The Schott Group began a new chapter in its long history with a move five decades ago that made Mainz its second home base. After only eleven months of construction time, the new glassworks was officially opened in 1952 with a crucible casting for optical glass. An event held at the end of January 2002, this casting process was re-enacted, marking the beginning of a number of anniversary events set to take place in 2002. The term “crucible” is the technical designation for the porcelain vessel used in melting the glass.

Know-how is the basis of our market leadership

The success of Schott is now based on a wide range of products. Nonetheless, optical glass continues to play a vital role in the history of the company. “Schott’s international leadership in glass production goes back to the 19th century and rests in particular on its ability to produce optical glass better than anyone else,” says Dr. Leopold von Heimendahl, spokesman for the present management of Schott Glas. In 1884, the chemist Otto Schott founded his glassworks in Jena with the aim of providing a scientific basis to glass production technology, which had up until then been merely empirically based.

Transformation into a technology group

“We were looking for a mid-sized city like Jena that was centrally located with good transportation links and also had a university,” said Erich Schott, managing director and son of the firm’s founder, when subsequently explaining the reasons for the choice of location. It was certainly a big benefit for Mainz. Schott is now the city’s largest industrial employer with 4,600 employees and 200 apprentices.

In this anniversary year, departure fever is once again in the air. Schott is accelerating its transformation into an international technology group. Microlithography, telecommunications, and photovoltaic are just some of Schott’s new areas of operation. The production of optical glass, which today comes in more than 110 varieties, still accounts for 20 percent of the total group sales revenues of €2 billion.

On May 10, 1952, Schott opened its new main glassworks in Mainz with a crucible casting for optical glass. This event was re-enacted for the 50th anniversary celebrations.