



Townsend Lumber Inc.

President
David Townsend

R.R. 2 TILLSONBURG, ONT. N4G 4G7 (519) 842-7381

FAX (519) 842-6122

www.townsendlumber.com

The History of Townsend Lumber Inc.

Bert Abbott and Robert Townsend were friends who shared similar lifestyles and common interests. They were both tobacco farmers and looking for a way to make money during the winter months. In 1959 they bought a portable sawmill near Cultus, Ontario in Houghton Township. That was the beginning of Abbott & Townsend Ltd.

This sawmill was moved to several different locations. They set up machinery at Bert's tobacco farm, and then moved it back to Robert's tobacco farm.

When Bert and Robert decided to build a stationary sawmill, they purchased a property near Glen Meyer, Ontario. The sawmill was built in 1970.

In 1971 David, Robert's son, attended the National Hardwood Lumber Association's grading school in Memphis, Tennessee for four months. As soon as David was finished school he started working at his father's mill.

In 1978 Robert Townsend's son, David and Bert Abbott's son, Murray, bought the business from their fathers. This mill was running well, and business was good until June of 1984 when it caught fire, and was burnt to the ground.

David and Murray decided to waste no time and rebuild immediately. They purchased some property just outside of Tillsonburg, Ontario, and in less than a year the corn field was transformed into a mill site.

The first month of operation was April of 1985, but the official opening of the new Abbott & Townsend Lumber Mill was not until October 25, 1985.

The new mill in Tillsonburg expanded rapidly. In 1988 David and Murray mutually agreed that they wanted to be independent businessmen, and David purchased Murray's half of the business. The mill was then renamed Townsend Lumber Inc.

On August 1, 1990 David Townsend bought Hallman Lumber Ltd. from Willard & John Hallman. This mill was added as a subsidiary of Townsend and renamed Kitchener Forest Products.

Townsend Lumber Inc. has expanded significantly and now employs about 180 employees.

In July of 1999 David purchased 73 acres of farmland across the from the current mill site. Despite some minor delays, on August 18, 1999 the Ontario Municipal Board agreed to amend the zoning bylaw of 45 acres of this land, which was agricultural, to include a sawmill and log storage. The proposed sawmill construction planning is already in progress. The new mill will be designed specifically to cut soft wood logs and logs that are less than 15" in diameter. The existing sawmill is unable to accommodate low grade, short, and pallet logs, so the new mill will saw these. This mill will support the aim of sustainable forest management, create new employment opportunities, build tax base and revenue for the township and complement existing mill facilities.

Written by Kristen Townsend