



MASCHINENFABRIK HERKULES

A family enterprise turns 100



Franz Thoma since 1911



When Franz Thoma founded the machine factory with the name "Herkules" in Kaan Marienborn on 28 November 1911, he could not have imagined that his grandson, Christoph Thoma would expand this business to today's internationally-oriented HerkulesGroup. Christoph Thoma's entrepreneurial activities are greatly influenced by the obligation he is feeling to continue the work of the founder and grandfather as well as that of his father Hans Thoma, and to develop the inherited. Franz Thoma, an engineer born in Würzburg, worked six years as a designer for the machine factory Waldrich, before he laid the foundation for his own company in the Siegerland county. In the early years, he employed 25 well-trained workers building stand drills. The partnership with the global trading house "Alfred Schütte" from Cologne allowed him to sell the machines manufactured in the Siegerland far beyond the borders of Germany.



Hans Thoma since 1945



Already during World War I, lathes were built that were needed by the steel industry, but also by the domestic roll foundries. In the 1920s, higher-quality rolls were needed, which led to the development and manufacturing of roll grinders. This product was the beginning of a real success story. Over the years, Herkules has developed into a global supplier of machine tools for roll machining. Worldwide, major customers of the steel and aluminum industries, but also the paper and plastics industry, are using machines manufactured by the HerkulesGroup.



Christoph Thoma since 1978



Since 1978, Christoph Thoma has been directing the company as chairman and CEO. After studying engineering in Aachen and Karlsruhe, he followed the practical example of his father. Hans Thoma, as well, entered into the family business directly after his studies and took over the leadership of the company after his father's death in February 1945.

Together with his father's brother, August Thoma, Hans Thoma rebuilt the company that had been severely damaged by World War II and affected by the restrictions imposed by the victors. Hard work, discipline, and a considerable degree of confidence were just as indispensable as a skilled and motivated workforce of loyal employees. Today, the HerkulesGroup employs 1800 people worldwide, about 1400 of them at the four German sites: In Siegen, Meuselwitz, Burbach and Chemnitz. Manufacturing facilities, sales offices and service centers in all major industrial countries around the world ensure closeness to the customers, understanding their needs at first hand, and offering custom-made products and appropriate services.

Since its beginnings in 1911, the success of Maschinenfabrik Herkules is based on a collaborative effort of the company's management and employees. Therefore, the organization of the 100-year anniversary party this year was also an expression of the appreciation and gratitude to all who have contributed to the success of the company.

The company's workforce will continue to be an important element for the group's success. In order to remain a technology leader, an investment in the education and training of the employees, as most recently done with the new training center in Siegen, is an indispensable investment in the company's future. The qualifications of our world-class experts in the plants are irreplaceable, because only with their help we can meet the high demands of international customers' needs.

Values such as tradition, continuity and progressive action are the pillars, and will continue to be important success factors of our family business.

Yours
Christoph Thoma



100 YEARS OF HERKULES – 7:00 P.M.

Herkulanian – for a lifetime

With his welcoming speech, the mayor of the city of Siegen, Steffen Mues, opened the official part of the anniversary celebration. In his speech, he emphasized the importance of Maschinenfabrik Herkules as a major employer in the region. He particularly highlighted the employees' bond to Maschinenfabrik Herkules: "You do not just go to work, you are a "Herkulanian", and often for a lifetime and across generations." Steffen Mues also praised the cultural and sporting engagement of Maschinenfabrik Herkules for many years, which shows the company's ambition to take over social responsibility.

Following, Dr. Henrich Schleifenbaum reported on his extensive experience as legal advisor to Maschinenfabrik Herkules, exemplifying the long-term oriented planning of the family-run company and the consistent implementation of these plans. "If you would delve deeper into the contracts signed back then, you would be amazed with what courage, what foresight and what willingness to take risks the contracts were concluded at that time. (...) The success of the company has confirmed the correctness of the found rules."

Doug Major, vice president of Court Holdings Limited Shareholders, described in his congratulatory speech the relationship of the Canadian company to Maschinenfabrik Herkules. According to Doug Major, the close supplier-customer relationship is not only based on the excellent quality of the Herkules machines, but also on the many values shared by both family enterprises "...we do share with Herkules an extraordinary strong relationship. That's predicated on respect, on trust, on value from the equipment." Not least, the long-term decisions such as the expansion of the product portfolio by acquisitions of companies strengthened the close relationship, "...we watched from the position of the customer, these shrewd, highly intelligent business decisions, helped us crystallize some of our intents as we addressed our global market."

Steffen Mues, mayor of the city of Siegen hands over the "crown" of the city of Siegen.

Doug Major, vice president of Court Holdings Limited Shareholders.

Christoph Thoma thanks Marita Thoma for the organization of the 100-year celebration party.

Dr. Henrich Schleifenbaum, longtime legal advisor and close friend of the Thoma family.



100 YEARS OF HERKULES – 9:00 P.M.

Honoring ceremony and presentation of a new artwork

This year, it was the first time in the company's history that four employees could be honored for contributing to the global success of Maschinenfabrik Herkules with their daily work for 50 years. Together with the works council chairman Peter Hatzig, Christoph Thoma honored the jubilees for their loyal employment with Maschinenfabrik Herkules. For 25 years of service were honored: Stephan Pieper, Dieter Daum, Andreas Josef Ohm, Elmar Bruch, Klaus Schneider, Thomas Hambloch, Eberhard Moos, Andreas Krämer and Maik Bedenbender. Sincere thanks for 40 years of work went to Frank Voigt, Paul-Josef Heide, Jürgen Dornhöfer, Reinhard Gröschel, Dieter Hartmann, Rolf Letzerich and Lothar Reinholz. With great applause, Klaus Dieter Roda, Günter Braach, Wolfgang Oerter and Karl Schlechtriemen were honored for 50 years of loyal service at Maschinenfabrik Herkules.

The presentation of the newly acquired artwork "Peace through chemistry" was another highlight of the 100-year celebration. With the acquisition of the bronze relief created in 1970 by the American Pop Art master Roy Lichtenstein, the modern art collection of the company is further completed. "Art creates an inspiring and motivating atmosphere, enhanced thinking and opens up new perspectives." said Klaus Benden, gallery owner from Cologne.

The official part of the anniversary celebration was finished by Axel Barten, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce Siegen and the Association of German Machine and Plant Manufacturers – VDMA. He conveyed the congratulations of the VDMA, and handed over to Christoph Thoma the Chamber of Commerce' deed for the 100-year anniversary of Maschinenfabrik Herkules.



100 YEARS OF HERKULES – 10:30 P.M.

Until late into the night...

...the party continued, with live music and dancing. The dance floor, opened with an impressive power act, was the beating heart of the party until early next morning. This was mainly due to the excellent performance of the well-known band Celebration from Hamburg who created a perfect party mood from the very beginning. Their rich repertory contains cover songs of Abba and the Rolling Stones but also of Amy Winehouse and Lady Gaga, thus catering all tastes and ages.

Guests preferring a more quiet setting were given the chance to settle back and listen to jazz music in the relaxing atmosphere of Herkules' Gefolgschaftshaus. It was exactly this blend of partying mood and relaxed enjoyment which characterized the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Maschinenfabrik Herkules. A celebration, which the Herkulanians and their guests will remember for a long, long time.



Christoph Thoma and Peter Hatzig, complimenting employees who have celebrated their 25th, 40th and 50th anniversary at Maschinenfabrik Herkules.

The artwork 'Peace through chemistry' bronze by Roy Lichtenstein, bought on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Herkules.

Axel Barten, handing over the deed issued by the Chamber of Commerce of Siegen on occasion of the 100th anniversary of Maschinenfabrik Herkules.

Expansion into the third dimension

At first glance, „parking at work“ does not seem to be an issue of inspiration for art. “But why not”, artist Eva Weinert may have asked herself and transformed the parking lot of Maschinenfabrik Herkules into a piece of graphic art, open to the public. On the formerly grey-coloured asphalted surface, parking spaces were highlighted in different colours and the overall colour scheme keeps changing with the cars of employees and visitors coming and going. Very deliberately, the graduate of Düsseldorf Kunstakademie made use of the daily routine of parking a car as an interactive element of her art project. “Whenever a car enters into a parking space, it fills up the previously empty surface area and expands it into the third dimension. The parking space is now defined by colour and shape of the car parked on it.”

With this project, Maschinenfabrik Herkules not only again promotes contemporary artists but also encourages the dialogue between their staff and contemporary art. The latter is proven by the lively discussions among Herkulanians already at early project stages.



“Parking lot” – an interactive project of art

Architecture Award 2011

For the first time since 2008, the Advisory Council for Urban Design Projects honors an outstanding building project in the Siegen area. With their straight-lined and functional design, the pavilion on the lake and the garage of Maschinenfabrik Herkules have convinced the Advisory Council. Located on the grounds of Maschinenfabrik Herkules, the two modern buildings mark a clear contrast to the old red brick production halls. Both the appreciation of these traditional buildings as well as the construction of innovative, modern buildings is typical for Maschinenfabrik Herkules. Thus, traditional values are preserved and linked with innovative actions and fresh thinking. We are proud that our architectural decision has been honored with this award.

Impressum

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