

On the eve of Managing Directors Paul Newman's 70th birthday, we look at his Charcroft journey.

Paul started his journey in 1974 from his study at home in Sturmer, Essex, where he set up a company buying and selling electronic components. The business was christened 'Charcroft Electronics', after the house in which it was set up. The company went from strength to strength and after moving into the garage for more space, within a number of years it also outgrew this. Paul began looking for new premises, and saw an advert in a newspaper for the Dol-Y-Coed hotel in the picturesque town of Llanwrtyd Wells. Although he had never been to Llanwrtyd before, the hotel immediately caught his attention.



Paul went to view the hotel, and immediately fell in love with the building. A listed building, believed to date from 1535, the hotel was steeped in history. On July 1st, 1985, Charcroft Electronics moved into its new home. For the first 18 months Charcroft co-existed with the original hotel business, where Paul had just one room as his office, and an old bathroom as a storeroom. But as the business continued to grow, Paul decided to cease trading as a hotel and focus on the Electronics company.

Despite his original vow that he only ever wanted to buy and sell, and had absolutely no interest in manufacturing, in 2003 Paul was offered an opportunity to acquire the manufacturing facility for Ashcroft ceramic capacitors, at the same time as being requested by Vishay Precision Group to establish a resistors manufacturing facility. It seemed like fate, so Charcroft began its first foray into manufacturing when the Ashcroft business was relocated to the Dol-Y-Coed. Charcroft was then approved as a Vishay Precision Centre, which was the start of a relationship that still stands strong today.

The manufacturing element of the business was a rapid success, with a turn-over that grew tenfold within a few years. With this in mind, Charcroft then went on to acquire the Mica business from Oxley in 2004, and the transfer of the 4800 series from Welwyn in 2006. 2009 saw the addition of Custom RC Models and the Flying Leads service to the repertoire, and in 2014 Tab components was acquired. The manufacturing business has seen a positive year on year growth, and continues to be an important element of the business, despite Paul's initial reservations!

Charcroft Electronics has come a long way since its humble beginnings in Paul's study – with over 40 staff, and boasting a full order book, excellent relationships with both customers and suppliers, and a great reputation, Charcroft continues to grow and develop in a competitive market. Much of this success is down to Paul and his vision and drive for his company. The dedication to the company is also reflected in the strong links forged with the local community of Llanwrtyd Wells, with Charcroft actively supporting many local causes, such as the First Responder unit, the local Eisteddfod and the local school.

Paul has a fantastic relationship with his staff, and is known for being extremely approachable and friendly. He is still actively involved in the day to day business, visiting customers and suppliers, attending conferences and exhibitions, and as Paul is fundamentally a salesman, he takes a great interest in our order book!

Amidst all the successes that Charcroft has celebrated, Paul's most memorable and treasured event was the royal visit of 2010. Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall came to visit Charcroft Electronics on July 1st, 2010 – 25 years to the day that the business had moved to the Dol-Y-Coed!

Although Paul's favourite quote may be "times are hard, but I'm struggling by", the continued success of Charcroft, and the high esteem that all the Charcroft family past and present place on Paul, shows that times are actually very good indeed.

