

Our Legacy... Our Progression

With an integrated business system, network connectivity and a paperless central warehouse, Gerrie is on the leading edge of technology today. Gerrie is passionately helping customers be more successful.

Proud Legacy



It was September, 1957, when a gentleman named Ken Gerrie opened a storefront electrical supply counter in the budding town of Oakville, Ontario. Oakville's population was just approaching 10,000. Popular culture had only recently embraced the technological marvel of television. Hula hoops, pop-up toasters, and soda pops were all the rage. It was a time of optimism and opportunity.

1957 was a time of optimism and opportunity.

Ken, a visionary entrepreneur, sensed the enormous potential in the Golden Horseshoe area. With his dedicated work ethic, he set in motion an operation that would become the cornerstone of one of the most dominant electrical supply companies in Ontario.

In those early days, it wasn't uncommon to find Ken at his Florence Drive store by the crack of dawn, and on the road delivering goods and picking up new orders north into Georgetown, Milton and surrounding areas well into the late evening.

"I was selling anything from pole line for farm wiring and standard house wiring material to sump pumps and water heaters," Ken reminisces. "During the festive holiday season, we'd sell small appliances and TVs. Light bulbs were a big item to help our December sales. In fact, we sold whatever we could buy."

Being a small independent had its challenges. Chief among them was the difficulty in achieving access to some of the better known brand name products. Over time, Ken's diligence and straight shooting approach began to make an impact on contractors and suppliers alike. Among the first leading name manufacturers to place their confidence in Ken and his new company were General Electric and Canada Wire.

Within a few short years Gerrie Electric had grown sufficiently to justify a move from its modest 2,000 square foot location to a 5,000 square foot showroom and warehouse facility. Staff numbers increased to five. Residential lighting was added to the product line and sold rapidly to home contractors and electricians working feverishly to keep pace with an exploding housing market.

During this time, Gerrie Electric was also making territorial inroads in Guelph, Fergus and Elora. In retrospect, *"just surviving in a very tough market was a remarkable achievement,"* says Ken. *"Getting the lines was definitely one thing. Facing the larger independents who offered better pricing was another. You had to be a good salesman, selling something other than price."* That something was, and continues to be, a profound sense of service and reliability. *"You have to treat people the way you'd like to be treated yourself; look at things from their side of the desk. If we make a commitment,"* says Ken, *"we follow through."*

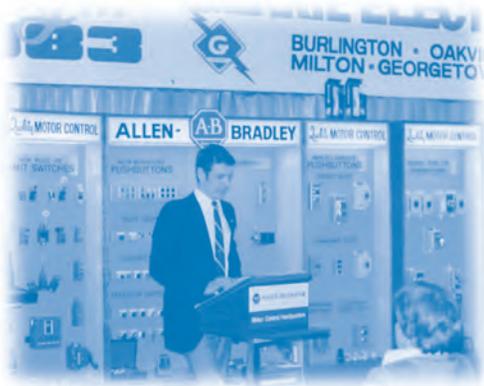


Gerrie Electric's 5,000 sq. ft. showroom and warehouse c.1962



"During the festive holidays we'd sell small appliances and TVs." Ken Gerrie

Carmen Stewart addressing an audience at Gerrie Electric's Pageant of Control, Burlington, 1983



Gerrie Executive

LEFT TO RIGHT

Carmen Stewart
CMO/EVP Sales

Elaine Gerrie
Co-President and CEO

Kenneth Gerrie
Chairman of the Board

Heather Gerrie
Co-President and CEO

Richard Solonenko
CFO/EVP Operations

In 1977, Gerrie Electric opened its first branch in Georgetown. The move was based on the desire to bring service and reliability closer to customers Ken had been calling on for years. A Milton branch followed in 1978.

By the close of the 70s, Gerrie Electric's market had changed dramatically. While hardware stores, larger retailers and flagship department stores began taking on a greater share of the appliance and retail market, Gerrie stepped up its presence in the industrial sector.

With the advent of the 80s, a decade marked by phenomenal growth, economic prosperity, and a surge in technological advances, Gerrie Electric was well on its way to becoming a market leader serving the increasingly sophisticated automation requirements of the industry.

To meet these challenges, in 1981 the company moved its headquarters to a 20,000 square foot facility in Burlington. In 1982, Gerrie Electric formed a high tech Systems Group to take care of its customers' expanding automation requirements.

Gerrie had developed a solid working relationship with Allen Bradley, the country's pre-eminent manufacturer of automated programmable control systems. From miniature sensors and large drive systems to micro PLCs and computer software, Gerrie Electric was positioned for the marketplace.

The 1980s were marked by phenomenal growth, economic prosperity, and a surge in technological advances.

New branches were opened in St. Catharines, Cambridge and Brantford. A centralized, integrated computer system to standardize common procedures was implemented in 1988, laying the framework for ISO compliance. Gerrie Electric was the first electrical distributor in North America to obtain ISO 9002 registration.

The company's tremendous growth led to a 25,000 square foot expansion at head office to make room for on-site training centres, more warehousing space, and more efficient, centralized administration. Branch expansion continued into Hamilton, Guelph, Mississauga, Kitchener and Simcoe.

3rd Generation



FROM BOTTOM LEFT UP THEN DOWN TO RIGHT Jonathan Kwant, Jacqueline Kwant, David Kwant, Whitney Reinhart, Taylor Gerrie Reinhart, Joanna Kwant.



Artist's conception of Burlington expansion of Gerrie Electric, 1990

*Passionately Helping Customers
Be More Successful*

Gerrie is proud to serve some very prestigious corporate accounts while never forgetting small contractors and individuals.

In addition, six acquisitions were made to round off the territory – Economy Electric in Welland, Bramtor Electric in Brampton, Watt Electric in Bolton, Concord Electric in Concord, Tesco Electric in London, Hyde Park, St Thomas and Woodstock and Watts Electric in Alliston. Warehousing procedures were streamlined with

the introduction of bar coding, therefore making it possible to respond to customer needs faster and more efficiently.

By the early 1990s, Gerrie Electric had moved into commodity management, providing a variety of unique and value added services to the company's customers. Supply Chain Services implements customized Supply Programs for customers looking to reduce costs and improve the bottom line.

In the mid 2000s a move was made into a new venture – the process business. With the newly formed Process Group, combined with their reputation for service and technical expertise, it didn't take long for the company to be recognized as a leader in Canada.

2014 emerged with an increased awareness that all things will eventually be connected to the internet and buzz about the "internet of things". Gerrie recognized that their customers will require new products and services for them to successfully embrace this very dynamic change in how we communicate and run our businesses. With that, Gerrie enhanced their service offerings by providing focused resources and aligning with key vendors such as Rockwell Automation, Cisco and Panduit to help our customers be more successful.

The force behind the company's evolution and growth is the people who make up the Gerrie Electric family. Many of the faces behind the desks and counters, and on the showroom and warehouse floors, have been with the company for 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 40 years. These employees have shown a tremendous commitment to Gerrie Electric and the customers they serve.

Two principal players literally grew up in the business. Company Co-Presidents and CEO's Heather Gerrie and Elaine Gerrie remember accompanying their Dad "on the road" during school holidays. They worked in shipping and in the showrooms, learning about the business from every conceivable angle. "Some parents have trouble getting their children involved in their business because they're just parachuted in," notes Ken, "but Heather and Elaine were brought up in the business and much like the company they represent, they had to earn their stripes." Heather and Elaine are active owners, steering the company today and well into the future. They have earned those stripes and continue to maintain the culture, commitment to quality and dedication to customer success that Gerrie has come to be known by. They are proud and excited to have the 3rd generation working their way through the company just as they did in the 80s and 90s.

Today, Gerrie is proud to serve some very prestigious corporate accounts while never forgetting the small contractors and individuals who helped lay the foundation on which the business was built. Throughout its history, Gerrie has remained true to absolute integrity coupled with an abiding work ethic. Or, as Ken comments with his customary down-to-earth candor, "we just keep ploughing away until we get to the end of the field."

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