

Morris and Reynolds celebrates 58 years in business

BY ZANORFA BERTRAM

Most businesses do not survive their first year of operation, much the less a first generation. That's why it is truly rare to find a business operating nearly 60 years after it was founded and still owned by the third generation of the family that founded it.

The Reynolds family has been in the insurance industry for nearly 100 years (since 1910) and founded its independent agency, Morris & Reynolds Insurance, in 1950. In April, Morris & Reynolds celebrated its 58th year in business. Today it is owned by Robert D. Reynolds who followed his father and grandfather when he joined the family business 25 years ago.

"The insurance industry has changed dramatically over the decades and our firm has evolved along with it, but the basic principles of business that my grandfather embraced – passionately caring about your clients and employees, working hard, being honest and doing what you promise when or before you promised it – are as important today as was the case 100 years ago. It is those things that our business is based upon," said Bob Reynolds, President & CEO.

Morris & Reynolds Insurance was founded in 1950 by Reynold's grandfather E.H. Reynolds, who grew up on a farm in upstate Vermont before he moved to Washington D.C. to attend law school at Georgetown University. He was later recruited by Florida's largest employer at the time, Florida Power & Light Company, and this led to his move to Miami.

During his 40-year career with FP&L, E. H. Reynolds played a leading role with the company as assistant secretary, treasurer, insurance

buyer and risk manager. Much of his focus centered on insurance, employee benefits and risk management matters, often needing to create solutions and coverages where none had previously existed. In 1935, E. H. wrote Florida's first workers compensation law to protect FP&L employees (as well as those in every other business in Florida) from injury or death while working.

In 1950, E. H. Reynolds opened his own independent insurance agency, E. H. Reynolds Insurance, in downtown Miami's Ingraham Building, and began by offering homeowners, automobile, business and life & health insurance to his former co-workers. His guiding principles, many of which are the cornerstone at Morris & Reynolds to this day, included offering Reliability, Peace of Mind, Competitive Costs, and Trusted Insurer Choices to his clients.

In 1953, E.H.'s son, Douglas H. Reynolds, entered the insurance business as an agent and adjuster following a distinguished career in the United States Army (where he rose from an enlisted man to the rank of Captain in three year's time). In 1954, the agency's name was changed to E. H. Reynolds & Son Insurance as Douglas worked in the firm while attending the University of Miami where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration with a specialization in insurance in 1957.

Nineteen-fifty-eight was a busy year for the firm and family as Douglas purchased the agency from his father and moved its offices to Coral Gables, a community that the agency would call home for nearly three decades. It was also in 1958 that Douglas merged his business with a smaller office owned by



Robert D. Reynolds, President & CEO, Morris & Reynolds Insurance.

Edwin Morris and changed the name to Morris & Reynolds Insurance. In 1979, Edwin Morris retired and sold his interest in the business to the Reynolds family, which today owns and controls 100 percent of Morris & Reynolds Insurance.

Over his nearly five decades of leadership and ownership of Morris & Reynolds Insurance, Douglas Reynolds grew the business into one of the most dominant and dynamic insurance organizations in America while also playing an active role in the industry and community. With his wife Victoria by his side, personally and professionally, Douglas grew the business with a passion for providing people with an old-fashioned, reliable level of quality service.

From helping thousands of local residents with their home, auto and life insurance needs to protecting professional sports franchises such as the Miami Dolphins, prestigious property owners, energy-related risks, publicly traded entities and all manner of small and medium businesses, Morris & Reynolds Insurance grew into one of the largest insurance agencies in Florida and America. Douglas

served as President of the Miami Insurance Board in the 1950s and was honored by the Society of Professional Insurance Agents with their Lifetime Achievement award.

In 1983, Robert D. Reynolds joined Morris & Reynolds Insurance as a sales agent, and like his father before him, did so while completing his studies at the University of Miami where he graduated with honors with a bachelor's degree in business administration while majoring in finance and specializing in insurance. Bob has continued his education in insurance over the past two decades by obtaining a number of professional designations including the Certified Insurance Counselor, Certified Professional Insurance Agent for which he has attained life member status, and the Associate in Underwriting. Bob has proudly been recognized with a number of civic and business awards, including the 2000 Agent of the Year, a prestigious national honor from the Society of Certified Professional Insurance Agents. This award was given based on his professional work and civic service, an achievement no other Florida agent has ever received.

While the insurance and financial services industries have changed dramatically over the decades, Bob has led Morris & Reynolds' recent evolution by expanding the agency in both size and scope. Today, Morris & Reynolds Insurance employs nearly 70 people and offers clients access to virtually the entire insurance market for all of the risks they face, including personal protection, commercial coverage, risk management, specialty programs, employee benefits and financial services from over 100 of the world's leading insurers.