

Shapiro Celebrates 95 Years of Service

Samuel Shapiro & Company, Inc. was founded in 1915 by Samuel Shapiro who, at the age of twenty had three years of experience working for a customs broker. He opened an office with a "five dollar roll top desk," as he used to say, and "the rest was profit."

On August 11th, M. Sigmund Shapiro and Margie Shapiro, his daughter and President/CEO, celebrated the company's 95th year in business with over 150 of its customers, employees, local officials, family, and friends. Speakers included Mary Jane Norris, Maryland Port Authority; Michael Lovejoy, Baltimore Port Director, Customs and Border Protection; Rick Lidinsky, Federal Maritime Commission Chairman; Marianne Rowden, President and CEO of the American Association of Exporters and Importers; among others.

During the event, Michael Lovejoy awarded Shapiro the prestigious U.S. Customs Ensign Award while Mary Jane Norris presented "Sig," as he is known by his friends and colleagues, with the Commemorative Ship's Wheel. "It was such a pleasure to be part of this wonderful event and celebration of 95 years of dedicated service," noted Norris. "During the good economic times, and the not so good times, there are constants: the family, dedication to the companies they represent and a strong commitment to the Port of Baltimore. We look forward to the next 95 years and the company's continued success."



Michael Lovejoy, Baltimore Port Director, Customs and Border Protection, presents Sig Shapiro with the U.S. Customs Ensign Award.

Margie, the youngest of Sig's children, became the third generation to run the family business. At the tender age of 12, Margie recalls helping her father numerically sequence checks at the dining room table. Today, her goal remains to continue the legacy of old-fashioned customer service that began so many decades ago. "We are still grounded by the company's roots and the \$5 roll-top desk of which my grandfather was so proud," noted Margie. "We still honor its essence, its soul, and its philosophy: to serve as an extension of each of our customer's businesses, providing compliant, stellar, and proactive service. This will never change."

Many customers and employees have remained loyal to the company for decades. James Speitel, President of Peerless Hardware of Columbia, PA, has been doing business with Samuel Shapiro & Company, Inc. for over 17 years. "Samuel Shapiro has guided and protected our company through the years with their vast knowledge of the industry and their never ending patience," noted Speitel. "Samuel Shapiro has enabled our company to experience growth by introducing solutions and handling the details. Being a small company, we rely heavily on Samuel Shapiro to keep us not only informed but handle the necessary work to keep our shipments moving on time."

Today, looking back at the company's growth and development, Sig can't help but to be proud of what has been accomplished. "The company has grown in a steady and orderly way, with new clients and expanded business from the old ones," he noted. "Our horizons and markets have broadened appreciably and will continue to do so. Much of this is due to Margie whose love of the action permeates everything we do." Margie, who has been President and CEO since 2002, shares the same proud sentiment as her father. But both also share undeniable humility and gratitude for the support of their employees, vendors, and customers. "Nothing makes me prouder than to represent the third generation of this Baltimore-based family business," she noted. "My grandfather, and my father after him, committed their hearts and their lives to this company, its employees and the city of Baltimore." When asked to reminisce on the company's history and its 95 years of service, Sig tries to think of what hasn't been said before. "I think of my dad, Sam, and his five-dollar-roll-top desk that started it all in 1915," he noted. "To have three generations prevail in business is quite thrilling."

Samuel Shapiro & Company, Inc. has been serving the international trade community since 1915. It was founded in Baltimore, MD (headquarters) and has branch offices in Charleston, SC; Dulles, VA; Philadelphia, PA; Atlanta, GA; and Rosedale, NY. Its corporate mission is **"We Deliver. Problem Solved.™"**