



Glen/Mar Construction's founders, Glen and Mary Brown, started the full-service general contractor firm in 1985. The company, based in Clackamas, Ore., works on projects primarily in the federal, health care, institutional, and commercial markets.

Glen/Mar provided general contractor expertise in the development of the \$18-million Bakersfield National Cemetery, near Bakersfield, Calif., for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Glen/Mar's scope of work included the construction of a 3,500-square-foot administration building (pictured here).



GLEN/MAR TURNS SMALL-BUSINESS DESIGNATION INTO A DISTINCTION

A VIETNAM WAR HERO'S SELFLESS EXAMPLE LIVES ON THROUGH COMPANY'S LEGACY

by Steve Freeman

Going from surviving in foxholes to laying foundations—it's more than a life's journey, it's a company's history.

After suffering physical injuries during his tour of duty fighting in the Vietnam War, Glen Brown returned to the U.S. with a new mission—to find employment to support his family. The Oklahoma native worked with his brothers in the drywall business and

became a sole proprietor; later, Glen and his wife, Mary, decided to launch into more comprehensive construction work and founded Glen/Mar Construction Inc. (Glen/Mar) in 1985.

Although Glen eventually succumbed to his Vietnam battleground wounds in 2010, for 25 years the decorated war veteran served at the helm of a company that has landed numerous projects in public, veteran, and high-profile federal sectors. Glen's life story is one of



This VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System health clinic in Reno, Nev., offers cardiology, oncology and pulmonary specialty services for military veterans. Glen/Mar oversaw construction of the 27,000-square-foot, steel-and-concrete facility, which achieved LEED Silver status.

determination and resourcefulness, qualities not unlike those demanded of a military soldier.

Military Service Redefines The Family Business

In the early years, the couple struggled to balance operating their fledgling company out of their home while also raising two young children. The full-service general contractor firm had only a few employees and practically no capital or credit; however, Glen and Mary shared a strong desire to see the venture succeed. When Glen/Mar first started, the work amounted to residential, multi-family and small commercial projects. The business expanded over the years as larger-scale construction and renovation projects were acquired. In 1999, the Browns secured an office in Clackamas, Ore., where the company continued to grow and change in defining ways.

Around 2004, Glen/Mar entered into a newly defined small business designation—the Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) program. Glen’s company is one of only 5,000 Veterans Affairs (VA)-certified SDVOSB firms in the nation.

The firm’s eligibility for SDVOSB status stemmed from Glen’s unfortunate military combat injuries. Glen survived an explosion during a battle in Vietnam, but the left side of his body suffered from burns, lacerations, and embedded shrapnel that was never removed due to potential life-threatening complications. As a direct result of his wartime wounds, Glen passed away in December 2010. The company that he built continues now under the leadership of his wife of 37 years and their son, Michael “Andy” Brown, who joined Glen/Mar full-time after graduating from the University of Oregon in 1999.

Mary, who assumed her husband’s role as President of Glen/Mar, holds a distinction for her leadership position. “We believe ours is the first situation in which a surviving spouse of a military veteran has been verified and certified in the VA SDVOSB program,” she says. Mary and Andy, who is Vice President of the company, have continued to expand the business, and also steer it toward supporting charitable causes in honor of Glen’s sacrifice for his country.

Today, Glen/Mar works with key local, state and federal agencies, such as the Department of



Glen/Mar's work with the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System included construction of a mental health outpatient clinic. The \$5-million, 15,000-square-foot, two-story medical office building features a glass curtain wall and an architectural metal panel system for the exterior finish, a fully adhered single-ply roof, and glass-tower open areas.

Veterans Affairs, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Agriculture, the General Services Administration, and the Bureau of Land Management. Its portfolio of projects includes hospitals for veterans, schools, national cemeteries and office buildings. Glen/Mar's staff now consists of 40 employees who work on projects all along the West Coast, including California, Nevada, Washington, Alaska, Idaho and Hawaii.

The Federal Contractor Years

The federal arena was not new to Glen/Mar. Starting in 2005, the company shifted its resources to go after civil contracts. According to Andy, the switch was demanding, and the paperwork is tenfold greater than that of the private sector. All work and workers must be bonded as well, and that

can be a roadblock for fiscally strapped companies.

"Not only do you need to understand construction, but you also need to understand government bureaucracy," Andy says. To assist in these efforts, the company employs office staff specifically dedicated to subcontractor relations and compliance.

Glen/Mar also became an

expert at managing subcontractors, which is vital for federal contracts. The company self-performs 15 to 20 percent of project labor and subcontracts the rest—mostly mechanical, electrical and plumbing work—to proven and preferred subcontractors.

"The secret of our success is timing and hard work," Andy shares. "We were one of the first construction firms to enter the SDVOSB marketplace, and we became very good at the work we performed."

Without even realizing it, many people in the Northwest rely on or visit sites that Glen/Mar helped develop. Whether it's constructing a new major health care facility, repurposing existing structures, or fulfilling the outdoor design of a cemetery or park, the company's distinguished list of projects validates its solid



Work performed by Glen/Mar Construction in the \$10.6-million expansion of Willamette National Cemetery involved building three columbarium walls. The walls, clad in granite stone, have nearly 10,000 niches designed to hold cremation urns.

reputation in the industry—one that meets even demanding federal expectations.

Some of Glen/Mar’s projects of note include:

- The VA Northern California Health Care System’s new, 12,500-square-foot brain injury research building.
- The Bakersfield National Cemetery, in Arvin, Calif., an \$18-million project that included construction of an administrative building and all infrastructure.
- An expansion of the John Day Lock and Dam in Oregon.
- The renovation of a United States Air Force facility in Sunnyvale, Calif., for the Palo Alto Health Care System.
- A 27,000-square-foot, \$8.7-million medical office facility for the VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System in Reno, Nev.
- A 10-acre expansion of the Willamette National Cemetery in Portland, Ore.
- The removal of a 30-ton cableway, used in construction, at Shasta Dam on California’s Shasta Lake.

A Labor of Love Through Charity

Glen and Mary built their company on a foundation consisting of hard work, integrity and compassion. Success for them was not defined just by profitability. The couple also looked for opportunities to perform acts of service for their clients, and also for the communities in which projects were located.



Members of Glen/Mar Construction, Inc. accept an award in this 2014 photo. Pictured (from left to right) are Michael “Andy” Brown, Vice President; Mary Brown, President; and Dale Kuykendall, Construction Operations Manager.

After Glen’s passing, Glen/Mar continued that legacy. The company created memorial funds to contribute to the Portland VA Medical Center in Glen’s name, in honor of his commitment to fellow veterans.

Another example of giving back to veterans includes Glen/Mar’s involvement in building the new USO Northwest Portland Center at the Portland International Airport. This visitor center, which opened in 2014, specifically caters to military personnel and their families traveling through the Portland, Ore., region. Glen/Mar generously donated supplies and expertise to this project, including soliciting the participation of licensed professionals to perform drywall, painting, electrical, plumbing and HVAC work.

In these instances and others, Glen’s selfless example lives on through the acts of his family and his company. As Glen/Mar soldiers on, it will undoubtedly inspire others to also go above and beyond the call of duty to meet the needs of clients and communities.

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