



Wednesday » October
29 » 2008

Highland marks 70 years with move to new digs

David Parker

Calgary Herald

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Completing 70 years of independent business in Alberta is an achievement well worth celebrating, but in the tough, competitive world of moving household goods, an industry known for tight margins, it's quite remarkable.

Highland Moving & Storage Ltd. has been around since 1938 and Casey Kachur, general manager of the Calgary branch, has saluted the anniversary with a move into a brand new building.

The company was launched in Edmonton by his grandfather Peter as Jim's Express & Transfer. When his son Don, the current owner, took the reins he changed the name to Highland -- he saw it on the handle of his son's hockey stick.

Highland opened a Calgary sales branch in the late 1970s and 15 years ago moved into a large office/warehouse facility on 44th Street S.E. After completing his business degree at University of Alberta, Casey moved here in 2005 with the goal of increasing its business in southern Alberta.

Casey's sales team has been successful in getting Highland -- a member of United Van Lines -- onto preferred lists with clients such as Petro-Canada, University of Calgary, Suncor, Bantrel, Fluor and Agrium.

The core business is still centred on domestic household moves, but commercial moving is established as a separate division in Edmonton and Casey has been able to grow that sector here as well.

Today the company boasts more than 100 trucks, the largest fleet in the province. Around 30 of those are based in Calgary and a number of vehicles, particularly those on national and international runs, are owner-operated but solely contracted to Highland. Domestic moves within the province are handled by a team of experienced drivers and crews by Highland's Traditional Moving Service.

Casey has a staff of 14 in the office and warehouse, and crews ranging from 25 to 60 depending on the season. He says it's still tough to get employees, but the firm's reputation has helped make attracting them a little easier of late and Highland has a good retention record.

The new building is a big advertisement for the success of the firm and in the reception area, the wall that displays a couple of dozen awards must be a big comfort for employees.

Jon Mook of Colliers International found the new 44,000-square-foot space at 7115 48th Street S.E. in the Foothills Industrial Park, which is split into 4,500 square feet of administration and the remainder as warehousing. A walk-through shows Highland is big into storage, and a new commodities division specializing in areas such as medical equipment and store fixtures, which require special blanketing and care, is taking up an increased amount of the space.

Moving companies have to work hard to keep ahead of the game. but Casey says it can be rewarding work and the new facility provides plenty of space for the company ping-pong table. He particularly enjoys Highland's support of the folk festivals in both cities, hauling tents and supplying trailers that have been used as practice rooms.

The 70th anniversary is next month; Casey and his father and all of Highland's employees have a lot to be proud of.

- - -

David Parker appears Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. He can be reached at 830-4622 or e-mail info@davidparker.ca

© The Calgary Herald 2008

CLOSE WINDOW

Copyright © 2008 CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#). All rights reserved.
CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#). All rights reserved.