

Happy 40th Anniversary

B & H By Larry Ussery
& Bruce Smith

B & H Labeling Systems is celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 2009. To help with our celebration, B & H's two longest serving employees, Larry Ussery and Bruce Smith, were asked to contribute a story to the B & H Bulletin that included reflections on their history with the company, and a few observations on how things are different today than they were ten, twenty and even thirty years ago.

Larry Ussery started at B & H in 1973 as a machinist. "I was hired by Mr. Hoffman, the "H" in B & H, over the phone. He offered me \$3.00 an hour, and I accepted. I was 20 years old, and had just finished machinist training at Modesto Junior College."

"There were ten people in the shop at the time, and job titles didn't matter very much. We all did whatever needed to be done. I did machine assembly, welding, painting, grinding, and of course some machining, because that was what I was hired to do. I vividly remember Mr. Hoffman having a drafting board in his office so he could work on machine designs."

"The biggest change by far has been to watch technology change machining and machine tools, and

how technology has changed the way we design and manufacture our equipment."

"Over the last 37 years, B & H has provided me an opportunity to raise my family in a safe, comfortable community, and I'm now a proud grandparent. A lot has definitely happened since 1973."

Bruce Smith started at B & H four years later as a new machine and change part designer in 1977. "Back then, it was drafting boards, mechanical indexing heads, t-squares, pencils, erasers, velum paper - all manual stuff. And the blue print printer used ammonia to develop the prints. Making changes or correcting mistakes was incredibly time consuming.



B & H Labeling Systems
Engineering Department
Before Computers

Computers were out there, but they simply weren't as affordable in the late 1970's, and great CAD software packages that we use today simply didn't exist. Computers and software are without a doubt one of the major changes we've seen. When I think about how we did all this back then, I just shake my head."

The other major changes Bruce has observed relate to the designs of the labelers, and their key components. "We started with horizontal chain driven machine designs, and 32 years later, we have evolved into fully electronic designs based on servos and full PLC controls with advanced registration control systems. These are all big steps forward in my opinion."

In our 40th year, B & H remains under the ownership of the Bright family. Calvin Bright, the "B" of B & H, is retired, but he stays up to date on the business through his daughter, Carol, who now serves as Chairwoman of the Board.

We will be celebrating our 40th Anniversary throughout the remainder of 2009, and we invite you to stop by our booth at Pack Expo Las Vegas 2009 and pick up your commemorative B & H 40th Anniversary lapel pin.

Larry Ussery, Machinist, joined B & H in 1973 and has over 36 years of service. Bruce Smith, Inside Sales Coordinator, joined B & H in 1977 and has over 32 years of experience.

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