Offering the full spectrum of stonework

O&G Industries has invested in state-of-the-art technology to create a broad range of finished stonework — from granite countertops to ornately carved limestone and landscape materials

by Michael Reis

In June of 2003, O&G Industries, Inc.’s Masonry Division opened a state-of-the-art stone fabrication plant in Beacon Falls, CT. Equipment at the facility includes two Infinity CAD-driven stone profiling systems from Park Industries of St. Cloud, MN.

Long established as a leading supplier of masonry products in Connecticut, O&G Industries, Inc. took a bold step in June of 2003 when its Masonry Division opened a state-of-the-art stone fabrication plant in Beacon Falls, CT. And the move has paid solid dividends for the company, as it is able to produce a broad range of stone products for its high-end clientele.

Even before opening the plant, O&G Industries had made a name for itself as a major supplier of stone products for upscale residential projects in the region. The company has four
showrooms — referred to as “Earth Products Showcases” — throughout Connecticut, with locations in Bridgeport, Danbury, Stamford and Waterbury. Each showroom features elegantly appointed natural stone and tile product vignettes, including countertops, bath interiors, fireplace surrounds and mantles, carved items, landscape stone, patio products and pool copings and granite sculptures. However, prior to 2003, the company’s stoneworking facilities were primarily for splitting and sawing, and much of its fabrication work was

The Infinity units, which are programmed using MasterCAM software, run 24 hours a day/seven days a week.

For countertop production, the company has a Prussiani Oceania CNC stoneworking center from IGE Solutions, Inc. of Jupiter, FL.

Equipment also includes a bridge saw from Sawing Systems of Knoxville, TN.
outsourced — mostly to firms in Canada and Indiana. By building its own large-scale plant, O&G Industries was able to directly control production schedules and quality. “Our goal is to provide customers the opportunity to use one source for their product selection and custom profiling requirements,” explained Bob Oneglia, Vice Chairman of O&G Industries. “The fabrication center offers a unique opportunity to our customers. It allows them to observe their project in process, right here in central Connecticut.”

**Equipping the plant**

The fabrication and distribution center in Beacon Falls is 80,000 square feet in size, and from the onset, O&G Industries knew it would be investing in the latest generation of stoneworking machinery. “The concept this company embraces is service, and the business has been built on that concept in every aspect,” explained Anita Parzuchowski, Marketing Director for O&G Industries, Masonry Division. “The technology was built around that concept, and it is an accelerator to that end.”

O&G Industries also had to ensure that the new plant would be able to produce a high volume of stonework from the very beginning, explained Patrick Schmitt, Facilities Director for O&G Industries, Masonry Division. “We were already selling [architectural work] through our retail
stores, and when we started the shop, the equipment needed to be enough to meet our demand for countertops and cubic work,” he said. “We had a name to uphold, and it has really worked out well.”

**Equipment at the facility includes two Infinity CAD-driven stone profiling systems from Park Industries of St. Cloud, MN. These units can create curved and straight stone profiles such as archways,**

One of the most recent investments has been a Flow waterjet, which is used for radius cutting.

**In addition to using advanced technology, skilled artisans help create ornate stonework.**

The company imports a great deal of material to meet consumer demands, and it once imported an entire shipload of stone.

**Some stoneworking operations — such as splitting — take place at other locations.**
copings, column caps, surrounds, sills and other architectural products. The programmable sawing operation lets operators program the desired stone dimensions, and the Infinity saws or shapes the material unattended. "When we bought the first Infinity, we set it up with 75 feet of track because we knew we would be adding a second," Schmitt said, adding that the machines run 24 hours a day/seven days a week. They are programmed using MasterCAM software, and they can display simulations of the operations to be performed as well as the estimated time of the process, waste factor and other information.

For countertop production, the company has a Prussiani Oceania CNC stoneworking center from IGE Solutions, Inc. of Jupiter, FL. This machine was designed specifically for the stone industry, and according to Schmitt, programming and operation of the machine was simple to master. This was aided by the fact that the company already gained a working knowledge of CNC technology operation with the Infinity equipment. Tooling for the Oceania is also provided by IGE Solutions.

Counter top templating is done using a Faro Arm, which creates digital templates, and the corresponding data is fed to the Prussiani CNC machine.

Other equipment includes a Park
Yukon bridge saw, a Sawing Systems bridge saw, a Park Pro Edge III edge profiling machine, a large-scale water treatment system, dust collection units and various hand tools. One of the most recent investments has been a Flow waterjet, which is used for radius cutting.

The Yukon saw and waterjet both have dual tables to minimize downtime while workpieces are loaded and unloaded.

A total of 26 people are currently working in the plant, and some stoneworking operations — such as splitting — take place at other locations, where 16 additional workers are employed. Schmitt can
oversee all of these operations from his office using a sophisticated video camera program that broadcasts to his computer.

Schmitt also explained that he carefully tracks production from each machine, obtaining the hourly rate and costs to run each piece of equipment.

The company imports a tremendous amount of material, reaching a level of one container per day. “With our clients, you have to stock products,” Schmitt said. “People don’t want you ordering material for them.” As an example, he cited that the company, which once imported an entire shipload of stone, currently has approximately 500,000 square feet of flagging in stock.

According to the company, the range of stonework available with O&G...
Industries is driven, in part, to the employees they hire and train. “Our CNC specialist’s extensive program knowledge is particularly useful in problem solving, ensuring that each project is completed per the design,” Schmitt said. O&G works to retain employees with a competitive wage and benefit program, and Schmitt estimated that 90% of the shop workers have been with the company in some capacity for over 10 years.

Pool copings and paving are another specialty of the company.