

Newspaper Articles On Hudson Bay's Forest Industry

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August 12, 1959

\$2,500,000 Plant Would Boost Forest Industry In HB

The announcement by Wizewood Products Limited, Prince Albert, to build a \$2,500,000 plant for the production of poplar building board in Hudson Bay, promises a tremendous boost to the forest products industry in this area.

At a meeting with local businessmen, members of the Town Council and Board of Trade, Monday evening, Wizewood company officials discussed the various aspects of the new industry.

Mayor Allan Anderson chaired the meeting and introduced W.F. Thorpe, president of Wizewood Products Limited; J. Korodi, general manager and J. Meyer, industrial consultant with the Industrial Development Office, Regina.

Mr. Thorpe outline the general organization of the new Company and called on Mr. Korodi to describe the details of the plant and its capitalization.

Mr. Korodi, who will be the manager of the Wizewood plant, described the four main products and the process by which they would be manufactured. He also pointed out that the company may be interested in securing local capital to insure the controlling interest of the plant to Saskatchewan people.

Both company officials went into some detail to describe their sentiments regarding the capitalization of the new plant through the subscription of Saskatchewan residents and expressed their hopes that local residents would subscribe funds and do everything possible to co-operate in assisting the Company to become established here.

Mayor Anderson pledged the support of the Town in matters pertaining to housing, etc.

The new plant will be located just south of the Town limits on the west side of the highway. Constructed in a T formation, the plant will measure 450 x 120 across the end of the T and 320 x 120 on the long end.

Employing some 60 to 70 people on a three-shift basis, the plant will have a maximum payroll of over \$200,000. Approximately 25 thousand cords of poplar bolts will be required for the 75 ton capacity mill.

Four different kinds of board will be produced: Foundation Board of dimensions from one quarter to three quarter inch; outside sheeting from five sixteenths to three quarter inch; inside wall paneling in quarter inch only and floor underlay in five sixteenths to three quarter dimensions.

August 19, 1959

Wizewood Limited Issue Progress Report On Plant

Wizewood Ltd. Announced in a report, released today, the progress in organizing the erection of a Wafer Board Plant in Hudson Bay.

Officials of the Company returned recently from a selling trip to eastern Canada and the USA and reported that 45 carloads or 2/3 of the total production are committed by written agreement. The sale of this volume is far better than expected and should enable the company to reach full production in an appreciably shorter time than estimated.

Negotiations for an agreement on distribution in the Prairie Provinces are in the advanced stage, with a nationally known distributor.

A profitability study was prepared by Archibald and Associated Professional Engineers of Vancouver, confirming the original profitability study prepared by J. Korodi.

Keith Consulting Engineers of Regina are at present at the proposed plant site working on soil tests to obtain data on load bearing capacity for the foundation of the plant.

Financing is well underway and is expected to be completed during the first week of September due to the great interest in the new industry, shown by the people of Saskatchewan.

Wizewood Ltd. has set up offices in the Aaron Building in Prince Albert and can be contacted there, by parties interested in participating in this new Saskatchewan industry.

September 16, 1959

Expect Wizewood Will Start Production Soon

The clearing and grading operations in preparation of a construction site for the new one-and-a-half million dollar Wizewood Limited, waferboard plant at Hudson Bay, will start early next week.

In a telephone interview, J. Korodi, general manager of the firm stated that he and Wizewood President, W. Thorpe, Prince Albert, "Expected to be in Hudson Bay early next week to complete arrangements for construction to begin."

Mr. Korodi, indicated that if weather conditions were favorable, actual construction could start in about two weeks.

Since a meeting with local businessmen in August, little has been heard of the Company's planning. Mr. Korodi explained that a great deal of work and planning required completion before actual construction could begin.

Construction of the plant is expected to take almost a full year, so that production of the waferboard is not likely to start before next August or September.

September 27, 1961

Wizewood Runs First Waferboard

The first production test of the Wizewood Ltd. Waferboard plant was completed at about 11:30 a.m. September 23rd, when the first four-by-sixteen waferboard slid off the production line. Bearing the names of all personnel, the panel will likely be kept as a souvenir.

After several mechanical delays, the "pad" of poplar wafers mixed with dry resin and wax, moved slowly into the giant forming press. Here the pad was compressed into a board 5/8 of an inch thick under a pressure of 200 pounds per square inch. Heated to a temperature of 380 degrees the wax and resin melted to provide a bond for wooden wafer.

Wizewood officials indicated that it would be sometime before the plant would go into actual production but the test run was necessary to check various components in order that the entire production line which is highly automated can function smoothly.

Prior to the material entering the press, plant personnel had been invited to sign their names on individual wafers. In the completed board, the signatures were quite legible. Names such as "Big Dolly", "Lucky Chip" and "Maybe" indicated that optimism ran high.

The test waferboard proved highly satisfactory as the wafers had bonded very securely and the resinous finish presented an attractive appearance. The stability of the 4 by 16 panel is superior to similar wood products.

While particle board production is not new on this continent, Wizewood will be the first plant to utilize a uniform wafer bonded in a dry process. When production problems have been worked out, it is expected that finishing procedures used elsewhere can be reduced by fifty per cent on the Wizewood waferboard.

November 8, 1961

Originator Of Waferboard Terms Wizewood 'Pioneers'

Dr. James D. A. Clarke, University of Oregon State, the originator of the waferboard process used by Wizewood Ltd., termed the men involved in the production of the new product here, "Pioneers in an undertaking unique on this continent." He charged the men to strive for a quality product of which they might all be proud.

Dr. Clarke, associated with the Scott Paper Company for many years, holds numerous patents on wood processes.

Over sixty plant employees attended the informal meeting and smoker held in the plant last Wednesday at 8 p.m.

John M. Gunn, a U.B.C. graduate, presently with C.C. Archibald and Associates, consulting engineers to Wizewood, conducted a "chalk talk" on the waferboard process. He discussed the various types of resins used in lumber products and pointed out the advantages of the phenolic (waterproof) resin used in the production of waferboard.

He went on to explain how waferboard could be made stronger or heavier or thicker by various changes in the production line. Mr. Gunn also stressed quality controls and indicated the build--in features of the equipment which would permit plant personnel to maintain these controls.

Lew Greer, general manager, introduced Dr. Clarke who spoke briefly of the future in the wood products industry. He stated that as the larger trees in the forests dwindled away, plywood manufacturers would have to find substitute products. Waferboard provided a ready solution, and here on the prairies, provided the means of utilizing what was ordinarily regarded as a "Weed Tree" (poplar) to manufacture a top quality product which compared most favorably with other wood products.

Dr. Clarke went on to say that the Wizewood plant had been very well engineered and that provisions had been made to allow for further refinements in the process as the plant personnel became experienced in the production of waferboard. He hinted at a limitless need for the product as time went on.

Wizewood Ltd. President, W. Thorpe, thanked the speakers and encouraged plant personnel to make suggestions for improvement when they saw an opportunity to do so.

September 26, 1962

Wizewood Anniversary On First Year Of Operation

Eight million square feet of "Aspenite" representing about 125,000 sheets of 4 x 16 board, have passed through the giant Onsrud-Berthelsen press at Wizewood Ltd., since the first test run on September 22nd, last year. The production of the eight millionth square foot marks Wizewood's first anniversary in Hudson Bay.

Although the plant started operations last September, it was not until February this year that full commercial production got underway. In the intervening period, plant and personnel concentrated on quality control of a five sixteenths sheet. Once uniformity and quality could be controlled, full commercial production was started.

At product presentation receptions held in Regina and Saskatoon earlier this year, "Aspenite" was offered in three grades; solid, select and standard, in seven thicknesses from one-quarter to three-quarter inch. Grant Industries Ltd. were appointed sole distributors to the building trade.

More recently, Wizewood has added channel and random grooving of Aspenite to regular lines. Experiments are being conducted to produce mahogany, birch and walnut veneer facings for various dimensions.

These and other decorative ideas will be used to give Aspenite a wider range of building applications. However, it may be some time yet before these new decorative finishes are ready for commercial production.

Since Aspenite was introduced to western markets, Company officials say, public acceptance of the product has been exceptionally good and sales are much higher than anticipated. There was a time this summer when Wizewood had difficulty meeting the demand of the market. However, production has been stepped up and all dimensions and grades are now available for immediate delivery.

Company officials pointed out that the demand for Aspenite has grown because it has less tendency to warp than other wood paneling and the new process bonds wood wafers with phenolic resin under heat and pressure to make an exceptionally strong, weatherproof panel. Its competitive price makes it attractive for home builders and those planning renovations.

During the past year, Wizewood has provided employment for a large number of local persons cutting poplar bolts, in addition to some 75 persons employed in the plant.

January 9, 1963

Million Dollar Fire At Wizewood

A flash fire of unknown origin raced through the central portion of the Wizewood Ltd. Aspenite plant during the early morning hours of January 2nd, causing an estimated one million dollars in damages. The fire alarm was turned in by the night watchman at 4:05 a.m. and by the time fire crews arrived at the scene, the blaze had spread to such an extent that extinguishing it before much damage was caused, seemed unlikely.

The peerless work of the plant crew and volunteer firemen prevented the fire from spreading to other areas of the plant.

Destroyed in the fire were the dry wafer storage areas, the blending, metering and filtering machines and conveyors, the administration offices and parts rooms as well as miscellaneous equipment in these areas.

It was learned Monday, that a fire proof filing cabinet containing many valuable records had escaped serious damage and only the contents of the top drawer had been damaged.

The fire was believed to have started between 3:30 and 4:00 a.m. and despite the fierce blaze, was under control within a few hours. Firemen continued to pour water into the burned out areas throughout the day to eliminate any danger of fire spreading.

Production supervisor Gordon Lawley, paid tribute to the untiring efforts of the plant crew and volunteer firemen in containing the blaze. He said that the million gallon water reservoir on the premises and the sprinkler system had both contributed to saving the plant.

The work of cleaning up debris started at 8:30 Monday morning, and while no official statement had been made regarding the commencement of rebuilding, it would appear that there is little doubt this will be done shortly.

A Board of Directors meeting has been called for January and it is expected an official announcement will be made at that time.

In the meantime, all employees have been laid off, except those who have been recalled for clean-up operations.

The three million dollar Wizewood plant went into commercial production last February and had celebrated the one year anniversary of their first test run last September 22nd.

During 1962, the firm had progressed steadily as production problems had been eliminated and sales had increased and the demand for "Aspenite" had grown. The plant employed over 70 people and had progressed to a two-shift per day production schedule.

January 16, 1963

Wizewood To Rebuild

The waferboard plant of Wizewood Ltd. At Hudson Bay will be rebuilt. Walter Thorpe, President of the Company has announced the decision to rebuild those parts of the factory destroyed in an early morning fire January 2nd.

Completed in 1961, the waferboard plant commenced operations in 1962 and was operating on a two-shift basis at the time of the fire. Its "Aspenite" product has met with very favorable acceptance by the construction and building trades and was being widely distributed throughout Canada.

To be rebuilt is approximately one-third of the production line, including wafer storage chests, blenders, felters and the forming line. Also destroyed and to be replaced are the Company offices.

In announcing the Company's intention to rebuild, Mr. Thorpe said that reconstruction would commence immediately following insurance settlements and the clearing of debris. It is planned to have the plant operational by early spring and to provide employment for the full staff as soon as possible. Some 20 regular employees have been at work since the fire and additional number will be required during the period of reconstruction. Inventories on hand were not damaged by the fire and shipments are being made against orders.

Engineering studies to replace damaged equipment have been initiated, while research into product development commenced before the fire, is continuing.

October 2, 1963

Wizewood Marks Second Year Of Production

September 22nd marked the completion of the second year since Wizewood turned out its first test board. In the two years 20 million square feet of Aspenite have been produced. This is the equivalent of a pathway four feet wide and stretching for almost 1,000 miles.

The past year was marked by a fire which occurred on January 2nd. While this fire caused some short lay-offs for employees and severely cut into the revenues of the contractors who supply the Company with poplar wood, the effects of the fire probably were not felt too greatly by the local economy. This is because the reconstruction of the plant was done mostly with local labor and supplies were purchased through local dealers where practical.

April 14, 1965

MacMillan Bloedel And Powell River Purchase Wizewood Plant

The sale of Wizewood Ltd. of Hudson Bay, to MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River Ltd., Vancouver, was announced today by Premier W. Ross Thatcher.

Mr. Thatcher said an agreement has been reached under which Wizewood will be taken over by MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River (Saskatchewan) Ltd., wholly owned subsidiary of the well-known B.C. Company. The purchase price is \$1,750,000. April 15th is the effective date of the agreement which is between MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River (Saskatchewan) Ltd. And the Government Finance office, the major shareholder and creditor of Wizewood.

Wizewood manufactures waferboard, a multi-purpose building product, at its plant in Hudson Bay. The Company has been in production since December 1961, with a six month halt in 1963 as a result of damage in a fire.

Wizewood's timber cutting rights, with certain amendments, have been transferred to MB & PR, the Premier said.

The Company has agreed to keep on staff all present employees of Wizewood, give preference to Saskatchewan people whenever practical in future employment policies and use Saskatchewan products and services wherever possible, Mr. Thatcher said.

In addition, it has agreed to operate the plant at the maximum capacity that is economically justifiable and expand production when feasible.

Equitable arrangements have been offered to the private investors in respect of their interests.

"Before the present Government took over," Mr. Thatcher said, "heavy losses had taken place. Last year the Company lost \$300,000 including depreciation. More over, investigation by industrial research experts indicated such losses would likely continue."

Mr. Thatcher said the entry of MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River into the Saskatchewan industrial picture was a highly significant event.

"MacMillan is one of the most rapidly growing companies in Canada. We are delighted to be able to welcome them to Saskatchewan."

At a press conference Monday morning, the cheque for the purchase price of \$1,750,000 was handed over to Government officials.

Charles A. Specht, MB & PR President addressed reporters with the remark that, "We are determined to be a good industrial citizen, and are well equipped to make an important contribution to industrial growth."

He went on to say his Company was confident about the future of Wizewood and if it does not expand in due course, it would be a rare exception among their many operations. The company plans to modernize and expand Wizewood as conditions warrant.

September 2, 1965

Aspenite Open House Attracts 55 Visitors

The "Open House" at the MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River Aspenite plant proved to be a huge success, as over 500 persons from Hudson Bay and surrounding communities turned out on Sunday, for conducted tours.

Members of the plant safety committee were in charge and tour parties were kept small enough that the tour leaders could explain each step of the operation.

With all Departments operating, visitors were able to observe the entire process of turning Aspen logs into Aspenite from the time the logs entered the debarker, until they emerged from the press in 4 x 16 sheets.

December 1, 1965

MB & PR Safety Class Receive Certificates

A social evening was held in the Rendezvous Friday, in honor of MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River employees from the Aspenite Division, who were awarded St. John Ambulance certificates upon successfully completing a first aid course in October.

Manager John Ross addressed the first aid graduates complimenting them on their initiative and foresight in taking the course.

He said MB & PR were proud to honor the employees in this way and hoped the example set by the group would encourage others to follow.

Mr. Ross said it was significant that none of the men present had been involved in industrial accidents during the year and that the first aid course probably served to make men more careful in their daily work.

Those graduates receiving certificates were Jay Hitchcock, Fred Canning, John Kostiuk, Ray Estin, John Robillard, Fred Yanke and Peter Wolbaum. Receiving vouchers were Max Morton and Leo Gisi. Grant Lewis received the medallion. Previous first aid grads were Arnold Laing (voucher) and Howard Cockwill (certificate).

February 7, 1968

Announce \$3,900,000 Expansion Program Of Aspenite Plant To Start Early This Year

The announcement of a \$3,900,000 expansion at the Aspenite plant in Hudson Bay was made jointly last Friday by Premier Ross Thatcher in Regina and the Honorable J.V. Clyne, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of MacMillan Bloedel in Vancouver.

Construction is scheduled to start in May of this year and the new production facilities will begin operating in September of 1969. The expanded facilities will more than double the present capacity of the plant to make it the largest particle board complex in Canada.

The plant which is known as the Aspenite Division of MacMillan Bloedel, presently employs about 170 persons, 110 in the mill and 60 in the woods. When operating at full capacity, the expanded plant will create another 80 jobs in manufacturing and 60 in the woods to bring total employment to 310.

The Aspenite Division consumes about 45,000 cords of poplar to produce some 310 million square feet of one-sixteenth "Aspenite" particle board annually. The expansion will increase capacity to 645 million square feet and a consumption of about 100,000 cords annually.

The Saskatchewan government has allocated additional timber to MacMillan Bloedel to support the expansion. The expanded plant will be Saskatchewan's largest woods products mill.

After initial improvements to production equipment, the MB Research and Development Group came to Hudson Bay to review and test further ideas in improving board quality and productivity. These tests proved to be positive and good gains were made at the Aspenite Division.

"Throughout this whole period," said Mr. Foster, "the plant operating and maintenance crews pitched in with suggestions for improvement and put their whole effort into making the mill even better."

By March 1967 it became evident that the market demand would exceed production and that an expansion might be necessary. A detailed market study confirmed this suspicion and subsequently a proposal for expansion was submitted to senior MacMillan Bloedel management.

Annual allowable cuts were determined, based on the regeneration study and the 70 year growing cycle of Aspen. The cutting schedule of Aspen was designed to support the expanded mill in perpetuity.

September 27, 1981

MacMillan Bloedel Marks The 20th Anniversary Of Aspenite

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August, 1983

Last Load On Old No. 1 Marks Start Of MB Modernization

The shutdown of Number 1 press at the MacMillan Bloedel Aspenite plant at 8:49 a.m. on August 24th, marked the start of a \$14.8 million modernization program at the Hudson Bay Division.

Built at a cost of \$3 million in 1961, the plant was rebuilt after a fire in January 1965, and a \$4 million expansion in 1968 saw the addition of a second press line, more than doubling production.

Since that first press load was produced by Wizewood Ltd. in September of 1961, the 14 escapement, Onsrud-Berthelsen press has produced over one million loads of aspenite or the equivalent of some eleven thousand carloads of building material.

On hand for the shut-down of "old No. 1" on Wednesday, was one of the first press operators John Kostiuk and Elof Herlen who ran the last press load. Other plant personnel whose employment at the plant goes back to the sixties were Ken Spark and Jay Hitchcock.

Resident manager John Didula said that for the balance of August, the plant will be able to operate the Number 2 line with the press installed in 197-.

In September, crews will remove old installations and machinery which is to be replaced or modified. For a 10 week period commencing September 26th, a modernization crew which at times will reach a total over 100, will be working around the clock. It is expected they will complete the job early in December. Didula said a tentative start-up date has been set for the week of December 12th.

With over 100 outside workers involved in the project, it is expected there will be some pressure on housing accommodations. To complicate matters, the annual influx of hunters will coincide with the peak employment at the plant.

Cancel Tours --- Commencing immediately, all plant tours will be suspended. Didula explained it would be too hazardous to have tours passing through the plant during construction. It was felt that in the interest of safety, all tours should be cancelled.

Woodroom --- One of the main areas of modernization will be the present woodroom. A complete change will take place in this area as new waferizers are installed and the size of wafers changes from 1 1/2 inches to 3 inches. The four existing 24 inch waferizers will be replaced by two new 34 inch machines. The new sized wafer will provide for better productivity and utilization while adding considerably to the quality of the product.

Dryers --- This is another area that will undergo considerable change. One double-size dryer will be added while three of the four units will have burners converted from natural gas to solid fuel for greater utilization of waste material.

Storage Bins --- Two storage bins will be changed completely to accommodate the larger size wafers. The present screw transport will be changed to "live bottom" bins. Didula was enthusiastic about this new concept which was designed by PS & E Engineering of Prince Albert, who are considered industry leaders in the design of live bottom bins.

No. 1 Line --- With a change to larger wafers, the 22 year old "Elephant Trunk" farmers will be replaced completely. New farming heads will provide more accurate metering of the wafer flow, to produce a more uniform panel.

Present trim saws on the discharge end of the press will be replaced by more automated units which will trim panels on all four sides.

Construction --- While a number of firms will be involved in the modernization project, PS & E of Prince Albert will be responsible for the metal work. Metal Fab of Saskatoon will handle the electrical work. MacMillan's own personnel will be doing the necessary millwright work to assist outside crews wherever possible.

John Didula thought the extra activity during the modernization should have a considerable impact on the economy of Hudson Bay.

May 1995

Stronger OSB Panel Will Access Larger Market Place

The proposed lumber processing plant in Hudson Bay will produce a stronger oriented strand board (OSB) that will access a larger market than the present OSB panels, Saskfor Products Limited Partnership president John Robillard, said.

The key to the more durable product is longer wafers. The new OSB panels will be manufactured from six inch wafers, twice the size presently used in the OSB division of Saskfor Products. A new 7/16 inch or 7/16 to 3/8 inch panel will have the strength of present half inch panels, Robillard commented.

The stronger panels will be used in the production of engineered high beams, high joists and flooring, commodities beyond the reach of present OSB panels.

The present OSB market is mainly North America, but it isn't restricted to only North America.

Environmentally Friendly -- The proposed new mill will be foremost in meeting environment standards.

"This mill is designed with the state of the art environmental control equipment. The air quality is going to be better than anything in the Province of Saskatchewan from an industrial point of view. It is going to be an extremely modern, clean operation. It will be nothing like we see in the existing plants around the Province."

"...We are not going to affect water quality because it is a dry process. The only water we use in our plant is for the employees' use. Water quality is not an issue ... The new requirements are so much greater than the existing facilities have, this will be a tremendously clean and safe environmental plant to work in," Robillard said.

Once in operation, one of the goals of Saskfor Products will be to use waster bark and wood waste for a heat system. The waste will then be burned rather than stored in bark or sawdust piles.

Robillard said the safety standards in the new plant will be stringent, as legislated through provincial and federal laws. It is the responsibility of the Company to ensure the best environmental work place is provided for employees.

Environmental Impact Study -- The environmental impact assessment that is in process may not have been necessary had the Government not been involved, Robillard said.

"If we were not in partnership with the Provincial Government we would be treated like any other Company , and we would not necessarily have to do an environmental impact assessment for the plant ..."

'We were informed long before we ever made an application that the Minister (Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management) arbitrarily demanded an environmental impact assessment for this plant, maybe because they (Government) were involved.'

"We as a new Company will prepare an application which will consist of pages and pages and pages of questions that have to be answered."

Part of the environmental assessment process is public involvement where there will be two sets of public meetings, giving the public the opportunity to review what the Company is doing. The present environmental conditions in the area will be outlined and the Company will identify what changes the new plant will be making.

Reports will be given on the Company 's effect on air quality and water quality, as well as waste and bi-product streams, increased transportation, and public and occupational health and safety. A major component of the study is the socio-economic effects of the investment on the community, namely there will be up to 200 construction workers and 150 new employees, plus 300 jobs created for seasonal work through bush contractors. The Company will have to identify how it will minimize environmental and socio-economic changes.

There will likely be one public meeting before July and another in September or October before final approval for the new Company is given. Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management is responsible for the meetings.

Contrasting the proposed mill to the pulp mill in Prince Albert that uses a lot of water waste, Robillard said on a scale of one to ten, if the pulp mill is a 10 as far as risk goes, the new Hudson Bay facility will be a one.

Run Independently -- Robillard said the Company will be run without outside interference. "There is really no Government involvement in this. The new Company is being run as an independent Company . It is no longer a Crown Corporation and I think the people have to understand that it is going to be much different. It will not be run from Vancouver, and it will not be run from Regina or with involvement or interference, whatever the case may be, of the MLA's in the Province. It will be run as an independent business."

Conservation Network -- Joy Dancer of the Saskatchewan Forest Conservation Network has expressed concern about a chemical that will be used in the new mill. Robillard said Dancer is referring to a chemical known as MDI, a chemical the new Company will not be using.

"MDI is in every household in this community, every one. Anybody who has got a refrigerator, or hot water heater, or has tennis shoes or ... running shoes had MDI because the soles of those shoes are made up of MDI. MDI is just a plastic type of composite, it is used for the lining of refrigerators, hot water heaters. It is a binder ... We are not even considering the use of MDI in the OSB plant. I don't know where this all came from ... "

The same resin used by the present OSB division for 34 years will be part of the new manufacturing process, he said. Saskfor Products would like to improve the resin in co-operation with its manufacturer, both from an environmental and efficiency point of view.

Future of Saskfor -- Growing for the Future -- is a slogan Robillard would like to promote at Saskfor Products. That encompasses the responsibility to ensure that harvested trees are replenished so that the children and grandchildren of the area will have forestry-related jobs when they become adults.

This will be accomplished by the Province which has a commitment to reforestation through money earned from stumpage fees, and Saskfor Products which will be spending money on reforestation.

One paradox in harvesting aspen is that, other than burning, the tree species regenerates faster through harvesting. When aspen is cut down, hundreds of others spring forth from the root system. An aspen that dies without the interference of humans does not regenerate as prolifically.

The only areas that will require special reforestation attention are the landing and some loading areas where large equipment will churn the soil and affect the trees' root systems. The loading and landing areas will be replanted each year.

For every hardwood (aspen) cut, another 10 are planted or regrow that wouldn't have regenerated on their own. An aspen tree can mature in 50 to 70 years, depending on growing conditions and soil while softwoods take up to 100 years.

Secondly, the Company wants to ensure that its product will be long lasting and will meet marketplace demands, Robillard remarked. The Company will also be researching the possible utilization of spruce trees. The peelers (larger sections of the softwood) come to the plywood plant in Hudson Bay, while the sawmill in Carrot River utilizes a smaller part of each log down to a 10 cm diameter. A substantial portion of each tree, below 10 cm goes to the pulp mill in Prince Albert. Through some research and work within Saskfor Products, the smallest log segments may be used in the OSB production utilizing both aspen and spruce, as other plants are doing.

First Nations -- Saskfor Products is working with the Province, First Nations and the public to ensure there is involvement and participation of everybody in the Company, Robillard commented.

Robillard met with the Prince Albert Grand Council and First Nations' representatives who see a lot of opportunity for employment in forestry. At a meeting with a contingent from Red Earth - Shoal Lake, discussion was held on openings for employment. The aboriginals comprise 20 per cent of the area's population, a significant factor in the forestry business, Robillard remarked. Saskfor products will work closely with them to ensure they have proper representation and employment in the mill.

If there is a treaty agreement, Saskfor Products will work with whatever group signs a land title.

Selling Wood to B.C. -- Commenting on the sale of spruce from Saskatchewan woodlots to B.C., Robillard said that once forest companies in B.C. cut their quota of wood, they look elsewhere for their wood supply, such as Saskatchewan.

"We certainly could use that wood. We would like to have it for the future if it is not being harvested right now, but it is something that we have control of, not on private land.... At the present time, we have enough wood for the foreseeable future to run our business. We don't have to go into a bidding war to get this wood. The season (the wood is going to B.C.) is, if you have got a plant in B.C. that is worth \$40 million and that plant is only running one shift because it hasn't got enough wood, because your investment is so great, your overhead costs are there whether it is running or not, so all your wood is incremental cost. You can pay a very, very high number for the incremental wood, because then it averages. If your only other option was to shut your facility down, if you don't have that incremental wood, then it is very costly. They could not afford to run a mill full out on wood from Saskatchewan. Impossible, impossible. This only supplements their own wood to give them full operating opportunities ..."

Move to Hudson Bay -- The move to Hudson Bay from Ontario is a tremendous opportunity, Robillard commented. "Number one because I would have the opportunity to get into a very exciting business in a very exciting Company that has some potential and growth for the future. Secondly, it is coming home for me, so it is very easy, it is something you look forward to. One of the big problems we have is getting people who have never lived in Hudson Bay to come to Hudson Bay. They see it as almost an isolated area where there is virtually a change of lifestyle from a major city of another part of Canada. But for someone who has lived here and has had the good times that my family has had here, this is a tremendous opportunity. We looked at it as that and said, "I think I can contribute something to this new Company , and I think this Company will be a tremendous asset to Hudson Bay and the northeast part of this Province ..."

The opportunity first presented itself in October of 1994, when Robillard was made aware of the possible joint venture between SFP and MacMillan Bloedel. He had to leave his position at MacMillan Bloedel, and he made that decision knowing full well that the opportunities were going to be very good.

He has signed a contract at Saskfor Products to the end of the year 2000. The first clause states that upon completion in December of 2000, and agreement upon both parties from SFP and MacMillan Bloedel, the contract can be renewed. Three representatives from SFP and MacMillan Bloedel sit on the Board and he reports to the chairman.

Robillard said when he first came to Hudson Bay in January to interview for his job, he saw uncertainty in the area; a week after the announcement, there was a large difference in the mentality of the community. There were smiles on people's faces, there was more of a sense of security. Since leaving the community in 1980, he has noticed the community is largely the same. Some stores have changed names, some have closed, but Hudson Bay is still the same community he knew and grew up in.

Robillard has 30 years of experience in the wood industry where he has managed a number of mills, worked on the designs of new mills, as well as locating and building new mills for MacMillan Bloedel and Trust Joist MacMillan.

Robillard grew up in Hudson Bay where he attended school, served as a Town Councillor from 1973 to 1978, and Mayor from 1978 to 1980. While living here, he was active in the community where he coached hockey and baseball. In 1980 the Robillard family moved to Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Hiring -- In the future, a hiring committee will be put together that will assess the requirements for employees and take applications based on those requirements. Preference will be give to people in the northeast part of the Province.