



### **A proud Houston company keeps the lights on for 100 years**

When 21-year-old John Fisk began providing electrician services out of his father's Houston Heights garage back in 1913—each day carrying his roll of wire, cutters and ladder by streetcar to his next installation—he probably never dreamed his company would help illuminate the Houston skyline for generations to come, let alone celebrate its fortunes a century later.

But this year Houston-based Fisk Electric Co. will do just that, turning the page on 10 decades of business in the books, and looking forward to the next 10.

Like many centenarians, Fisk has witnessed much during its lifetime: the Depression, recessions too numerous to name, two world wars, the oil boom (and bust), an unprecedented explosion of technology. Through it all, Fisk remained true to John's humble beginnings and pioneering marketing and business spirit that helped grow and sustain his company.

Even in the early years John Fisk advertised aggressively to get new customers, and expanded services to offer more to his increasing customer base. AC and DC power led the way for vertical transportation, and John Fisk rode the trend straight up, integrating vertical lifts, or elevators, into his business plan and introducing complementary electrical services he knew larger, taller office buildings would need.

By 1935 his company completed its most notable electrical installation to date: all wiring, air conditioning and elevators for the 570-foot San Jacinto Monument, built east of Houston to commemorate the Battle of San Jacinto. More notable contracts would follow, helping to define the Houston skyline: the 44-story Humble Building (then Houston's tallest skyscraper) in 1961, NASA's Mission Control in 1962, the Astrodome in 1965, the JPMorgan Chase Tower in 1982 and Minute Maid Park in 2000.

As Houston expanded and diversified, so did Fisk. Much business came from Houston's oil boom, but the forward-thinking Fisk wisely expanded beyond oil, branching out to war-funded municipal projects, eventually wiring and lighting one-third of NASA's campus southeast of Houston, and cutting a large swath of Houston's burgeoning medical center construction.

The industry took notice, and with time came notable projects farther from home: the Dallas Galleria, CityCenter Las Vegas, the Bridgeport (Conn.) Center, the new Boston Garden arena, hotels in Cairo, Egypt, and an entire university campus in Saudi Arabia.

Today Fisk has more than 1,350 employees in seven regional offices across the country, offering a broad range of electrical and technology services to the construction and building technology industries. While Fisk's original focus—electrical contracting—remains a major part of the company's business, the company has expanded its services to include structured communication cabling, audiovisual, electronic security, wireless LAN/WAN, networking services, telephony and management services.

So what's the secret to living for 100 years? Balanced and healthy living, conservative financial values, or paying homage to a rich culture and history? There's no doubt each played a role in the company's success. And, like a centenarian looking back over his long and storied life, there's no doubt John Fisk would be proud of the company he created and what it's become: evidence of a life well lived.