

Easley Chamber's Spotlight on... Martin Microscope Company

Martin Microscope Company began in 1946 in Easley, founded by Robert H. Martin, Sr. (Bob). Bob Martin was a WWII veteran and a native of Easley, the son of local pharmacist, J. Rosamond Martin, and Mary Hamilton Martin. The company moved to Greenville from about 1950 until returning to Easley in 1983 when Bob Martin acquired his childhood home at 201 South Pendleton Street from his mother's estate. The company was located there until 1993 when we acquired the large building next door, originally a Rhodes Furniture store. Bob Martin, Sr. passed away in 2006 in his 60th year in business. His son, Robert H. Martin, Jr. joined the company in 1988 and is the current owner.

Martin Microscope Company is an independent distributor of a variety of brands of microscopes, the only company of its kind in South Carolina, and one of the oldest in the United States. Microscopes are used in a surprisingly wide variety of fields including biology, geology, pathology, forensics, electronics, and textiles. They are used for research, laboratory testing and diagnosis, quality inspection, and education. We sell only light microscopes, as opposed to electron or scanning probe microscopes, but light microscopes can be very specialized with varieties including brightfield, darkfield, phase contrast, differential interference contrast, polarizing, metallurgical, inverted, and stereomicroscopy. Our customers

include state and private universities, industry, crime labs, and research facilities including the Smithsonian Institution and the Chicago Field Museum. We sell new and used microscopes and related accessories including digital imaging and image analysis products.

We custom design some products, including our MM Series digital camera adapters with which we pioneered the use of consumer digital cameras and camcorders for microscopy. Our high definition video microscopy systems, based on these adapters, can be seen regionally at Jones Gap State Park, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Twin Creeks Science & Education Center, the Highlands Biological Station Museum, and most

recently the North Carolina Botanical Gardens, in addition to many regional colleges and universities. These systems have also been used by the National Geographic Channel for television specials featuring

microorganisms. This year, one microorganism, a newly discovered species of tardigrade, or "water bear", found in the Smokies was named *Macrobiotus martini* in memory of Robert Martin, Sr.

We are located in downtown Easley at 207 South Pendleton Street. More detailed information about our company history and the products we sell may be found on our website: www.martinmicroscope.com.



From left are Aaron Cunningham, Megan McLane, Robert Martin and Jon Martin.