



Proferro has been a leading player in the foundry world for over seventy years. And central to its rich history are the concepts of innovation and emphasis on the importance of quality.

The history of Proferro goes back to 1936, when the Picanol NV Weefautomaten company was founded by the Belgian industrialist Charles Steverlynck. The company originated from the former Gieterij en Werkhuizen Van Steenkiste and initially employed some 50 people. That same year, Picanol NV

Weefautomaten started with the production of a new automatic loom that was designed by the Spanish engineer Jaime Picañol. The castings were used for Picanol weaving machines.

Following the difficult years endured during the war, the management decided to once again set up the foundry and use new shock forming machines. This enabled the company to mould the sand under pressure and break it out quickly after casting. By 1948, the foundry was equipped with a new laboratory for mechanical, metallurgical and chemical research and during this period Picanol became one of the first companies to use synthetic sand for its foundry moulds. Over the course of 1954 the company acquired a low-noise mould making machine and a new molding line for the foundry and just four years later the smelting furnaces were equipped with a cooling system on the outside wall.

In the early 1960s management decided to move to a new location - in the industrial zone of Ypres. In 1962, the company invested in setting up its own foundry and Picanol opted for the most modern casting technique at that time - specifically the high-pressure method. In October 1966, the new foundry was put into operation and just one month later, one-fifth of the cast iron output was being produced in the new foundry. At that time, it was equipped with four cupola ovens and a Taccone and Sandslinger molding machine.

In 1970, the foundry worked on its own production for two-thirds of the time, with the remaining one-third being for external customers, such as Ford Tractor Antwerp and the German ZF group. In 1975, the construction of the new core-making workshop commenced and by June of the following year the move from the old foundry in the Polenlaan to the new foundry in the K. Steverlyncklaan occurred. The old foundry in the Polenlaan closed at the end of June 1966.

The 1980s were characterized by a further growth in external customers. With a capacity exceeding its own needs, the company produced amongst other things serial castings (gearboxes) for trucks. In 1989, the foundry division was split off from the other activities and made into a separate company - Proferro NV. This was because two-thirds of sales of the foundry were realized outside of Picanol.

In 1994, Proferro achieved its ISO:9002 certification. In the following year, a new smelting installation was put into use. This was a modern duplex installation with an oven capacity of 18 to 27 tons/hour. In 1996, Proferro began with the production and sale of nodular cast iron in order to capitalize on the changing market demand.

In 2007, an ambitious investment plan for the renewal and growth of the company was approved, which amongst other things involved the construction of a new molding line in the existing production site in Ypres. Through the investment of 16 million euros spread over the period 2008-2010, Proferro is aiming to respond to the demand for larger; more technically difficult parts and therefore considerably expanding its market potential with existing customers and customers/sectors for which it is not yet active. The new molding line became operational from the beginning of 2010.

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