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Warrenton

S T Y L E

OCTOBER 2019

SOUTHERN
FAUQUIER
SPOTLIGHT

◀ RODNEY
SMITH
Chairman
of the Board,
Smith-Midland

SMITH- MIDLAND

THE FAUQUIER,
MULTI-MILLION
DOLLAR COMPANY'S
HUMBLE ROOTS AND
INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

{ SOUTHERN FAUQUIER Spotlight }

Highlighting the people, places, and businesses in **BEALETON • REMINGTON • MIDLAND • OPAL • GOLDVEIN** & points between



Smith-Midland's Chairman of the Board Rodney Smith (center) and his sons (from left to right) Jeremy, Easi-Set Building Products Manager; Matthew, Vice President of Sales and Marketing; Roderick, General Manager, Smith Carolina; and Ashely, CEO and President.

Smith-Midland Corporation

A Local Business with International Outreach

BY GARY CARROLL

Perhaps without even being aware, you probably have been protected by traffic barriers and sound minimization walls along I-66 built by Fauquier-based manufacturing company Smith-Midland Corporation. You may also have used prefabricated restroom facilities at nearby parks or visited schools or other public buildings constructed in part with walls and other architectural products built by the same company, which has its headquarters along Catlett Road near Midland.

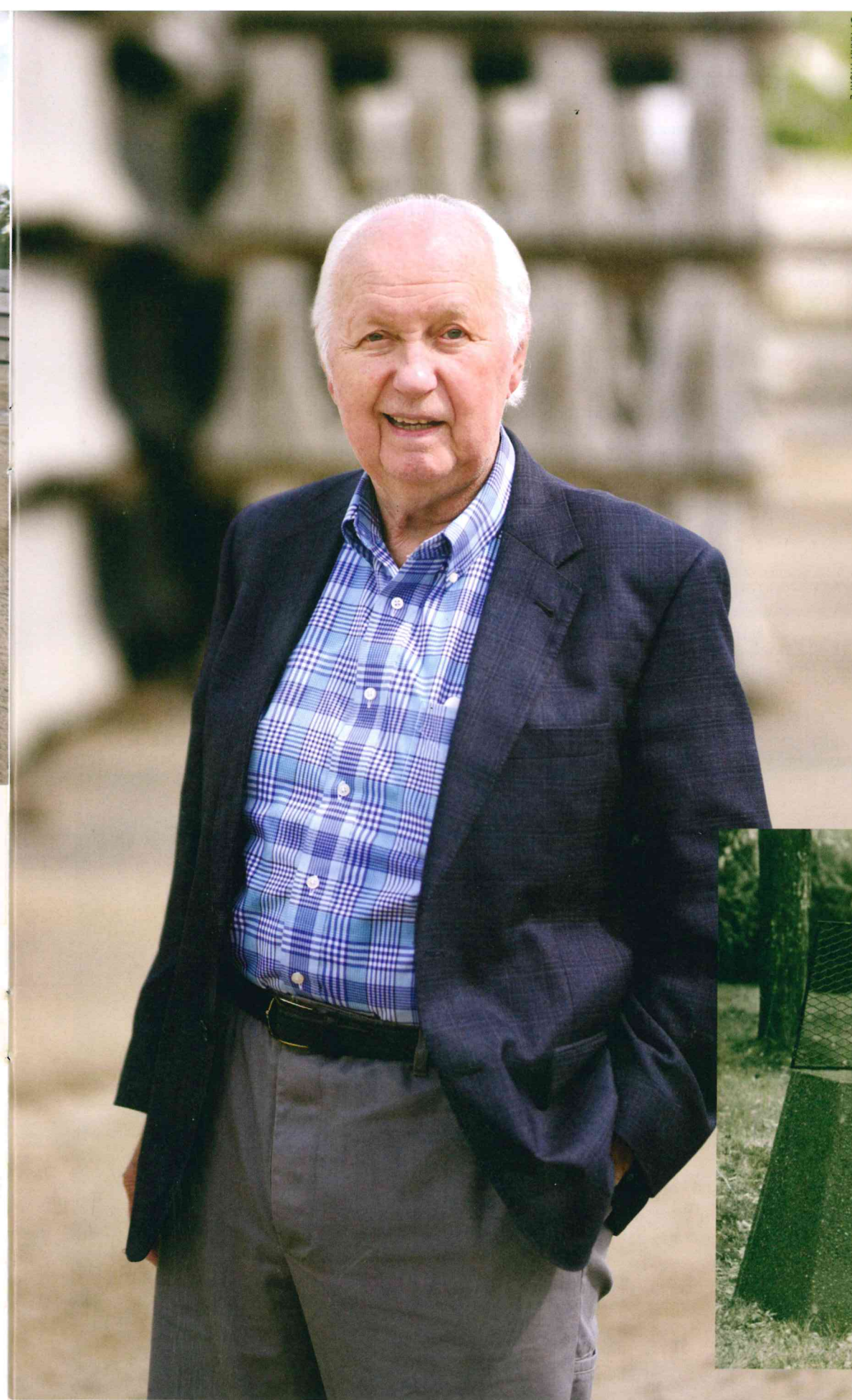
Chatting with Smith-Midland's Chairman of the Board Rodney Smith at the company headquarters, I was impressed by the fact that this is a company

born of a local farmer's need to control his cattle that has grown into a major successful enterprise — still family-run, community-focused, and concerned about its employees. Despite only a high school education at former Bealton High School, Rodney has excelled because of his own ingenuity, determination and hard work. When I asked Rodney why he has been so successful, he said simply, "I dream up something and make it happen."

Smith-Midland and its predecessor, Smith Cattleguard Company, have been making these dreams come true by building and selling prefabricated products for almost 60 years, during which

it has earned a national and international reputation for innovation and high quality products. Its history clearly verifies the company motto — "Attention to Detail is the religion of success."

It all started simply enough when David Smith, a local farmer and father of current owner Rodney Smith, decided he was tired of repeatedly opening and closing gates surrounding cattle pastures to keep his cows from escaping. The solution was installing into the ground at the gate's opening a simple but cleverly designed frame with round bars on top that cattle hooves could not cross but that could withstand the heavy weight



LEFT: Smith-Midland's Chairman of the Board Rodney Smith posing in front of their concrete barrier products at their Midland plant; wearing his FFA jacket in high school (below); showing off one of his products in early 60s (bottom).



of farm machinery and vehicles. With very little advertising—the older Smith thought advertising was like bragging—Mr. Smith sold 12 cattle guards to local farmers in 1960, and 60 the following year.

As young Rodney Smith became more involved in Smith Cattleguard, his ingenuity and talent for marketing served as a catalyst for the company's expansion. In 1966 the company designed and started marketing cattle feed droughts and in 1968 the company produced its first brochure, designed by Rodney himself. Two years later the company's expansion prompted a move to its current 20-acre location on Catlett Road, and in 1971 Rodney took over leadership of the company. One of his first major contracts he negotiated after becoming chairman of the board involved creating road barriers for Washington, D.C.'s new Whitehurst Freeway, then under construction.

The company proudly displays a wall chronology of its successes and expansion over the years in the large company break room at its Midland headquarters:

- 1975 Development of a precast home
- 1977 Commonwealth of Virginia accepted Smith's newly designed traffic safety barriers
- 1979 Expanded by opening new office in Reidsville, North Carolina
- 1980 Rodney Smith named small

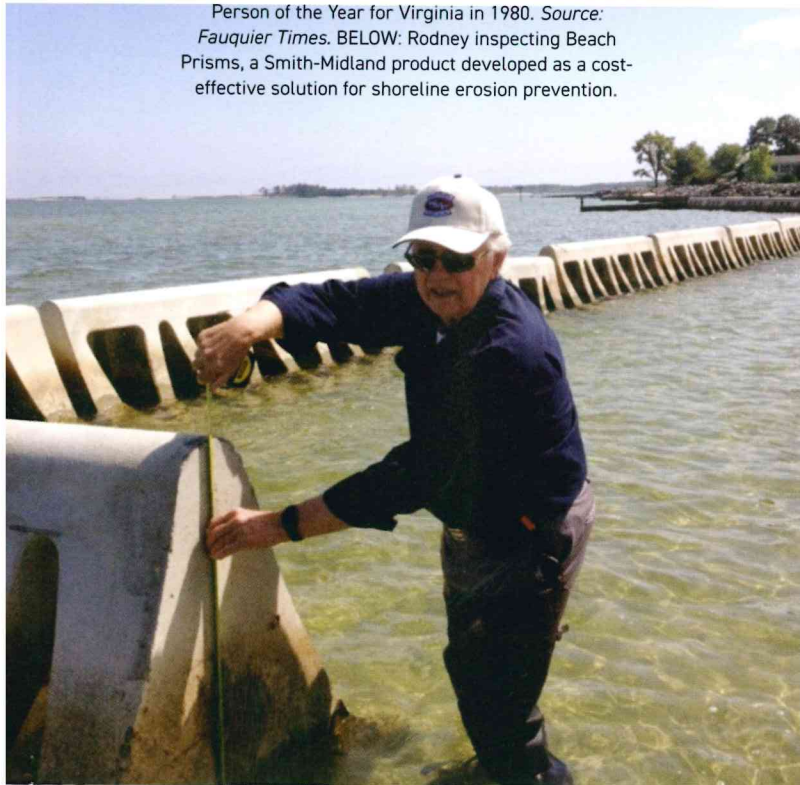
business person of the year in Virginia

- 1982 Construction of Liberty Bank using pre-cast walls
- 1985 Transformed from Smith Cattleguard to Smith-Midland Corp.
- 1993 Provided JJ hook barriers for Presidential inauguration in D. C.
- 1993 ACI award for excellence for Smith-Midland's role in construction of Reston Town Center
- 2000 Provided Slenderwall panels for 42nd Street renovation in Manhattan
- 2002 Blue Ridge restrooms for parks
- 2003 Provided retaining walls for Pentagon repairs/construction
- 2010 Received award for I-66 roadway panels.

When this chronology is updated, it will need to include establishing a new office in Columbia, S.C. and licensing of Smith-Midland products in a number of foreign countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Canada, and Chile. Rodney says he has traveled to some 60 foreign countries for business or pleasure, or both.

Smith-Midland has also been a major contributor to the community, and Mr. Smith sits on the Board of Visitors for Bridgewater College.

RIGHT: Rodney received the honor of Small Business Person of the Year for Virginia in 1980. Source: Fauquier Times. BELOW: Rodney inspecting Beach Prisms, a Smith-Midland product developed as a cost-effective solution for shoreline erosion prevention.



President Of Smith Cattleguard

Rodney Smith Selected 1980 Small Businessman In State

Rodney I. Smith, president of Smith Cattleguard at Midland, has been selected "Small Business Person of the Year" for Virginia.

Smith was selected by Region III Richmond Advisory Council of the US Small Business Administration (SBA). He was given an award by Council chairman B. B. Taylor Jr. in ceremonies April 17 in Virginia Beach. The ceremonies were attended also by US Sen. Harry Flood Byrd Jr. (I-Winchester) and by Norfolk Delegate Robert E. Washington.

Smith was selected "because of his outstanding accomplishments in business and many contributions to his community," said SBA district director R. P. Kuttenuker. "He exemplifies the imagination, initiative, independence and integrity by which the American Small Business Person makes a vital contribution to the nation, the economy and the free enterprise system."

The Warrenton-Fauquier Chamber of Commerce plans to honor Smith at a luncheon meeting May 8 at Fauquier Springs Country Club.

Smith Cattleguard, a successful precast concrete manufacturing firm, was founded in 1961 on a farm near Midland by David G. Smith, father of Rodney Smith. The company's first product, an all-concrete cattleguard, has become the largest selling cattleguard in the United States. It is manufactured in six Smith

The list of local community organizations supported by the company includes Midland Christian Academy, Wakefield Country Day School, Fauquier Community Theatre, Boys and Girls Club of Fauquier, the Fauquier County Fair, Habitat for Humanity, and Fauquier County Public Schools. It also currently employs some 150 workers living in the area.

Smith-Midland became a publicly traded company in 1995 and currently is valued at almost \$60 million. The family is still very involved with the company — in addition to Rodney as Chairman of the Board the team also includes his four sons: Ashely as CEO and President, Matthew as Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Jeremy as Easi-Set Building Products Manager, and Roderick as General Manager Smith Carolina (the North Carolina office). For more information on the company, its products, and job opportunities, you may access its comprehensive website, www.Smith-Midland.com. ❖



SMITH CATTLEGUARD president Rodney I. Smith has been chosen Virginia's Top Small Businessman of the Year. Founded in 1961, the company has grown from a one-man operation to a firm with a 57-member staff.

plants and is sold in at least 37 states.

Rodney Smith, who soon became the fledgling company's moving force, put together a top management team that regularly brings new and innovative products to the market place. Because of his success in developing new pre-cast concrete products, he was elected President of the 600-member National Precast Concrete Association for 1980.

Smith Cattleguard products have become "the accepted standard for the precast industry," said Kuttenuker.

Among the innovative products developed at Smith Cattleguard, are the precast concrete cattleguard in 1961, an electrically heated automatic stock waterer in 1963, underground utility vaults in 1965, precast concrete transformer pads in

1966, a patented underground precast conduit in 1973, a prototype precast single family dwelling in 1975, a patented design for concrete highway safety barriers in 1977, a precast concrete utility building (patent pending) in 1978 and a precast fireplace in 1979.

The precast concrete highway safety barrier developed in 1977 by Smith Cattleguard has proven to be the most effective barrier ever developed. The design has been approved for use in six states, Canada and Belgium. Plans are to extend its use to all 50 states and to 20 countries. (The barrier is used on Interstate 66 which passes through northern Fauquier County.)

Since its beginnings in 1961, Smith Cattleguard has grown from a company of one (David G. Smith) to a firm having an administrative, production and marketing staff of 57 persons. The firm operates from a new 4000-square-foot office building with a large, modern concrete batching facility at Midland.

"Although Smith Cattleguard Company currently is defined as a small business, the firm is well on its way to becoming one of the nation's successful big businesses," Kuttenuker said.

Rodney Smith is married to the former Hazel Dettweiler. They have four sons.