

Newsmaker Interview

Bob Stenger Talks to Coal News

Coal News: We appreciate you talking to readers of Coal News as you celebrate your 90th Anniversary. Heartiest Congratulations Bob! I have had the pleasure of knowing you for a while but our readers would be very interested in your background and how you came to be President of The Cincinnati Mine Machinery Co.

Bob Stenger: Thank you, Bill, for this opportunity, and congratulations on your ten year anniversary! My brothers and I started working at Queen City Steel Treating, our sister company, when we were 16; loading and unloading furnaces. In 1972, after time in the Coast Guard, my father suggested I go to work at Cincinnati Mine Machine Company, since I had 2 older brothers at Queen City. I started running drill presses and milling machines. I worked my way up through various positions in the organization before becoming President twenty-two years ago.

Coal News: Tell us please about the long history of the company, your family involvement, management team and employees.

Bob Stenger: My grandfather started Queen City Steel Treating in 1922 and purchased Cincinnati Mine Machinery in 1924, at that time a very young company. He hired a gentleman by the name of Armin Bruestle in 1929 and the two of them laid the ground work for who we are today. Mr. Bruestle retired after 65 years running the business! My father, after serving in the Navy in World War II, graduated from the University of Cincinnati Engineering College and went on to run the Queen City Steel Treating Company and served as Chairman of Cincinnati Mine Machinery Company, overseeing our operations.

Back to the 70's, while working in the shop, I met Ron Paoello, our current Sales & General Manager, and Tim Jent, our current Production Manager. We have worked together for 40 years in various operations. Brother Bill joined the company in 1987 and currently serves as Treasurer. Randy Morris joined us almost 20 years ago and heads up engineering.

Our direct sales force is outstanding and has been the eyes and ears for



us for many, many years. Phil Page, Nathan Hickman, Paul Sanders, Kevin Clark and recently hired Jason Bratcher are devoted to the principles of Cincinnati Mine Machinery and eternal friends.

We have long term relationships with our agents in the West and South United States as well as in Mexico and Canada. We set up our own sales and distribution company in South Africa in 1998 after doing business with agents since the late 1930's. We took that same template and established Cincinnati Mine Machinery Australia in 2004 after 60 years of working through agents.

Our employees here in Cincinnati, many here over 25 years, are dedicated hard working & every bit as much a part of the Cincinnati Mine Machinery family as anyone. They have been instrumental, and continue to be, in our success as a company. Their input and contributions are critical for our future growth.

The 4th generation has arrived, my two sons, Bobby and Tony, joined the company 10 years ago much the same way that I started. Today Bobby is focusing on Sales and

Marketing, while Tony is hard at work in Manufacturing and Purchasing.

Coal News: Safety is of paramount importance in our industry. Bob, please tell us your views about safety both within and outside your company.

Bob Stenger: Well Bill, these days, I don't think you can remain in business without a focus on safety. You know it has to become a way of life – to work safely, whether it be in the mines or in our manufacturing plant. Just as the mines do, we hold safety meetings and practice drills as well. We have alert systems in place and employee involvement groups that help us move forward with continuous improvement in the safety effort and well as the production methods we use. Today we manufacture a variety of chain presses and other tools to help assemble and disassemble our chains. With our new dual sprocket chains we have made them easier to assemble by design.

Coal News: Let's turn to products and begin with conveyor chains. Tell us about those please.

Bob Stenger: We developed and

patented our first conveyor back in the 70's. This chain continues to be used on many of the OEM machines as standard equipment. This chain incorporates our universal connector and has proven itself time and again in the toughest conditions. Cincinnati designed and patented the first dual sprocket chain, which is having unparalleled success both here in the US as well as internationally. We have recorded over two million tons on several chains running in South Africa which was unheard of prior to its development. We are currently testing several other "tweaks" that we feel will improve on its life. We believe we manufacturer "The Strongest Chain Under the Earth".

Coal News: And you also manufacture an extensive range of Crawler chains. Cincinnati also manufactures other items such as sprockets, footshafts, and ripper chains. Describe these for us please.

Bob Stenger: We do, Bill, and have been offering this product for over 15 years. We manufacture crawler chains for most continuous miners and roof bolters on the market today. We have had great success with them as well, particularly when looking at cost per ton.

We also continue to manufacture cutter chains and bars, rippervevor chains for the continuous miners, trim chains for the boring machines, and cutting chains for the high wall miners.

Along with the various chains we manufacture the sprockets, foot shafts, stub shafts to drive them, as well as bit lugs for the continuous miners and boring machines.

Coal News: I know you and your team have been spending a great deal of time on the strategic objectives of the company. Tell us about that please.

Bob Stenger: Our "Voice of the Customer" initiative has allowed us to spend many hours with our customers and "listen". We compiled their ideas, frustrations, and problems, the good and bad, and developed a statement of who we are today. Very eye opening! From this we have developed action plans to address the main issues and are implementing them.

This is an excellent program for us, that along with our Strategic Plan, gives us a very promising path forward!

Coal News: And now my last question, Bob, with your extensive knowledge of the industry how do you see the future of coal both here and around the world?

Bob Stenger: Bill, as you know every day is a battle for our industry with this administration and the E.P.A. The regulations, the arbitrary standards, the permitting process are hurdles that kill jobs and intentionally increase our energy prices. The fact that CO2 at .03% of the atmosphere is now the biggest issue they have with our coal fired plants goes to show what an excellent job our industry has done to curtail all the other particulates which have been the prime issue for the last 50 years. Something we should all be very proud of. Power plants being built today are not built with 1950 technology.

Enough on that, we could all go on for hours on this subject. Coal use around the world is increasing the quality of life for millions and millions of people. The National Mining Association's "A Proven Partner for America's Energy Future" and Peabody's "Energy Poverty" do an excellent job in explaining the abundant need for coal globally.

Coal will continue to be the cheapest and most reliable energy source for many years to come, both here and abroad. If we have another winter like last and all of a sudden see power outages around the country, there may be some eyes opened as to the value of coal. Short of that, we get up every day and go fight the fight.

Coal News: We very much appreciate you taking the time to talk to Coal News readers, particularly as you celebrate your 90th Anniversary and we celebrate our 10th. Thank you so much Bob!

Bob Stenger: Again thank you Bill and Congratulations on your 10th anniversary. Keep up the great work you do for the coal industry!

Coal News: Thank you Bob and very best wishes to you for the future.