

Company History

Sydney Landscaping and Nurseries Ltd. is a family owned and operated company which was established in 1964.

Julius Mesics, Past-President, left his home Country of Hungary in 1957 to start a better life. He landed in Cape Breton as a 21 year old, unable to speak a word of English. This is where he met his wife Ann, who taught him the language and customs of the area. He got his first taste of Landscaping at Ellerbroks Nurseries, and after seeing a need for another company in the area, decided to branch out, with then business partner Jack Stenhouse, and formed Sydney Landscaping.

A used pickup truck, a pick and shovel, and a wheel barrow were the beginning assets of the company, along with plenty of drive and ambition. Over a short period of time, the company began to establish itself as a reputable firm with good service. The company started with residential work, but then realized there was a market in the industrial and commercial sectors as well. Their first large project was the Highway 125 overpass in Sydney River. They installed sod on all slopes and medians. In those days, the sods were cut by hand with a spade shovel. In 1972, the company changed it's name to Sydney Landscaping & Nurseries Ltd., to reflect it's involvement in the installation and sale of ornamental plant material. As the years went on, reputation increased as did productivity with the purchase of a mechanical sod cutter, tractors and larger trucks. In the late 70's the demand for sod was increasing. Homeowners and architects alike, began to see the aesthetic value of top quality turf grass. Pasture sod and hand seeding were becoming less desirable. To respond to this demand, the company purchased land in Portage, where the company shop remains today. The dream to develop top quality Kentucky Blue nursery sod fields, the first in Cape Breton, was realized. In the early 80's, Julius branched out on his own, keeping the company name, with wife Ann by his side as secretary. In 1983, their son Gary obtained his BBA from St. F. X. U., and became Vice President. In 1987, the company purchased a state of the art hydroseeding unit. This service provided customers a more economical choice to establish a guaranteed, top quality lawn. Further, as environmental awareness heightened, hydroseeding became a viable process for organizations like Devco, and NS Power, to aid in their site restorations.

Besides the knowledge and experience of management, the workforce of Sydney Landscaping is key to their success. In a seasonal, normally high turnover industry, the company is fortunate to have numerous returning employees. This provides consistency in the quality of product the company can deliver.

The Do-it-yourselfer has also been a big part of the company's success. They provide supplies of Kentucky Blue nursery sod, cut fresh off their fields daily, screened topsoils and bark mulch for pick up or delivery.

In 1988 Gary received his Qualified Plantsman Diploma from the University of Guelph, and took numerous courses over the next few years. In 1995, Gary became safety coordinator and developed a comprehensive safety program for the company. In 1996, the company became safety certified by the Nova Scotia Construction Safety Association, and remains certified through yearly safety audits. In the Spring of 1998, Gary became one of 2 Cape Bretoners to obtain a Canadian Certified Horticultural Technician (CCHT) designation. Now called Certified Landscape Technician (CLT) this designation is recognized across North America in the horticultural industry, and is considered the benchmark for industry employees. Sydney Landscaping and Nurseries Ltd. has been involved in most of the larger construction projects in Cape Breton. Their customer base primarily consists of about 80% larger projects (Commercial/Industrial) and 20% smaller sized projects (Residential/Recreational).

Today, Gary and his wife Sandra carry on the family tradition. Their son Jeremy, joined the company in 2009, and is currently Gary's right hand man, and safety coordinator. With the help of their employees, Sydney Landscaping & Nurseries Ltd. strive to continue to serve the Cape Breton community, with the trustworthy and professional service they deserve.