



Mike Penner and Laura Townsend, co-owners of the Townsend Penner Group, stand before a load of Townsend Lumber's 8/4 Red Oak. Joined by key personnel at Townsend Lumber Inc. including sales contacts: Richard Pace, Kiln Dried Lumber Sales Manager; Zach Buchner, Breeze Dried stick Sales.



## From Portable Sawmills to Industry Revolutionary:

### Townsend Lumber's Kiln-Dried Lumber Business and Breeze Dried Sticks Offer Solutions for Every Sawmill

By Terry Miller

**T**illsonburg, ON—Townsend Lumber Inc. and Breeze Dried Inc., headquartered here, have transformed the lumber industry with generations of ingenuity, hard work and perseverance.

More than 50 years ago, Robert Townsend and Bert Abbott established Abbott & Townsend Lumber, which began as portable sawmills selling railroad ties and timbers for the Toronto subway and furniture plants in Ontario primarily. In 1988, Robert's son, David Townsend, established Townsend

Townsend Lumber Co./Breeze Dried Sticks co-owners Laura Townsend and Mike Penner are pictured with their daughters Leah (left) and Claire (right).





Townsend Lumber has been a family business for three generations. Pictured above in 1972 standing, Bert Abbott, David, Robert, Duane Townsend and Robert Abbott. Seated are Marion, Ruth Ann Abbott and Kathelene Townsend.

“We have many long-term relationships with companies using our Breeze Dried sticks, so we make sure that we don’t ever leave any of our customers hanging; you must have sticks. We make sure that we are producing the product in a timely fashion. We inventory sticks for our valued customers.”

– Mike Penner, Co-Owner and President  
Townsend Lumber and Breeze Dried Inc.



Some of the Townsend Lumber team, including grading line members, forklift operators, the kiln drying manager and supervisors, are pictured.

Lumber Inc. In 1991, David acquired another sawmill near Kitchener, Ontario, and renamed it Kitchener Forest Products, and in 1992 he invented the Breeze Dried kiln stick and started producing and selling his revolutionary patented lumber drying sticks and crossers.

In 2016, David’s daughter, Laura, and her husband, Mike Penner, purchased the group of companies. Today, an impressive 170-acre facility outside Tillsonburg is home to the family business. Together, Laura and Mike have a strong understanding of the business and industry. Laura is a third-generation owner who started working in the family business at a young age, and has worked in many departments of the company over the years. After school, Laura obtained her Chartered Professional Accountant designation, and since then has been working full-time in the business, managing the finance, human resources and information technology aspects of



Pictured is kiln-dried lumber ready for shipment from Townsend Lumber Inc., located in Tillsonburg, ON.

Please turn to page 62



This is an aerial picture of the Townsend Penner Group Tillsonburg location, which is home to the Townsend Lumber sawmill and kiln drying facility, the Breeze Dried stick facility and the BreezeWood Floors factory.

the companies. Mike focuses on operations, where he has developed a true passion for and dedication to the business.

Mike, co-owner and president of Townsend Lumber and Breeze Dried, said, "I take my responsibility very seriously when making decisions." Since purchasing the business, Mike has been upgrading equipment for the organization to improve efficiency and quality, including a new Cleere-man Industries linear carriage with Paw-Taw-John Networks system, and a VisionTally system which will integrate with their ERP inventory sys-

tem. A second grading and stacking line was also added to increase the capacity for their Breeze Dried stick program.

Townsend Lumber produces around 16 million board feet of Hardwoods annually—13 million at its Tillsonburg mills and 3 million at its 11-acre Kitchener green mill, located in New Dundee. The company has 650,000 feet of kiln capacity with its 12 dry kilns; six kilns are manufactured by Brunner-Hildebrand Lumber Dry Kiln Co. and the other six are manufactured by Nardi. All 12 kilns have Lignomat controls. Townsend Lumber is a certified heat treating facility.

"There are at least 20 different Hardwood species in our log yard," said Mike. "You name it; we have it here. That's just one of the reasons we have long-term, loyal customers, because they know by working with us they have access to a large variety of species."

Townsend's primary species are Ash, Red Oak and Hard and Soft Maple, which they cut in thicknesses from 4/4 to 12/4. The mill's secondary species are White Oak, Beech,

**We at Bryant Church Hardwoods, Inc., located in Wilkesboro, NC, are proud of our modern Hardwood concentration yard facility that we constantly update to better serve our customers with the finest Appalachian Hardwood and Eastern White Pine lumber available. Call us at (336) 973-3691 when we can be of service.**



This is an aerial view of our modern Hardwood concentration yard where we process quality Appalachian Hardwood and Eastern White Pine lumber.

Some facts about our company are, we:

- Have a 30 acre Hardwood and Eastern White Pine lumber concentration yard that exclusively represents one sawmill.
- Specialize in all thicknesses of kiln dried Eastern White Pine lumber.
- Deal in Appalachian Hardwood species such as Red and White Oak, Poplar, Ash, Hard and Soft Maple, Steamed Walnut, Cherry, Basswood, Beech and mixed Hardwoods.
- Market our Appalachian Hardwood lumber in 4/4 through 8/4 thicknesses that is green, air dried and/or kiln dried.
- Specialize in mixed truck loads.

- Have 9 steam dry kilns that have a combined dry kiln capacity of 630,000 bd. ft. per charge.
- Own a Newman 382 planer.
- Usually carry about 4,000,000 bd. ft. on our air drying yard.
- Usually carry about 1,500,000 bd. ft. of kiln dried lumber in inventory.
- Offer export preparation, container loading and package tally.
- Offer the service of sorting lumber at special lengths, widths and grades according to customer specifications.
- Use our own trucks and contract trucks for prompt delivery of your orders.
- Have over 75 years of combined experience in the lumber business.



**Tim Church**  
**Mason Church**

**Bus.: (336) 973-3691**  
**FAX: (336) 973-7993**  
**(800) 973-3380**



Web site: <http://BCHI.com>



P.O. Box 995 • Wilkesboro, NC 28697  
Distribution Yard: 683 Buck Road • Wilkesboro, NC 28697

*Because we've been in business since 1953, we have many years of experience that helps us to ship your orders right the first time.*





The grader in the Townsend Lumber main mill is inspecting the lumber as it is being produced.

Cherry, Hickory, Basswood and Walnut.

"We rarely cut logs that should be cut as 10/4 into 5/4. We want to cut what the log dictates for yield and value," said Mike.

Townsend also carries some unique species found in the North Shore Lake area, such as Sassafras, Hackberry, Black Locust, Shagbark and Pignut Hickory.

Richard Pace, kiln-dried lumber sales manager, has worked at Townsend for 25 years. "We try to cut at least three different thicknesses in each species," Pace remarked. "We do up to 12/4 in about 70 percent of our species."

Mike added he keeps an inventory of thicker stock.

"We don't shy away from it. We have the yard space, we

*Please turn the page*



Two packs of Breeze Dried six-foot Maple sticks are ready for shipment.



For more than 20 years, **Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods** has manufactured and exported the **highest-quality** Appalachian hardwood lumber and logs. With control of raw material from the forest, Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods guarantees a consistent, **high-quality** product from start to finish.

### SPECIES

ASH • CHERRY • CYPRESS • POPLAR  
RED OAK • WALNUT • WHITE OAK

### SPECIALTIES

KILN DRIED HARDWOODS • WALNUT STEAMER  
QUARTERSAWN HARDWOODS  
S2S • STRAIGHT-LINE RIP • GANG RIP • CUSTOM SORTING  
CUSTOM PACKAGING • EXPORT PREP  
GREEN ON LATHE LUMBER



P.O. Box 160, 100 Harless Drive  
Huntland, Tennessee 37345 USA

Phone 931.469.7272 Fax 931.469.7269

sales@thompsonappalachian.com

www.thompsonappalachian.com

have the barn space; so again, should a log dictate the best value is cutting thick stock such as 8/4, 10/4 or 12/4, that's how we cut it."

Townsend markets most of its high-grade Hardwood lumber to wholesalers and distribution/concentration yards who in turn sell Townsend's lumber to appearance-grade manufacturers. Only a small percentage of

grade lumber is sold directly to retail customers and contractors with whom the company has had partnerships for years. The company exports 20 to 30 percent of its kiln-dried lumber. All No. 2 Common and Better lumber is end-waxed with ANCHORSEAL from U-C Coatings LLC to ensure no splits or checking occurs.

Townsend also has a strong indus-

trial program to sell railroad ties and pre-cut components, as well as White Oak and white pine appearance grade timbers with lengths up to 30 feet.

With 170 employees, Townsend has a dedicated team with decades of experience manufacturing lumber and drying lumber as well as producing Breeze Dried sticks.

Townsend Lumber products have been used for some significant projects, such as the refurbishing of the Bluenose, the ship represented on the Canadian dime.

In 1999, the Townsend Lumber group created BreezeWood Floors, a division to manufacture quality solid and engineered wide plank Hardwood flooring. BreezeWood has a state-of-the-art nanotechnology finishing line in Tillsonburg, which delivers industry-leading durability and phenomenal finish clarity using Akzo Nobel finishes. BreezeWood flooring is sold at BreezeWood retail factory stores and through various retailers and distributors.

In 1992, inspired by the Townsend sawmill, David Townsend invented the Breeze Dried stick to eliminate sticker stain. Breeze Dried sticks are the solution for sticker stain, which was a universal problem for North American sawmills. The Breeze Dried stick revolutionized the industry.

Laura Townsend, the company's co-owner and chief financial officer, said her father worked persistently to design a product that eliminated sticker stain.

"My dad tried different profiles with wood and plastic, and different patterns and variations. The final design is what he decided worked best, after his two years of experimentation and looking at the results," recalled Laura.

In 1996, Breeze Dried sticks earned a patent in Canada, the U.S. and the United Kingdom. Many have tried to imitate the success of Breeze Dried sticks, but none have surpassed David Townsend's design.

"The true Breeze Dried stick, made



# Lug Loaders

by



## TS Manufacturing

### TS Versa-Cam Lug Loaders for high productivity.

- **Overhead press rolls** handle 4" variations in piece thicknesses for sawmills
- **Tipplers lifted by servo drive**, process any boards with large splits
- **Overhead frame** lifts out of the way, with pneumatic pivot, for easy clearing
- **Servo drive hooks** for precision timing
- **Handle piece dimensions** at high speeds



Visit us at  
Expo Richmond 2018  
Richmond, VA, May 18-19  
Richmond Raceway Complex, Booth 318

**RUGGED | DEPENDABLE | INNOVATIVE**  
TS Manufacturing Company  
[www.tsman.com](http://www.tsman.com)  
+1.705.324.3762





to our specifications, eliminates the indentation issues that exist with other sticks," Mike remarked.

Primarily made from Maple, Breeze Dried patented lumber drying sticks have superior air flow in yard and kiln drying. The design forces moisture out of the lumber quickly, reducing issues with checks and splits and eliminating sticker stain. Breeze Dried sticks have uniform grooves and ridges that run the width of the stick, unlike fluted sticks that have one groove that runs the length of the stick.

Mike added they offer sticks in custom lengths, and will keep a truckload ready for reliable program customers.

"We have many long-term relationships with companies using our Breeze Dried sticks, so we make sure that we don't ever leave any of our customers hanging; you must have sticks. We make sure that we are producing the product in a timely fashion. We inventory sticks for our valued customers. And some customers provide purchase orders for many loads of sticks with pre-set delivery dates to ensure they have sticks when they need them."

Zach Buchner, vice president of sales for Breeze Dried Inc., added they keep up to three loads of Breeze Dried sticks ready to ship and maintain an inventory of 1 million board feet of Maple at all times to make Breeze Dried sticks.

"Our lead time in the past two years hasn't been more than two weeks for kiln sticks," Buchner added.

Two years ago, the company added a sure-grip, anti-slip corrugated surface, and currently have a patent pending for this improved design to an already proven product.

"We made a design improvement, where we have now made the top ridge an anti-slip feature," Laura explained. "All of the sticks we produce going forward have the new and improved design feature."

Another benefit of the Breeze Dried sticks is that they are strong, but not

unbreakable. When placed under extreme pressure, the Breeze Dried stick will break, preventing equipment damage, product damage, and worse, injury.

"When you talk safety, it's a lot better for one or two sticks to break than to have a whole pack of lumber fall over when you are loading it into the kiln," she explained.

Also, the rigidity of Breeze Dried

sticks protects the structural integrity of the lumber.

"It's a stick that's not too flexible," described Buchner, who has marketed Breeze Dried sticks the past five years. "When you have uneven ends in the pack of lumber, having a stick that has substance to it and doesn't easily bend helps you create a flatter lumber pack

*Please turn the page*

# WE'LL EARN YOUR TRUST EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

We strive to keep and build your trust every single day by delivering on our promise: **on time. on grade. on count.**

Utilizing state-of-the-art technology in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains, BPM Lumber sets the standard for sustainability, manufacturing and customer service.



**bpm** LUMBER

TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Rift & Quartered Width Sorts Log Sales  
PictureTally Prepared Bundles Core Supply Programs  
Custom Cutting Programs Worldwide Deliveries

Ask about our FSC certified products.

Tony Love *KD Sales*  
606.877.1228  
tlove@bpmlumber.com

Steve Counts *KD Sales*  
423.968.9080  
scounts@bpmlumber.com



The mark of  
responsible forestry  
FSC® C008935

## TOWNSEND LUMBER INC. *Continued*

for drying because it helps support those boards that don't have boards beside them, above them or below them."

The company also produces Breeze Dried crossers to eliminate crosser stain on the top and bottom of bundles. Breeze Dried crossers have the same patented design as Breeze Dried sticks.

Other key personnel with the Townsend Penner Group are Mackenzie Troyer, Industrial Division Sales Manager; Randy Sage, Retail Division Sales Manager; and Ken Upper, Vice President of Finance and Administration.

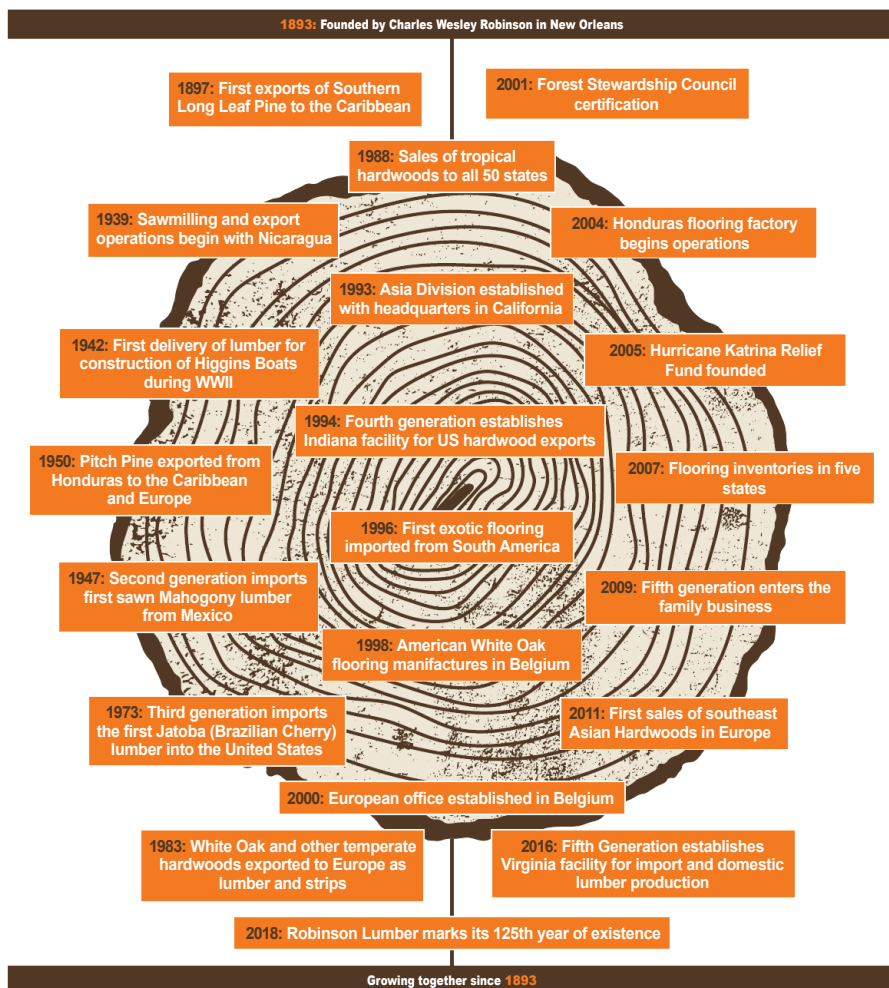
Townsend Lumber is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's

Association, Lake States Lumber Association, Kentucky Forest Industries Association, Kiln Driers Association and the Canadian Hardwood Bureau. The company is also certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Rainforest Alliance.

The portable sawmill Robert Townsend established over a half-century ago has led to the innovative Breeze Dried name and laid the foundation for a strong group of integrated Hardwood companies. Under Mike and Laura's leadership, the Townsend name is sure to continue providing top quality service and products for years to come. ■



4000 Tchoupitoulas Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70115 USA  
+1 (504) 895-6377  
info@roblumco.com  
www.roblumco.com



For more information, visit  
[www.townsendlumber.com](http://www.townsendlumber.com),  
[www.breezedried.com](http://www.breezedried.com), and  
[www.breezewoodfloors.ca](http://www.breezewoodfloors.ca).

## GRASCHE USA INC.

*Continued from page 26*

sten carbide using a cobalt binder are highly susceptible to the leaching effect of wood resins and tannins that are the result of the heat and friction of high speed sawing." Comer continued, "The tool is cutting at such a high speed that the heat and friction combined with the compounds leaching from the wood result in something close in composition to hydrochloric acid, which weakens the cobalt binder. The weakened binder then allows pieces of the tungsten to slip out of place on a molecular level, which essentially crumbles the cutting surface so that it dulls much more rapidly than the Chrome KCR08 that we distribute from Ceratizit. As the name would suggest, the Chrome KCR08 uses chrome as the binder. Chrome is corrosion resistant and is much less susceptible to the leaching effects of this acid, meaning that it resists the acids to maintain a sharp edge much longer."

This KCR08 chrome grade also uses a much smaller grain structure called sub-micron, Comer offers the

