



Mid-States Concrete Celebrates 75 Years of Business

Celebrating
75
years

Seventy-five years ago, on Monday, May 13, 1946, Mid-States Concrete Products Co. was founded by Charles V. Harker.

Harry S. Truman was president. Perry Como's *Prisoner of Love* was the number one song in the United States and *A Night in Casablanca* was one of the most viewed movies released that year. Minimum wage was \$0.40 and you could buy a gallon of gas for \$0.21. A visit to the grocery store for a gallon

of milk, a dozen eggs, and a loaf of bread would cost you less than \$1.50. The economy was strong, interest rates were good, and the business had a new precast concrete floor and roof slab that would revolutionize commercial construction.

Mid-States began with production of Flexicore™, a hollow core floor and roof slab that has expanded and changed many times over the years. Initially a 12" wide mildly reinforced precast element, it became a 24" wide product in the 60s with the advent of prestressing technology and steel strand reinforcing. Today the company manufactures 48" wide hollow core floor and roof slabs in multiple thicknesses – 8", 10", 12", and 16" – capable of clear spanning more than 55 feet.

While the hollow core slab was the beginning, today the company engineers, manufactures, and constructs complex precast building systems combining architectural and structural prestressed/precast insulated wall panels (1960, 1965,

2005), precast beams, columns (1986), and other structural commercial building system components.

In January 2007, the company rebranded under the name Mid-States Concrete Industries and in 2013, in response to changing energy codes, Mid-States joined the AltusGroup now offering CarbonCast™ continuously insulated wall panels. As it has over its lifetime, Mid-States in 2017 innovatively began offering Graphic Concrete™, a technology which provides owners and architects the ability to impart durable patterns and images onto any precast concrete surface using patented technology from Finland.

Now in its third generation of family ownership, Harker's son, Charles H. Harker is CEO, and has been with Mid-States since graduating college, and his grandson, C. Hagen Harker is president. The company is a leader in safety, not only in the precast industry but across all industries achieving OSHA Sharp status in 2017.

"I just remember, we'd have family dinner every night and we didn't talk a lot of business, but I was interested in what he (Charles V. Harker) had to say and I grew up liking it; it was second nature," said Charles.

Like every company that has been around this long, Mid-States Concrete Industries has seen its share of ups and downs. During the last 75 years, with the nature of this business being cyclical and seasonal, Mid-States had some rough times, but it's been a good business overall.

"[Charles V. Harker] started the business with no money and he talked a couple local businessmen into investing," Charles said. "Everyone loved Charlie Harker. He just was trustworthy. He was a man of his word. That was number one - his word was good as gold, so people trusted him. They invested with him and subsequently as business grew, he bought out the initial investors."

The Harkers attribute this good business to the people that have been part of this team, as well as longstanding Customers. Decisions have always been made based on what's good for our people, and what's good for our Customers.

"We recognize we have to be there for our Customers," Hagen said. "Seventy-five years don't really mean a hill of beans without all the great people that work here at Mid-States that make it a family, make it the kind of place we have today, plus, most

importantly, all the work we do for our Customers.”

The leadership of Mid-States also makes sure to focus on planning ahead. While having a plan for today is great and all, it is even more important to focus on managing the business for five years, 10 years, 20 years, and beyond.

“We don’t get too high when things are great, and we don’t get too low when things are bad, but we’re consistently optimistic that things will go well,” Charles said. “We try to find the right people at the right place, and we make it work.”

Precast Chalk Talk: Episode 23



Mid-States Concrete will celebrate its 75th anniversary on May 13, 2021. In this episode of Precast Chalk Talk, the second and third generations of this family-owned company, founded by Charles V. Harker, discuss the past 75 years, and what they are looking forward to in the next 75.

Check it out [here](#).

Fun facts about 1946:

- Federal Minimum Wage: \$0.40
- Average Annual Income: \$2,600

- House: \$5,150
- Monthly Rent: \$35
- New Car: \$1,125
- First-Class U.S. Postage: \$0.03
- Movie Ticket: \$0.55
- Gallon of Gas: \$0.21
- Gallon of Milk: \$0.67
- One Dozen Eggs: \$0.59
- Loaf of White Bread: \$0.10

Find every episode of **Precast Chalk Talk** [here](#).

CareerTalk: Episode 14



Mid-States is so proud to be a partner on the ABC Supply Stadium. Our work was recently featured in CareerTalk, a partnership between students at [CareerTek](#) and [PeerCanvas](#).

CareerTalk is "conversations with professionals about their careers and how interested students might prepare themselves." Mid-States Production Foreman Patrick Yates, Production Manager Chris Olson, and CIO Michael McNett were interviewed for the video.

Check it out [here](#).



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