

Jewel-Craft Inc. & The Jewelry Industry Mourn the Loss of Dorothy (Dot) Wesdorp

The Villages, FL - Dorothy (Dot) Wesdorp, co-founder of Jewel-Craft, Inc. from 1950 - 1985, passed away on 07/15/2019. Dot's two sons, Gary (Co-President and CFO) and Benet (Co-President and COO), reminisced about Jewel-Craft's early years and remembered how hard their parents worked and were always impressed by their love and respect for each other. Gary said, "My dad would go around and pick up all the jewelry. He would do the benchwork, and then she would polish it and she would inspect it. So, it was my mom's job to tell my dad what he was doing wrong...and they were married for 70 years." The two brothers accredit much of Jewel-Craft's success to their mother and continue to integrate her teachings and passion not only into the business, but also in their daily lives. Benet stated, "Mom taught us the importance of family and, as we continue to grow, I strive to make each employee feel like they are a part of our family."

Her husband, Robert (Bob) Wesdorp, owner of Jewel-Craft, Inc. from 1950 - 1985, accredited Dot with Jewel-Craft's success. With Dot's passion and commitment to quality, demand continued to rise for their services and prompted the Wesdorps to start hiring help, outside the family, and by 1977 the company had grown to 11 employees.

Mike Martin, who joined the company in 1972, recalls, "What I remember the most about those days was that when we'd come in to work in the morning, Bob and Dot would already be working, and they'd still be working when we left at the end of the day. This company was grown, not by luck or by someone being in the right place at the right time, but because of the hard work and dedication of Bob and Dot."

Bob and Dot's hard work led to big changes and continued growth. In 1977, they moved Jewel-Craft from their humble beginnings in a Fort Wright basement, to a building in Crescent Springs, Kentucky. It was from this location that Jewel-Craft started to make a name for themselves across the entire national jewelry industry. Bob and Dot slowly eased out of the business and, in 1985, turned over management to their sons Gary and Benet. Benefiting from their parent's work ethic, it did not take Gary and Benet long to grow out of the Crescent Springs location. In 1990, they were ready to expand again and officially moved into their current Erlanger, KY location.

Today, Gary and Benet Wesdorp share corporate leadership duties. Three of Gary's children, all three of Benet's sons, and Gary's son-in-law are also currently employed with the company, learning the business as their father, mother and grandfather did - from the ground up.

Ross Wesdorp, grandson of Bob and Dot, shared, "Something my grandma always said that stuck with us, is never forget the people who got us where we are today."

One thing is certain, Dot's legacy and dedication will always carry on through the entire Jewel-Craft family.

For more information about Jewel-Craft, Inc. or the company's 70 plus year history, visit www.jewel-craft.com or call 859-282-2400 or 800-525-5482.

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