

Company History

(9/13)



We bring order to chaos

In 1982, Mellon Certified Restoration literally began with a trial by fire. As an experienced carpenter, Jim Mellon began *Jim Mellon General Contracting, Inc.* operating out of a small office in his Delaware County, Pennsylvania apartment. His one man business was doing small, private repair and construction jobs in the surrounding area. Then came a fateful day in 1983 when, as a local volunteer fire fighter and rental property owner, he found himself on the other side of the fire scene as one of his rental properties went up in flames.

As a general contractor, Jim embraced the new challenge of *restoration* work; however, he soon recognized the special skills and education required to handle an *insurance* fire loss in restoring his covered property. Although he could readily handle gutting, structural reinforcements, window replacements, electrical wiring, plumbing, and the design and installation of a new kitchen and bathroom, he was unfamiliar with the insurance industry's requirement for very specific, line item estimates. In addition, he soon learned about the *proper* cleaning and smoke deodorizing procedures from a friend in the cleaning business. Six months later, the restoration was complete and the tenants moved back in.

That was the *spark* that ignited a new direction! Beginning in 1988, with some new found knowledge and skills, *Jim Mellon General Contracting, Inc.*'s core business was gradually moving from general contracting work to the more defined, restoration of peril damaged property niche. In 1992, the company officially became known as *Mellon Certified Restoration*.

As the reputation for service, skill, and responsiveness grew, so did the company and Jim's office was now a bedroom in his *house*. However, needing more space for additional staff, equipment and supplies, the company moved its operations base to adjacent storefront offices in Yeadon, Delaware County, Pennsylvania in 1992.

Recognizing that there was still much to understand and learn about insurance related restoration, Jim joined ASCR (now RIA) in 1994. He went on to fulfill the rigorous educational requirements of the National Institute of Disaster Restoration (NIDR), earning the prestigious *Certified Restorer (CR)* designation in 1995.

In 1996, the company adopted a new logo and coined the slogan "*We Bring Order to Chaos*" to reflect what truly is the mission of the fire & water restoration company. Recognized as a local expert in property damage, Jim was sought out by the media for expert commentary on topics ranging from smoke odor removal to inhibiting mold growth. This recognition certainly played part in the company being named *Small Business of the Year* by the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce in 1997. That same year, Jim joined the local chapter of NARI and began another learning experience as he sought the *Certified Remodeler* designation (achieved in 2000).

Recognizing that future growth and success was dependent on continual improvement, the company joined the Business Networks organization in 1999. This group brings like businesses together to review best practices, share new ideas, analyze issues and propose solutions. Members are partnered with non-competing remodeling or insurance restoration business owners from different regions of the United States and Canada. Together, members observe and evaluate each company. Over the years, Mellon Certified Restoration's participation has resulted in a number of positive changes in its procedures.

In 2000, the company acquired one of its larger competitors in the restoration business, adding five additional office locations in Pennsylvania which overnight, nearly doubled its volume of business and increased the employee base by 100%. In addition, the acquisition significantly extended the company's reach in the marketplace....already servicing portions of southeastern PA and neighboring counties in Southern NJ and northern DE, Mellon Certified Restoration grew to cover central and northeastern PA as well.

In 2002, Remodeling Magazine named Mellon Certified Restoration to its "Big 50", a select group of remodeling companies *"...that distinguish themselves by outperforming their best competitors...we look for firms with top-notch business acumen, outstanding customer service, a financially strong foundation, and exciting systems."*

Also in 2002, the company established a formal, state certified, multidisciplinary and companywide Safety Committee. As a large business that operates in potentially high risk environments, the formalization of this group and the subsequent training of its employees helped guarantee safe work habits / procedures and ultimately safer environments for its valued customers and staff.

In 2004, always looking for ways to improve, not just his company, but the entire restoration industry as well, Jim and staff developed an interactive program to ensure that correct business overhead figures were being transmitted back to Xactimate. Individual utilization of this program helps ensure the accuracy of Xactimate's regional price database updates. The program was presented to restoration company leaders at national ASCR and DKI meetings in 2005.

In 2005, looking for another way to improve and differentiate itself from most, if not all, of its competitors, the company established a *dedicated* Customer Care Department to ensure property owner satisfaction with its services. As a non-operations related staff member, the Customer Care Coordinator contacts the property owner at established intervals for every job in progress. Any questions, issues or concerns are transmitted to the appropriate personnel and are immediately addressed. The culmination of the process is to send and subsequently compile the high number of returned Quality Questionnaires. Monthly tabulation of the returns has enabled the company to monitor customer service results, not only for the company as a whole, but also for our individual Branches, Estimators and Production Managers. In addition, the company uses these measurable results to train all employees in order to establish and exceed customer care goals.

In 2006, the Delaware County Firemen's Association named Mellon Certified Restoration as its Delaware County Business of the Year. This high honor bestowed by the Association's 79 Fire Chiefs recognizes the company's continual local support of their community endeavors.

As the company grew over the years, more Corporate and Philadelphia Metro Branch personnel were added and the Church Street location eventually became too small. As one of the larger employers in Yeadon, the company purchased the former Lansdowne Racquetball and Fitness Club and converted the 30,000 sq. ft. facility to house all Corporate and Philadelphia Metro Branch Office staffs, as well as supplies, equipment and storage warehouse. The move to this new and efficient facility took place in August, 2006.

In 2007, the company celebrated its 25th Anniversary and a new Exton Branch located in Chester County, PA opened for business in July. Although Mellon Certified Restoration had always serviced Chester County, they established this centrally located, full service-office to assure that their many clients and Chester County property owners receive the benefits of local expertise and an even more responsive level of service.

In 2008, the company's continued success in the central Pennsylvania marketplace mandated the relocation of its Harrisburg Branch to just east of downtown Harrisburg. This move to a larger, strategically located, modern facility increased the available on-site warehousing and parking as well as professional office space for existing and future staff.

In 2009, responding to the tremendous growth and success in central Pennsylvania, the company constructed a 3,234 square foot addition to the Harrisburg Branch. This expansion further increased our warehouse / storage space and enabled the Branch to also add three (3) new staff offices, an ADA compliant restroom, an ozone room and contents cleaning facility.

Also in 2009, Mellon Certified Restoration purchased a larger 10,500 square foot building in Allentown, just a few miles east of the existing Bath location. Opened in October, 2009, the move signaled the company's continued commitment to the Lehigh Valley marketplace and the increasing success of the Lehigh Valley Branch. Like the Harrisburg Branch's relocation in 2008, this move to a larger, strategically located, modern facility increased the available on-site warehousing, new staff offices, an ADA compliant restroom, an ozone room and contents cleaning facility as well as additional parking.

In 2010, Mellon Certified Restoration purchased a 10,500 square foot building in Peckville, PA. Following extensive renovations, this facility will allow our Scranton Branch to move from nearby Dunmore to a larger, strategically located, modern facility which will increase the available on-site warehousing and parking as well as professional office space / training facilities and an ozone room and contents cleaning facility. Like the previous Harrisburg and Lehigh Valley relocations, this move again signals the company's adherence to its mission and goals, its commitment to its existing marketplace and recognition of the Scranton Branch's continued growth and success.

In June of 2011, the Scranton Branch relocated to its new facility in Peckville. In addition, Mellon Certified Restoration was selected as RIA's 2011 Phoenix Award winner for "*Innovation in Restoration*"! Our project submission focused on the special efforts and success associated with the Milton Hershey School's Founders Hall project. The selection was made by a jury of peers from applications submitted by numerous restoration companies' across the United States. Winning this very prestigious award was certainly an honor and the project was featured in



the June, 2011 edition of *Cleaning & Restoration* magazine. In addition, Mellon Certified Restoration was listed as # 6 of the select national group of distinguished insurance restoration companies in Remodeling Magazine's "Big 550 in Insurance Restoration". (It is estimated that there are approx. 11,000 – 12,000 restoration companies in the U.S.).

Celebrating its 30th anniversary in business in 2012, the company also established its 7th full service Branch in Williamsport, PA. For a number of years, Mellon Certified Restoration had been successfully serving Lycoming and surrounding counties from its operations in Harrisburg and Scranton. However, as fast response times are a critical service component, the Williamsport Branch was opened in April to quickly respond to the region's commercial and residential restoration needs. The company was also honored to be cited in The Heritage Commission of Delaware County, 34th Annual Preservation Award to the Steward family for its role in the interior & exterior restoration and recreation of the landmark *Jimmy John's* building. In addition, Mellon Certified Restoration received Disaster Kleenup International's (DKI) certificate recognizing its support and dedication to their procurement program in utilizing Benefect botanical disinfectants and cleaners.

The future never looked brighter! To meet the growing needs of its clients and customers, the company has progressed from 1 office - 1 employee - 1 vehicle and basic equipment to 7 locations - 150 employees - 80 vehicles and a large inventory of specialized, state-of-the-art equipment. Always looking forward, Mellon Certified Restoration pledges to continue its involvement with local civic and industry associations and to build upon its great reputation for "*bringing order to chaos*" to commercial & residential property owners.