



Boshart Industries 1955-2005



In the Beginning



The original Boshart location in Crosshill

MEL BOSHART PROVIDED PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL WORK FOR FARMERS — AND EVEN USED HIS PIPE INSTALLATION EXPERTISE TO FABRICATE BARN STABLING WHEN REQUESTED.

Even as a youngster, Mel Boshart was learning about fixing pumps, good customer service and running his own business from his father, Noah. Noah fixed rod and sucker pumps and piston pumps until he was 90. In 1978, after a newspaper article mentioned his age, he teased Mel about taking his customers away (they did not want Noah using their steep cellar steps at his age). Mel also worked for his brother as an electrician for a short time.

Mel Boshart Plumbing began in 1955 with Mel working out of his home in Crosshill, Ontario. With his experience, he was able to provide many services to his customers, including searching and sourcing new products. Mel's philosophy of giving the customers the best service possible helped the business grow in those early years. For instance, well tiles were expensive and hard to find, so the company began manufacturing well tile from the late 1950's into the 1960's. Mel also supplied submersible pumps to his customers as early as 1966. Mel's business was definitely a family operation, with his wife Eileen helping with the books, and even making coffee for salesmen and customers who met at their kitchen table.

In the 1970's the installation and pump repair business was flourishing and Gary Boshart, Mel's son, joined the business after he finished school. They were both kept busy repairing and installing pumps for farm and rural residential customers.



*The 'Mighty Slim'
3-inch submersible pump
was a popular pump offered
by Boshart for many years*

Submersible pumps were quickly growing in size and popularity with well drillers beginning to install larger well casings instead of the original 3-5/8" casings. Due to the volume of existing small well casings in use, Mel recognized the need to keep the three inch pumps in stock. Even when these pumps were no longer readily available in his area, Mel drove to Kentucky in his station wagon to pick up a load of pumps; later a company truck would make the trip. This was a pivotal time as the Company started selling wholesale to plumbing contractors and wholesalers throughout Southern Ontario.



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Time for Change

There was an addition built on the house that finally moved the office out of Eileen's kitchen, however, her oven was still called into use occasionally to dry out pump motors! The staff increased to five including Mel, Gary, a secretary and two pump installers. The original Crosshill location had 2,500 square feet of warehouse space – small compared to today's standards. Everything had to be loaded and unloaded by hand, including truckloads of heavy pump cable that were lowered to the ground and painstakingly rolled to the proper location in the warehouse.

Boshart published its first catalogue using typed stencils and a hand operated Gestetner machine. The first catalogue included Gate and Ball Valves, Pitless Adapters, Well Caps, Well Seals, Bronze Insert Fittings, Submersible Pumps and Cable, as well as Pressure Tanks and Tank Tees.

Mel Boshart Plumbing was one of the first companies to promote Pitless Adapters in Eastern Canada. Mel and Gary attended the company's first trade show – the Ontario Water Well Show and Convention held in Barrie Ontario.

In 1977 Mel Boshart Plumbing became a limited company; Mel Boshart & Son Ltd., which reflected the fact Gary Boshart was becoming an important part of the growth and direction of the company. Mel was on the road more often and Boshart was now selling its water well products in Eastern Canada.

MEL RECALLS HAVING A HARD TIME TRYING TO CONVINCING CONTRACTORS THAT PITLESS ADAPTERS WERE A BETTER, MORE SANITARY CHOICE THAN WELL PITS AND WELL SEALS.



1955 - 2005



Moving, Growing, Changing

IN RESPONSE TO CUSTOMER'S REQUESTS, BOSHART BEGAN TO DEVELOP AND MANUFACTURE A COMPLETE LINE OF WELL SEALS – TRUE TO IT'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPLY THE CUSTOMERS NEEDS AT A COMPETITIVE PRICE



In 1983, with the company now focused on the wholesale business and space limited at the Crosshill location, Mel Boshart & Son Ltd. moved to a larger facility in Wellesley Ontario. The company had grown to fourteen employees and Boshart was now selling to wholesalers on a much larger scale – including an expansion into Western Canada.



In 1978 a small block building on the Crosshill property was put into use as a manufacturing site. A rubber press was purchased and the molds were made on-site for rubber gaskets. This process employed three local high school students who drilled and assembled the well seals after school and on Saturdays. However, space at the Crosshill location was becoming tight, so the decision was made to sell the pump repair and installation part of the business.

The Boshart's started to have their own unique designs of bronze pitless adapters and insert adapters manufactured. Bronze insert fittings and tank tees were machined off-site and packaged in Wellesley. The three inch submersible pumps and pitless adapters were also assembled in Wellesley, with Well Seal and Well Cap production remaining in Crosshill. A lot of care went into the development of these products and the brand name 'Seal Well' was viewed as an appropriate choice. In keeping with the family atmosphere, a contest to design the logo was open to all employees.



Communication improved as each office employee got the convenience of their own phone. Computers became a necessity and the progressive Boshart's even had a custom-made program developed to do exactly what they needed. Best of all the Telex machine was replaced by one of the first fax machines as Gary Boshart embraced new technology. This proactive business approach benefits both the employees and customers to this day.

Business flourished and sales increased rapidly. With the need for extra inventory compounded by a rapidly growing product line, once again the Boshart's were in need of a larger location to accommodate their expanding business.

In October 1987 extensive renovations began in a factory building at 25 Whaley Avenue in Milverton Ontario. An adjacent 20 acres of land was purchased for future expansion. The long awaited move was made in July of 1988. Each office employee loaded computers and the contents of desks into their own cars – and a cavalcade wound through the countryside from Wellesley to Milverton. The warehouse staff carried out the hard work of loading and unloading trailers with inventory. The move to the location in Milverton presented unlimited possibilities for expansion and improved customer service.

In 1992 the company name became Boshart Industries Inc., and a second property directly across the street on Pacific Avenue was purchased. This enabled Boshart's to move the Injection Moulding Department from an off-site location.



Search and Research Continues

Everything that is done at Boshart Industries is looked at with this question in mind - How will this best benefit the customer? The Boshart's have also always been keenly aware of the competitive market conditions within the Industry. The result of ongoing research is the ability to provide a diversified mix of products for the water well, plumbing, irrigation, pool and spa, water works, HVAC and industrial markets. Seal Well, BII and PLUMB-eeze products always stand for quality, and strive to set the standard in the marketplace.

Back in the 1970's while still located in Crosshill, the Boshart's were already importing from half-way around the world. When the 1990's arrived the term Global marketplace was being heard everywhere. In order to stay competitive it was necessary to consider other off shore possibilities so Mel travelled to Thailand, Hong Kong, Holland, China, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Italy, in order to secure quality products and suppliers. As a result of this trip the first full ship container from Siam Fittings in Thailand arrived in Milverton. An expanded Quality Control Department was developed to ensure that all products met stringent specifications. The Purchasing Department is continually searching for new products and suppliers, and includes a Product Development Department dedicated to developing new products as well as improving existing products.

In 1996 an addition to the warehouse increased space by 10,000 square feet providing room for more inventory. A warehouse management system was installed using bar coding and radio frequency scanners. All warehouse personnel are equipped with a hand held scanner, and with the scan of a single bar code, all information pertaining to an order is available. The hand held directs the order picker through the warehouse providing the utmost efficiency for order collecting. As the bar code is scanned, the correct product is verified, and inventory is automatically adjusted. Upon completion of an order, a customer packing slip is generated and all internal information is electronically transferred to the main data base for final processing. In 2000 this system was rewritten and the scanners were replaced with updated models. The warehouse staff take pride in next day shipping with a 98% order fill rate. In 2004 the warehouse was expanded by 13,700 square feet.



BOSHART INDUSTRIES INC. DEVELOPED INTO A STRONG AND VIBRANT BUSINESS DUE TO IT'S DISTINGUISHED AND VARIED PAST HISTORY, AND THE PROGRESSIVE FORWARD THINKING OF MEL AND GARY BOSHART. THESE PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES, AS WELL AS SOUND JUDGMENT, STRONG LEADERSHIP, A SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY AND A SINCERE COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMERS HAVE ALL COMBINED TO BUILD THIS SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS.



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Rapid Growth

'LUNCH AND LEARN' MEETINGS ARE HELD REGULARLY AND ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE IN THE COMPANY. THESE MEETINGS ARE DESIGNED TO MAKE EACH EMPLOYEE MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE PRODUCTS.



In 1997 the office space was doubled to accommodate the additional staff required to keep up with the rapid growth. In 2003 the third floor (pictured above) was renovated, making office space for an expanding Purchasing and the Hardware Sales Department. The third floor expansion also included a very attractive and functional training facility with an adjacent kitchen. This space is used for customer product information training as well as staff training seminars and workshops.



In 2002 the Injection Moulding Building was expanded allowing for additional storage of raw material and finished inventory, with the addition of an overhead crane for safe and efficient mould changes. A state-of-the-art, more efficient 500 ton Nissei Injection Moulding Machine was purchased to increase production and versatility. The addition of this machine has given Boshart the versatility to custom manufacture products for a variety of different industries. The Injection Moulding staff work three shifts Monday to Friday. Production of Yard Hydrants began in 2003 in this building.



The Packaging Department has evolved and now employs five individuals plus a number of part time employees. With the expanded Packaging Department, Boshart customers have the option of buying a range of product in personalized packaging complete with their own logo and part numbers.

The Sales Staff at Boshart attend regular meetings where various sales strategies and marketing information is developed and shared. Each inside sales representative maintains their own territory, which builds customer relations and provides them with faster personalized service. In Canada, 11 Manufacturers Sales Agencies represent Boshart Industries, with Mel Boshart personally taking care of much of Alberta and British Columbia. In the U.S. Boshart is represented by over 30 Sales Agencies.

The Advertising staff has desktop publishing software and special training. The Sales, Purchasing and Advertising Departments all work together to produce a catalogue and a product information manual that make it easy and inviting to do business with Boshart Industries. The Boshart catalogue is also available online.

Mel and Gary Boshart appreciate how important each facet of the company is. They encourage their employees to do their job efficiently by proactively providing them with the technology that is needed. Boshart's IS department has developed a computer system that easily integrates software and the transfer of information. For example, the system has the capability of printing customer part numbers on all packing slips and invoicing, making it easier for customers to cross reference all products. Electronic commerce has also been developed. The overall reason and most important benefit for these efficiencies is to ensure that all employees are able to provide courteous and accurate service, making for complete customer satisfaction.



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Looking Back



EACH EMPLOYEE WAS WELL AWARE OF THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SET BY MEL AND GARY BOSHART. EMPLOYEES QUICKLY CAUGHT ON TO THE WORK ETHIC THAT WAS EXPECTED, AND IT BECAME WOVEN INTO EVERY ASPECT OF THE OPERATION.



Looking back at the last 50 years it has been an amazing journey, with commitment to customers being a major part of Boshart Industries' success. The company has grown from a 2,500 square foot warehouse and five employees in Crosshill to combined facilities today of over 98,000 square feet and eighty-five employees. The first secretary to work in Crosshill left to raise a family and returned many years later to work in Advertising, and the secretary who started work in 1977 retired from the position of Personnel Manager after 26 years. The student who drilled and assembled well seals in 1978 at Crosshill is today Sales Manager for the Hardware Sales Division. Many other employees have been recognized for ten, fifteen and twenty years of service. By providing a professional and encouraging environment, Mel and Gary have motivated their employees to have a strong commitment and a team approach to their work.

The family origins of the company remain to this day – with Mel's daughter Jayne working in the Purchasing Department, and Gary's son-in-law Jeremy in the IS Department. Mel's grandchildren including Gary's daughter provide part-time assistance as needed. In fact many of Boshart Industries employees feel as though they are extended family.

Boshart Industries Inc. looks to the next 50 years with the same positive outlook and commitment to remain competitive and informed about the market that it serves. Quality control, efficient order processing, friendly and knowledgeable staff and a commitment to future growth will ensure customer satisfaction for many years to come.

SEAL WELL, BII AND PLUMBEEZE PRODUCTS ALWAYS STAND FOR QUALITY, AND STRIVE TO SET THE STANDARD IN THE MARKETPLACE.

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