

Merritt Brothers Lumber Company, Inc.

Athol, Idaho

TPM Member Since June 1974



In 1968, Buck and Wayne Merritt opened Merritt Brothers Lumber Company. Buck and Wayne had both previously been employed in the sawmill business. Buck was a mill manager at the time. They purchased an old sawmill in Priest River, Idaho, pumped life into it, and it became quite successful.



Satellite view of Merritt Brothers Lumber, Athol, Idaho.

Tragedy struck and that mill burned down in 1972, however, they were able to rebuild the mill and continue to operate, all the while looking to grow into a bigger facility.

In 1990, the Merritt Brothers Lumber Company purchased a second mill site located in Athol, Idaho. Both Buck and Wayne were growing close to retirement when an opportunity to sell the Priest River Mill to another family-owned company presented itself. Knowing that their employees would be taken care of, they sold the sawmill facility. The Athol mill was enlarged and specializes in finger joint



Buck and Wayne Merritt, founders of Merritt Brothers Lumber.

studs. The remanufacturing plant is now located off of Interstate 95 and Hwy 54, in Athol, with rail car access to the Union Pacific and BNSF Railroads.

Today the Merritt Brothers Lumber Company is still owned by the family and operates with the same values and integrity that they had when it was founded. The company moved from the sawmill business to creating a value added plant that “recycles” sawmill by-products into finger-jointed framing lumber. The material makes efficient use of available wood resources and can be manufactured in long lengths. Because it is typically fabricated from dry material, it is exceptionally dimensionally stable.



Entrance to Merritt Brothers Lumber Company.

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This is a benefit in performance and makes it easy to hold in inventory. Merritt Brothers Lumber Company utilizes the latest technologies to produce the finger jointed products that customers need, using the most up-to-date information and personal customer service available.

Merritt Brothers Lumber is affiliated with J & H Forest Products. J & H Forest Products is a brokerage company, buying and selling lumber throughout the country. It is owned by the same family as Merritt Brothers Lumber.

Herb Jahnsen, Vice President at Merritt Brothers, has been with the company for over 25 years. When asked about the future and economic outlook, Mr. Jahnsen commented, "There are subtle indications that we are seeing some increased building gains, which typically indicates the economy is improving."

Merritt Brothers and related companies have been with the TPM Association since 1974. Mr. Jahnsen said, "Merritt Brothers and related companies rely on TPM for a variety of services from legal consultation to supplying health insurance coverage."

Today, the company remanufactures approximately 30 million board feet per year, and provides jobs for 30 to 40 employees. That is a significant number for the Athol, Idaho community.



Inside the finger-joint mill.



Merritt Brothers yard and staging area.



Merritt Brothers Lumber has access to the Union Pacific and BNSF Railroads. Lumber is wrapped and ready to go.

Merritt Brothers Lumber Company, Inc. can be reached at:

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