

# POLAR BEVERAGES

Polar Beverages, New England's largest independent soft drink bottler, is a fourth-generation, family owned business that traces its roots back to the year 1882.

It all started with the J.G. Bieberbach Company, importers of seltzer water and bottlers of ginger ale and mineral water out of Worcester, Massachusetts.

In 1916, Denis M. Crowley, the great-grandfather of the present owners of Polar Beverages, bought the wholesale bottling division of the Bieberbach firm.

Two years later, in 1918, he purchased the Leicester Polar Spring Company, successor to the Arctic Polar Spring Company. The combined business became known as the Bieber Polar Ginger Ale Company.

In the early years of the company, sale of bottled water accounted for a large percent of its business. The addition of the Leicester Polar Spring Company was important to the business because its assets included the rights to the use of a spring in Spencer, Massachusetts, which provided an abundant source of pure spring water.

Because of the exceptional quality of the spring water, flavored soft drinks were added to the plant's production. Among the first flavors produced were Pale Dry Ginger Ale, Cola, Orange Soda and Root Beer.

The company headquarters remained at the site of the old Bieberbach firm, 113 Summer Street in Worcester. At various



times in the company's history, Polar Beverages were bottled in other Polar owned plants in Boston, Massachusetts and Hartford, Connecticut, while offices and warehouses were maintained in Springfield, Massachusetts.

In 1950, the third generation of the Crowley family, which included brothers Ralph D. Crowley, Sr., Edward D. Crowley, James C. Crowley and Denis M. Crowley, led the company. Entrepreneurial chairman Ralph Sr., took Polar's management reins.

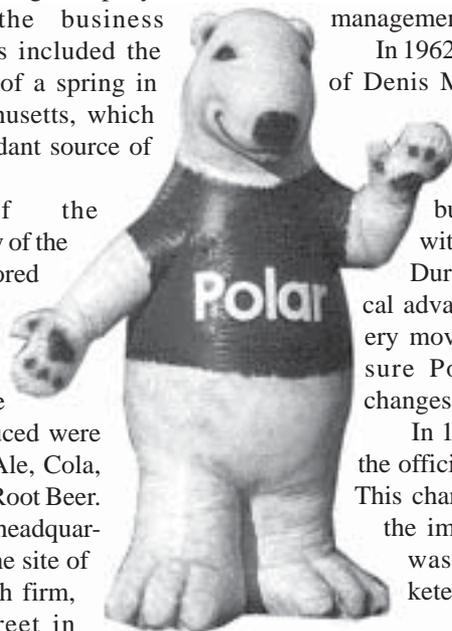
In 1962, Edward D. Crowley, son of Denis M. Crowley, and grandfather of present owners of Polar died. He was extremely active in the

business from its inception with his father to his death.

During his life time, technical advances in bottling machinery moved rapidly and he made sure Polar kept up with the changes.

In 1966, Polar Corp. became the official name of the company. This change was made to correct the impression that ginger ale was the only product marketed by the company.

In 1968, all operations consolidated into one plant,



**Orson the Polar Bear**

which is the present and primary place of operation, at Worcester, Massachusetts, a site strategically located in the center of the Northeast market-place.

In 1988, the fourth generation of Crowley's led by Ralph Crowley, Jr. and his brother Chris Crowley, led tighter consolidations in the family business. Polar, at the time, was a \$16 million entity, selling its own Polar sodas and water, as well as private-label soft drinks.

In 1992, after 25 years in the family business, Ralph Crowley, Jr. became President and CEO, and his brother Christopher Crowley became the Executive Vice President and Treasurer of Polar Beverages.

In December 1996, Polar Beverages acquired a long time competitor, Adirondack Beverages of Scotia, N.Y. The company manufactures products which includes the Adirondack, Waist Watcher and Clear & Natural brands, as well as a



number of private-label products in a 500,000 square-foot production facility.

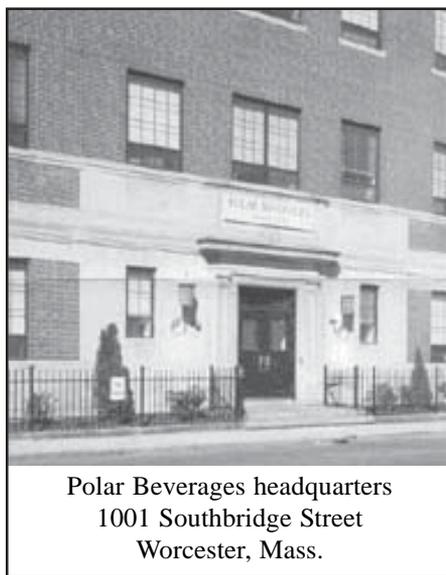
In 1998, the company growth required incremental warehouse space. After much thought and many attractive relocation offers among other New England areas, Polar decided to remain in Worcester, Massachusetts and renovate the Cookson Performance Plastics plant on Southbridge Street.

The renovation brought an old industrial site back to life, ensuring permanent employment for over 600 residents and bolstering the regions economy. The Worcester Chamber of Commerce awarded Polar with the Silver Hammer award for the renovation and restoration of the former plant.

In May 1999, Polar Beverages acquired Venture Distributing, the leading New Age distributor in the Boston marketplace. Venture's portfolio of strong door-opening New Age brands included brands such as Nantucket Nectars and Arizona. This acquisition allowed Polar cold drink access to over 3,500 pieces of equipment.

By the end of the 90s, Polar had completed twenty acquisitions, expanding into a five-division, "super-regional" organization. Polar's brands include Polar and Adirondack carbonated soft drinks and spring waters; DPSU national brands, i.e., Sunkist, 7UP, A&W and Royal Crown and New-Age brands such as Nantucket Nectars and Arizona.

In September 2001, Polar Beverages formed an alliance with another long time competitor, Cott Corporation. The new partnership is known as Northeast Retailer



Polar Beverages headquarters  
1001 Southbridge Street  
Worcester, Mass.

Brands, LLC. Polar gained a considerable amount of production volume, while contributing private-label customers including over a dozen grocery chains and warehouse clubs. All shared retail branded soft drinks continue to be produced at Polar's Massachusetts and New York bottling plants, each plant is about 500,000 square feet in size.

Polar Beverages continues to carry on their tradition since 1882.

