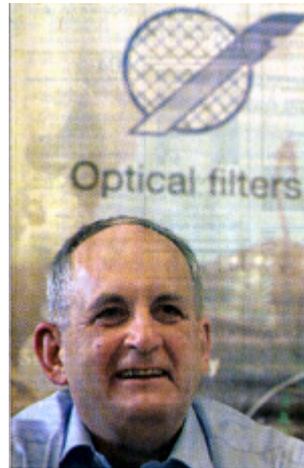


## MEADVILLE LANDS NEW BUSINESS AND JOBS FOR AREA

*Optical Filters Announces Plans for first US Manufacturing Facility, Ferry to be Company's General Manager*

### NEWS RELEASE

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The area gains a high-tech manufacturing facility based in the UK which has announced commitment to establish its first US based operations right here in Meadville.

Officials from UK-based **Optical Filters** have formally announced plans to expand its operations and create a new U.S. based manufacturing facility in Meadville, PA. The company specializes in the design and manufacture of optical filters and emi shielding windows. Company representatives also announced that Susan Ferry, current executive director of the Meadville Area Industrial Commission, will be its General Manager, its first new hire.

**Optical Filters Ltd** is a privately owned company and was founded 15 years ago. Its focus is on the design and manufacture of optical filters for display enhancement and emi shielding. The target markets include avionics, public information display systems, test and measurement equipment, marine equipment, MRI scanning room and military end-uses.

The Company has an annual turnover of around \$4.5m of which the North American market accounts for some 25%. They currently employ 45 people in the UK and envisage that their new site in Meadville will initially provide five full-time skilled jobs and a further 40 to 60 within the next five years.

“We are delighted that Susan will be joining us,” said Optical Filter’s Chairman, Michael Dent. “We recognized from the start that a major factor in our expansion in the USA would be the recruitment of a high quality General Manager to guide and develop the US operation. Her wealth of operational experience and expert knowledge of industrial development makes her an ideal person for this position. She will provide the stability and leadership to guide the

development of our Meadville site and provide the highest levels of customer service for the North American market.”

Dent goes on to explain the decision to locate Optical Filters in the Meadville area, “We looked at three locations in the United States and chose Meadville for a number of reasons. Firstly, we were impressed with the diversity and standard of manufacturing skill in the area, which is key to our business and secondly the tremendous assistance from MAIC, who played a key role in our final decision. They were extremely professional, very helpful and able to facilitate meetings with the right people from other public and private bodies as well as coordinating our search for suitable business premises.

“On our many visits to the area, we also found that the openness and willingness of the private business community to help a prospective new manufacturer was somewhat unique and certainly added to its attractiveness.

"I'd like to personally thank Don Hester, owner of MAJR Products, for bringing this opportunity to Meadville" said Susan Ferry, Executive Director of the Meadville Area Industrial Commission. "It was Don's business relationship with the company that brought them here. Don should be commended for being such a strong ambassador for our community. This project is a great example of how a community can make a difference. Success is built upon teamwork."

We are pleased to have been able to provide location assistance and project support for such a wonderful business. This was truly a team effort. As our team members from PMI, the Industrial Resource Center, Gannon SBDC and the local Career Link met with representatives from Optical Filters and learned more about our opportunities and workforce and skilled training, I believe they became convinced that Meadville would be a solid investment for their company. We would also like to thank the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Meadville and the Northwest Planning Commission for providing financing assistance for the project as well. Ferry also praised Meadville Mayor Richard Friedberg and Senator Bob Robbins for their personal support of the project.

"The company had a very specific timeframe for this project. They wanted to be in operation in a very short amount of time," explained Ferry. "We assisted the company with demographic and community information, providing financing and location assistance and helped to identify potential sites so they could get moving quickly".

“I am very pleased to have the opportunity to join the company in the capacity of General Manager, it is a very positive step and a wonderful opportunity to further my current career goals while helping to achieve growth within this new U.S. facility. I'm certain it will be both rewarding and challenging.”

The company will initially occupy 6,000 sq. ft. of space in the former United Tool building located on Terrace Street Extension in the City of Meadville.

"We are very grateful that this company, which could have chosen anywhere in the United States to place this expansion, chose Meadville. This is an outstanding opportunity for our area" stated Ferry.