

## **Bill Horn of B&F Parts and Services Talks to Coal Miner Exchange**



*Bill Horn*

**Bill Reid:** *We're with Bill Horn at B&F Parts and Services in Cedar Bluff, Virginia. Bill is President and partner Frank Rash is Secretary/Treasurer. Bill, tell us how B&F Parts get started?*

**Bill Horn:** Well, we both had mined coal for 27 years and we finished up mining in 1994. We got acquainted in '95 and had a few pieces of equipment. We started selling what we had and then began going to auctions. We became B&F Parts and Services Incorporated in '98. Just from one auction with the sales and the people we knew in the mining industry, it just eventually grew into a large company. We were quite successful through the ups and downs of the coal market.

**Bill Reid:** *What are the roles of Frank and you in the company?*

**Bill Horn:** Frank is Secretary-Treasurer and does a lot of the purchasing. He will hit the roads and go look at equipment before purchasing it. I usually stay put in the shop. I was a Chief Electrician for Island Creek and CONSOL Energy for several years and my training has always been as an electrical man and maintenance man. I was at VP No 2 mine at Island Creek as Chief Electrician back in the '70's and after that I went into business for myself with a little contract mine. Throughout the years there were several

different mines and I finished up mining in '94. That was the last mining I did before I got into our rebuild business in the late '90's.

**Bill Reid:** *What facilities do you have at B&F Parts and tell us what machines you have in stock?*

**Bill Horn:** At present, we've got seven properties: four machine shops and three fab shops. We can do any kind of work concerning mining equipment and parts. We also have in stock all types of mining equipment plus the parts to run the machines and exchange parts if needed. We were working about 18 people back about four years ago when the market was real good. We had two fab shops going, two machine shops going, then parts and delivery and so forth. As far as the mining equipment on hand goes, we've got the miners, the roof bolters, shuttle cars, scoops, and rock dusters. Just about everything that is needed in the mining industry, we have it.

**Bill Reid:** *Tell us more about what you rebuild and some of the equipment you presently have available for sale?*

**Bill Horn:** We fabricate a lot of belt drives, belt terminal groups, belt take-ups, belt tail pieces, and belt starters. We do that quite a bit plus feeders. We do lots of mine feeders in just about any size. We have a lot of cores in stock that we can rebuild to customer specifications. Also, we've got over 100 scoops in stock, anywhere from the 482's all the way up to the 610's, and also Eimco, Long-Airdox, and the older S&S versions. We also have in stock a couple of Joy 14CM15 D-model miners that are quite current with AC tram including a core unit. We've got about half the rebuild done on them, so they're available as a core unit or completely refurbished.

**Bill Reid:** *How would you separate your company from some of your competitors?*

**Bill Horn:** I think the size of our inventory and the amount of equipment we have in stock is the major advantage that we have. We also have a lot of obsolete parts that people need for the older style equipment. Most of the other vendors call me when they're looking for something special that's a little bit older, and usually we have it in stock. If we don't have it, we have one located somewhere and know where to find it for them.

**Bill Reid: *And where do you do most of your business?***

**Bill Horn:** We do business in about all of the states in the United States. We do a lot in Alabama and out west, then West Virginia, Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, Probably West Virginia and Virginia are our major players right now as far as that goes. We also buy equipment. If anyone has equipment for sale, we always have the option to look at it, and if we can work out a price we purchase it and keep it in stock.

**Bill Reid: *Everywhere I go there's some excitement with the new President coming along, and the prices of coal are easing up just a little bit. Are you seeing a little bit more encouraging signs in the market?***

**Bill Horn:** Yes, most definitely! We've done a lot of quotes here since the new President got elected. The outlook now is totally different and everybody has always got a smile on their faces now. Before, it was always doom and gloom. They just didn't know what to do. But at least we do have hope now and are far more optimistic about our industry!

**Bill Reid: *Just a final question then, Bill. How do you see the future of the coal industry in America, and how do you see your own company's future?***

**Bill Horn:** Well, we certainly hope we are looking to a better future with the indications of all the calls and activity we've been getting. A lot of people are starting to go back into the mining business and boost their production with the demand driven by the spike in coal prices. It definitely looks good! We certainly hope that everything is followed through with what the new President said he is going to do. The regulations and government controls are really what has destroyed the industry and we hope that will get turned around. Hopefully, with the new President the country can get back to using some more coal and this industry will take off and put us all back to work.

**Bill Reid: *Well thanks very much, Bill, and I wish you and B&F Parts every success.***