

## Hubbell, Roth & Clark celebrating 100 years



This is a photo of one of Hubbell, Roth & Clark's projects in the 1960s.

In 1915, Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc. (HRC) began its 100 year endeavor, as a small engineering firm in downtown Detroit, founded **by Clarence W. Hubbell**.

That same year, Clarence was retained by George Fenkell, Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Detroit, to review a survey on pollution of the Detroit River and to provide recommendations. In 1916 Clarence presented his plans for sewage treatment for Detroit in a 200-page document entitled: "Preliminary Report on Sewage Disposal for the City of Detroit." Despite the staggering number of deaths that could be attributed to water borne diseases like typhus, it wasn't until 1939 that a primary treatment plant began treating 400 million gallons per day of sewage that had previously been discharged raw into the Detroit River.

HRC continued to build a reputation for providing innovative solutions to complex engineering challenges, along with outstanding customer service. The firm prospered as a result, and soon emerged as a one of the leaders in designing many of the major infrastructure projects for the City of Detroit during the early 20th Century.

A prime example is the Detroit Wastewater Treatment Plant. Completed in 1939, it is still recognized as one of Michigan's Top Ten Civil Engineering Outstanding Achievements of the Twentieth Century.

During World War II HRC designed sanitary and industrial wastewater plants for a number of facilities that were required to fight the war, such as the Selfridge Airbase, Chrysler Tank Arsenal, and Ford Willow Run Bomber Plant.

Following the war, there was a need for the development of new production and testing facilities. HRC designed many wastewater and industrial waste treatment plants that were required for these

new facilities, including the General Motors Proving Grounds in Milford, the General Motors Technical Center in Warren, and the Ford Motor Company complex in Monroe.

In the years that followed HRC continued growing and adding services to meet the needs of the rapidly-expanding metro Detroit region. Major municipal drains, interceptors and collection systems were designed in order to prevent the flow of polluted discharges into lakes and rivers, and eliminate flooding in neighborhoods.

In the 30-year period from 1975 to 2005, the population of Southeast Michigan rose by more than 200,000 people. HRC stayed on top on changes in technology during this time, and continued to develop expertise in the areas of roadway design, and structural engineering in order to accommodate the need for improved road networks and bridges.

HRC partnered with Lawrence Technological University in 2002 for an extremely innovative and award winning solution to the Bridge Street Bridge reconstruction project in Southfield. HRC, working with LTU, prepared the design on what would be the first of its kind bridge, reinforced with carbon fiber rather than steel.

Today, in addition to its Bloomfield Hills headquarters, HRC has offices in Detroit, Grand Rapids, Howell, and Delhi Township near Lansing, to serve clients all across Michigan. The company currently employs over 160 people, many of whom have been with the company for over 25 years. HRC has never been sold; in fact, descendants of its founders are still leaders in the firm.