

FENTON WELL DRILLING AND FENTON PUMP SERVICE – A HISTORY

By Wayne Fenton

Fenton Well Drilling was created in 1955 by my father, Harry R. Fenton. He started out with an old cable tool rig that originally came from a quarry where it was used to drill blast holes. I can still remember going to the quarry w/ my mother when I was 8 or 9 years old and looking over the edge of it. It looked like you could fall off of it real easy. Dad progressed on to drilling water wells for people in the area and eventually owned two cable rigs. I remember helping him at a young age, but I was really too small to be of much help. Maybe I just thought I was helping. Dad would let me shovel mud and other little jobs, maybe to just keep me occupied. I would help some in the summer when I was out of school and sometimes during Christmas vacation when we had a couple of weeks off from school. It was during those cold Decembers that I figured out the meaning of "cold as a well driller's ankle". Drilling with cable tools is a slow process, and deep wells could take as many as 2-3 weeks to complete. In the winter, Dad had a 3-sided building he would set up to keep us out of the weather, and in it he had a small oil drum that he dripped oil in to make heat for us.

**THREE GENERATIONS
OF WELL DRILLING
AND PUMP SERVICE
EXCELLENCE...**

When I graduated High School, I went to work full time for Dad, and worked with him until I was drafted in 1966. When I got out of the Army, Dad had purchased a 1963 air drill. The demand for well drilling had gone from 1-2 wells a month to 1-2 a week. This air drill was top of the line and really remarkable to see run. We ran that rig until 1985, the year my Dad retired.

I had started a pump company in 1973, following behind Dad, putting in pumps on the weekend. The pump business was started by me to supplement my income, but by 1976, it turned out to be a full-time business. I followed behind Dad, putting in pumps and waterlines. We purchased a pump hoist and a trencher, and we were able to take care of practically any service work that came in. We had a reputation of promptly taking care of folks that were out of water.

In 1985, Dad retired from drilling, and I bought the business from him. Dad had a great reputation of being fair and honest with people, and always set a good example for me to follow in his footsteps. When Dad retired, I took over the drilling and started upgrading the equipment and hired more people to take care of the growing demand in the area. My oldest son, Tony had just turned 18 in 1985, and he started working for me full-time. He had already been working with me since he was big enough to get in the truck with me. He turned out to be a good pump man and was handling most of the service work. Our area was growing at a fast clip in the 70's and 80's, and I was seriously considering buying another drill rig to keep up with the demand. One of the drawbacks of increasing the size of your company, in my opinion, is the fact that you lose some of the personal touch of dealing with your customers. For that reason, I decided to remain small to be able to provide personal attention to our customers' needs and concerns.

In 1997, Tony took over the pump business. The work demand was more than one person could handle. Tony has been able to expand the business by offering full service on pumps, installing large farm projects, and other water line excavations.

Over the years, we have been able to provide the NRV full drilling and pump service for farms, homes and business' The company has been a member of the Virginia Water Well Association since 1985. The VWWA is an organization that promotes, serves and protects the water well industry by providing continuing education in the latest technology, equipment, regulatory issues, and business issues. In 1993, I was chosen to be a member of the board of directors. From 2003-2005, I was proud to have been elected to serve as President of that organization and since then have been asked to serve as a member of the board. Our company requires all of our employees to attend all the technical classes that the VWWA has to offer. In Nov. 2007, The Commonwealth of VA requires all contractors that hold a WWP (water,well,pump) classification, to have an individual certification of WSP (water system provider). Tony and myself are both recognized as Master Water Well System Providers, by the Commonwealth.

We continue to provide the NRV full well service with honesty and fairness. We are life-long residents of Montgomery County. We are dedicated to our community and support our local economy. We are proud to have served the people of the NRV since 1955 and look forward to many more years of service to them.

**COMMITTED TO PROVIDING
OUR CUSTOMERS THE BEST
QUALITY AND FRIENDLIEST
SERVICE POSSIBLE**