held several informal discussions together on the future of the company including ownership. These discussions led to Bob’s vision of ownership for an employee group.

Once an agreement in principle was reached, Bob Stollery and Hank Gillespie (current PCL Board member and an integral member of the team that worked on the transfer) reviewed the proposal with senior vice presidents Nick Oneschuk and Jock Dawe. The four created a list of Poole employees who would be invited to purchase shares in the new company. All invitees attended a meeting at a small Edmonton hotel. Everyone agreed to participate in the proposed venture. They became known as ‘The Original 25.’

After important financial and legal steps including the involvement of the Great-West Life Assurance Company, the sale went through.

At the end of the first year a second offering was made to broaden the employee base of ownership and the process has been repeated every year thereafter. Ultimately, all the financing was repaid and Great-West Life’s share was repurchased.

Due to the efforts of a dedicated group of PCL employees, the family of companies has grown every year since 1977. That makes almost 30 years of growth.

Today, more than 1,680 salaried employees are shareholders benefiting from the vision Bob Stollery formulated in those historical days in the 1970s.

POOLE SUCCESSION

In 1948 the Poole sons (George and John) took a leap of faith and purchased the company from their father. “He was 64 years of age by that time. Apparently people in the office were beginning to wonder what was going to happen to the company so they were quite happy to see the new generation, although they didn’t yet know what we could do,” said John Poole.

Ernest Poole remained as president for another 10 years and after that assumed the role of chairman until his death in 1964. “There was a general feeling of a good future even though it hadn’t been felt to any great extent yet. I guess we wanted to try to make a go of it. We wondered if we would ever get it paid for, because, of course, we had to buy the company at its appraised value,” recalled John. “George and I felt we were taking on a pretty hefty burden.”

When John and George bought the company in 1948, their father penned several guidelines by which he hoped his sons would continue the tradition. These came to be known as ‘Poole’s Rules.’ The original list still hangs in the Edmonton office.

“I remember him relating the tale that during one summer at Rouleau he was overwhelmed with work. He needed two good finishing carpenters to meet his commitment so he went into Regina and hired himself on as a carpenter at the biggest job in town. He worked one full day while observing his fellow workers and at the end of the day he hired the two best carpenters and took them back to Rouleau.”

–John Poole on his father Ernest Poole

Edmonton, 90 years old, continues to go into his personal downtown Edmonton office everyday.
During the 1950s Canadian prairie farms were transformed as oil and gas discoveries brought new wealth to Alberta and the province. Flourished with an influx of people arriving to meet the demands of petroleum-based industries. In grain-rich Saskatchewan and Manitoba similar patterns of post-war population growth unfolded, while Vancouver, situated on Canada’s west coast, was destined to become the jewel of the Pacific.

Over the next few decades Poole constructed many schools, colleges and universities across the West as war babies grew up. Hospitals and churches, residential complexes, government and commercial buildings, and the infrastructure to support all these community facilities, created an unprecedented demand for construction.

Western Canada

And so it was that Poole Construction built on its existing western Canadian offices and established new district operations that would carry the PCL name into the twenty-first century. These operations are the construction leaders in their respective regions with the western Canadian landscape marked with thousands of PCL-built structures.
Buildings Operations

Central Canada and the Maritimes

The visionary leadership of Bob Stollery, Nick Oneschuk and Jock Dawe prompted PCL to follow Oxford to Halifax in the 1960s and Toronto in the early 1970s, enabling PCL to serve its most important client. Today PCL Toronto has emerged as the organization’s largest operation. In 1989 PCL entered the marketplace in Ottawa. Notably, PCL Ottawa established the framework for a new dimension in the PCL family of companies by successfully negotiating a major contract entirely in French. PCL has left its signature on many of the landmark public buildings in Canada’s capital region. Although Poole had worked on the Canadian east coast several times since the 1960s, it was an innovative public-private partnership agreement that led PCL to put down roots in Halifax at the millennium.

The North

The development of Canada’s North is a special story that started in 1935 with the construction of a series of radio repeater towers and generator shacks. Our major Arctic push began in 1957 when Bob Stollery led the transformation of a barren parcel of land in the Northwest Territories into the town of Inuvik. The full story of PCL construction in the North is a saga of isolation and hardship, and a stirring tribute to the spirit of the Poole people who were pioneers in the adventure.

Everyone who has contributed to PCL over the last half century has helped to define the distinct personality of each office. The stories of those who built PCL’s Canadian buildings operations are as varied as the regions in which they lived and worked.

Today, our Canadian buildings operations are headed up by Paul Douglas, president and chief operating officer, Canadian Buildings. He leads an impressive group of builders responsible for landmark buildings.

Buildings Operations

• Toronto 1983 • Ottawa 1990 • Atlantic Canada 2002 • Grand Sierra 2004
In 1977 the company began work on twin 26-story office towers for Great-West Life in Denver. To facilitate the fit-out for the project and take advantage of the growing local millwork market, PCL opened its own millwork shop in Denver. Denver’s 56-story Republic Plaza, completed in 1984, is one of the nation’s first “intelligent” building complexes, using state-of-the-art systems in every aspect. In 1990, our U.S. operations landed the first of several projects at Denver International Airport.

Concurrently, the Denver Square project was launched in partnership with Phil Anschutz, an American oilman with a keen interest in reviving the city’s downtown. The components were later renamed Qwest Tower and the Hyatt Hotel at Denver Square. This landmark development launched PCL into the big leagues in contracting in the United States.

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By 1983 Oxford had launched the development of the landmark Citicorp Plaza in Los Angeles, signaling PCL’s entry into southern California. In 1999, PCL Southwest Region completed construction of the $238-million STAPLES Center.

PCL Minnesota sprung up in 1981 and in 1989 work began on one of our largest U.S. projects ever – the Mall of America in Bloomington. The first Rainforest Cafe restaurant was completed at the Mall of America in 1994. Over a six-year span during 1994–2000, PCL completed 71 separate Rainforest Cafe projects in the United States and Canada. Construction of the $118-million American Express Client Center during 1999–2002 represented the largest competitively awarded project undertaken by PCL Minneapolis to that time.
PCL Seattle emerged in 1992, bringing with it work in the Hawaiian Islands. The $200-million design-build Hawaii Convention Center, completed in 1997, is a landmark in Honolulu and represented the largest public competition contract ever awarded by the State of Hawaii at the time.

When PCL Orlando came on board in 1995, work began immediately on the Universal Studios parking complex. It is PCL’s largest-ever parking facility project. It is also the largest of its kind in North America and has been described as ‘the only parking garage you can see from space.’ 1996 brought the Orlando operation its first work for the Disney organization at Disney’s Animal Kingdom theme park in Lake Buena Vista.

PCL San Diego joined the ranks in 2004 and has the Glorietta Bay Civic Center and Promenade project for the residential and resort city of Coronado as part of its resume.

Moving just outside of the U.S., the massive Atlantis Hotel Casino Resort, on Paradise Island in Nassau, Bahamas, is another landmark PCL project.

Today, our United States operations are headed up by Peter Beaupré, president and chief operating officer of PCL Construction Enterprises, Inc. based in Denver. He leads a growing U.S. operation ranked 14th largest in the United States by ENR (Engineering News Record Magazine) and is listed in Fortune Magazine among the top 100 companies to work for in the U.S.
Poole Construction’s entry into the world of civil construction began in 1935 when the company was awarded road work on the TransCanada Highway from the Alberta foothills town of Cochrane to the entrance to Banff National Park. After George Poole completed his civil engineering education, Poole Engineering was formed in 1944, primarily to undertake highway work. By the time Poole became an employee-owned organization in 1977, its civil portfolio had grown to include airports, dams, bridges, tunnels, pipelines and more.

Roads and Expressways
Poole kept its roads portfolio growing after the 1935 job and in 1956 the company moved 150,000 tons of asphalt on a single Alberta highway job—a major project at the time. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the company built large sections of one of the world’s most spectacular mountain highways: the Icefields Parkway from Banff to Jasper. PCL’s civil portfolio took off with a series of firsts in Florida in the late 1980s starting with the Southport Bulkheads project to expand the pier for cruise ships at Port Everglades. We were also awarded our first people mover project, the Jacksonville Automated Skyway Express: a roadway, utility and sidewalk project.

One of the major roadway projects underway today is the Anthony Henday Drive Southeast Leg Ring Road in Edmonton. It is Edmonton’s first highway/infrastructure project to be built as a public-private partnership (P3).

Pipelines and Dams
After extensive early work on many Canadian dams starting in the 1960s including the Brazeau Dam and the Bighorn Dam, PCL moved into the water business in the U.S. by winning our first Arizona pipeline project in the late 1980s. The first roller compacted concrete structure in California, the Freeman Diversion Improvement project, quickly followed. In 1993, we won the Salt River Siphon Replacement project and in 1997, the Agua Fria River Siphon Replacement and Centennial Wash Siphon Repair was in the PCL portfolio.

Transit and Tunnels
In 1988, PCL built the south extension of Edmonton’s light rail transit system including the first hydroshield tunnel in North America. In 1994, the Spadina Subway Extension in Toronto was completed. Today, PCL Civil Southeast and PCL Seattle are hard at work on the $231-million Sound Transit Project in Seattle, Washington.

*Partnership with Hochtief.
The PCL family of companies civil infrastructure portfolio is led by Paul Douglas in Canada and Peter Beaupré in the United States. We have formal operations dedicated to civil work in the U.S.: PCL Civil Southwest (Phoenix) and PCL Civil Southeast (Tampa) operations.

Bridges
In 1986, the Alex Fraser Bridge opened in British Columbia and in the same year, PCL launched itself into bridge construction in the United States with the Glade Creek Bridge in West Virginia. In 1991, the award-winning Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge in Tennessee was completed. PCL was part of an international joint venture contracted to build the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel Parallel Crossing during 1995–99. In 2003, one of the widest single box segmental bridges in North America opened: the PCL-built Ringling Causeway Bridge in Sarasota Bay, Florida.

Airports
PCL has worked on many airports across North America including the Denver International Airport, the Ottawa International Airport, the Seattle Terminal Radar Approach Control Facility and the Halifax International Airport. Our largest project in PCL history at over $2 billion is being worked on today: **the five-part, 10-year redevelopment project at Toronto Pearson International Airport.**

**A PCL/Aecon Joint Venture

Water Treatment Plants
In 1947, Poole Construction built the company’s first water treatment project: the Edmonton Water Treatment Plant. Almost fifty years later and many projects in between, the first PCL-built wastewater treatment plant in Arizona was awarded. This project was followed by the Northwest Water Reclamation Plant Expansion in Mesa, Arizona. In 2003 construction began on the East Mesa Water Pollution Control Facility in Yuma, Arizona. Today, we are working on the $160-million Albuquerque Water Treatment Plant.

**Civil Southeast (U.S.) 1989 • Civil Southwest (U.S.) 1989 • Albuquerque 2006
PCL’s industrial division had its humble beginnings in Alberta during the 1950s with the start of a 40-year association with Calgary Power (later to become TransAlta Utilities) for the construction of power generating facilities. In 1952, the first polyethylene plant in Canada was completed for Canadian Industries Limited. The large Hinton, Alberta pulp mill contract was awarded to Poole in 1955.

The early 1980s brought contracts for a hydrogen reformer in Saskatchewan and a state-of-the-art tunnel ventilation system for Canadian Pacific Railways in B.C. In Alberta, PCL’s industrial and civil operations collaborated on the Obed Marsh Coal Preparation project for Union Oil. In 1982, a continuing client relationship began when Praxair Canada Inc. started with construction of its Prentiss, Alberta air separation plant.

In 1988, PCL was awarded the Colomac Gold Mine, situated ‘in the middle of nowhere,’ north of Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories.

In 1991, PCL Industrial became a construction partner on the Topsides Assembly and Hook-up Package, part of the $6-billion Hibernia offshore oil project in Newfoundland. While underway, Hibernia was the largest construction project in North America.

In 1997, PCL Industrial became a member of an international team of contractors operating as the Grand Banks Alliance that designed and constructed the Terra Nova offshore oil project on the east coast of Canada. PCL Industrial was responsible for the fabrication, installation and hookup of four massive process modules that totaled 9,700 tonnes.

The Polyethylene Train III project for Dow Chemical in 1997–98 in Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta is another remarkable PCL Industrial achievement. It was designed and built in only 18 months (projects like this typically took no less than 32 months). PCL is proud that since the 1990s we have executed over 75 projects for Dow Chemical Canada Inc.
Peter Stalenhoef, president and chief operating officer of heavy industrial, leads a group of independent industrial operating companies that position PCL as a full-service provider in North American industrial construction.

Please go to www.pcl.com to learn more about PCL’s industrial companies.

Alberta’s massive oilsands development has yielded significant work for PCL.

After beginning work on Syncrude Canada’s Mildred Lake site in 1974, the first of 20 projects for Syncrude’s Capacity Addition Project was started in 1986. These projects were the mainstay for the PCL Industrial operations and fabrication facility for four years. PCL Industrial was awarded several contracts for significant portions of the Upgrader Expansion Project for Syncrude Canada, including the role of construction contractor on the largest single train hydrogen production unit in the world, a project that started in 2001.

In late 2004, PCL was selected as the construction contractor for the $900-million delayed coker and diluent recovery units that form the heart of Canadian Natural Resources Limited’s $11-billion Horizon project north of Fort McMurray.

PCL’s fabrication and module assembly facilities

Although Poole had been fabricating its own piping since 1958, in 1978 it took the step to open its first fabrication shop in Edmonton. In 1987 the fabrication shop relocated to Nisku, just outside of Edmonton. At peak in August 2003, 962 PCL staff, craft and subcontractor personnel were working on a Syncrude project at PCL’s fabrication facility and module yard in Nisku. At the time, this was the largest module contract awarded in the history of module construction in Alberta, and this project confirmed PCL Industrial’s status as the largest and most technically advanced pipe fabrication and module assembly facility in Canada. The facility today is a 145,000-square-foot pipe spool fabrication facility and an adjacent 75-acre module assembly facility.

In the United States, we serve our industrial clients across the southwestern states through our 25,000-square-foot vessel/platework fabrication and module assembly facility in Bakersfield, California.

Building strength through acquisitions

When Monad, an industrial contractor, joined the PCL family of companies in 1995, it became the first acquisition of an external construction firm in the history of PCL. In 2002, we acquired the full service industrial company in Bakersfield noted above, which established our first U.S. industrial district office. In 2003, Intracon Power, an industrial electrical company; and Teton Industrial, a full service industrial company, were brought on board. Melloy Industrial Services, specializing in heavy industrial shutdown work, was acquired in March 2004 to complement this slate of independent industrial operating companies in the PCL family.

Please go to www.pcl.com to learn more about PCL’s industrial companies.
PCL FAMILY OF COMPANIES

Our operations are carried out by a number of independent companies which operate in different construction markets or geographic areas.

Buildings

Our full service buildings operations support the work of project sites across North America. This network of construction professionals rises to the challenges associated with our diverse buildings portfolio, bringing added value to every commercial, institutional, educational and residential project. While we’re better known for our larger projects, such as airports, sports facilities and office towers, we also excel at smaller unique projects, such as renovations, restorations and repairs.

Industrial

Our industrial companies, which are located strategically throughout North America, respond to the unique construction needs of our clients in the petrochemical, oil and gas, pulp and paper, mining, and power and cogeneration industries. In addition to offering construction management services, we offer a full range of general contracting services, specializing in mechanical, civil and electrical construction, as well as piping and plant shutdowns/turnarounds.

Civil

By nature, civil work is geographically diverse and extremely demanding. This has made us versatile civil builders – equally at home building on land or over water, in busy cities or in remote areas. Our civil teams possess the ingenuity and the experience needed to undertake any civil structure imaginable – from bridges, overpasses, tunnels and interchanges, to water treatment facilities, pipelines and light rail transportation projects.

Watch us build at www pcl com