

The R.J. Noble Company continues to evolve with new Astec Double Barrel drum mix plant in Corona

By Brian Hoover

R.J. Noble Company (R.J. Noble) is a General Civil Engineering Contractor that specializes in grading and asphalt paving projects, with two asphalt plants, a rock plant, and a recycling operation. The company started out in 1950, when Robert Noble made a deal with landowner Roy Kokx, to acquire land to form a rock plant, small asphalt plant and a pit mining operation in the City of Orange. The company started out on a bare minimum of 25-acres, and by 1953, Robert Noble had grown his company to 25 employees while acquiring an additional 50-acres from Roy Kokx to expand the rock quarry operation. The business has been family oriented from the start, with Robert Noble, two of his brothers, a cousin and a nephew, along with Robert's brother-in-law contributing to the company's success. Robert's

brother, Bert Noble, developed and designed the company's first asphalt plant, and in 1962, he became vice president in charge of engineering for the R.J. Noble Company. Paul Cleary, Sr. had been serving as the vice president, and upon Robert Noble's death in 1965, he took over ownership of the land and company based on an agreement where the survivor takes all. The Cleary family, led by Paul, Sr. and his two sons, continued to own and operate the company for more than 28 years.

In 1956, Roy Kokx's son-in-law, William T. Carver, was brought in to learn the business from the ground up. His son, Michael J. Carver (Mike Carver), started his career with

R.J. Noble in 1977, and he also worked his way up, literally starting with tasks like pulling weeds and sweeping floors. He attended night school and graduated with a BS degree in business management from Cal State Fullerton. Carver worked hard and eventually became the company's top estimator and project manager. He was promoted to vice president in 1998 and went on to purchase the company from Paul Cleary, Jr. in 1999. Through Carver's leadership, the company now owns the original 25-acres in

Orange, along with an additional 100-acres in Corona. R.J. Noble performs most of their asphalt

Background: R.J. Noble Company's new Astec Double Barrel drum mix plant in Corona.





paving and construction operations in Orange and Riverside counties, while occasionally working in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. In addition to contracting and production, the company also owns and operates a large landfill, a trucking enterprise, and several storage facilities.

R.J. Noble has been a leader in the production, manufacturing, engineering, and recycling of asphalt for more than 60-years. They currently produce a variety of materials for their own paving company, as well as for the state of California, its cities, and private enterprise. These products include hot and warm mix asphalt, Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement, sand, and concrete products. They own and operate two large multiple-resource plants, as well as a rock quarry, a rock-crushing plant and a recycling operation at both production facilities. Their recycling facilities currently process around 500,000 tons of asphalt, concrete, and rubber annually, while producing more than a million tons of asphalt mix between their two manufacturing facilities.

R.J. Noble Company has been at their Orange headquarters for more than 65 years, and at their Corona location for 40 years. They upgraded their batch plant operation in Orange to a Double Barrel drum plant in 2008, and due to its success, the decision

Left: The Carver Family (L to R) KaSondra, Brenda, Mike and Austin performing the ribbon cutting ceremony in Corona.

was made to do the same at the Corona location. Terry McGill is the general manager in charge of all operations for R.J. Noble Company, and a big part of his job is to continually look for ways to make R.J. Noble Company safer and more productive. "Our research indicates that there will be continued aggressive growth in the Inland Empire and surrounding areas, so we made the decision a few years back to upgrade our Corona batch plant to a new Astec Double Barrel drum plant," says McGill. "While the batch plant allowed us to produce individual 5-ton mixes, the drum plant offers much higher efficiencies and more production and storage capabilities. We use the new silos to store multiple mixes in larger production runs which benefits everyone."

According to McGill, the new Astec plant is full of the industry's newest technology, including a state-of-the-art computer system and fiber optics. "We began the planning stages of our new drum plant in late 2015, and by the end of 2017, it was up and running. That may seem like a long time, but is actually quite an amazing feat," says McGill.

Above: Astec Double Barrel drum dryer/mixer at R.J. Noble Company Corona location combines the latest in hot mix technology.

"There are other companies and agencies that have been at it for four or five years and still have not yet broken ground. We are fortunate to have an owner like Mike Carver who has taken such a hands-on, aggressive approach to this new plant." McGill points out that there are many other individuals that have contributed to the implementation, construction and overall success of the new Astec drum plant. "In addition to our owner, Mike Carver, who was the ramrod behind this entire operation, it is important to recognize others that have helped to make this new plant a reality," says McGill. "Our VP of operations, Austin Carver, for instance, and our VP of administration and marketing, KaSondra Carver, have both worked hard at making sure that things continued to progress at a fast pace." McGill also says that Mike Carver's wife, Brenda, was extremely involved and helped out in several roles along the way. "I would also like to take a moment to give special thanks to Tom Davis and his daughter, Kristen Davis of Davis Consulting, along with Scott Taylor of Taylor Environmental Services, who worked very hard at putting

together the environmental plans and worked closely with the county of Riverside to get the necessary approvals. This was a tedious and arduous task, and their knowledge and experience enabled us to move forward on time."

McGill believes that Astec is the leading manufacturer in the asphalt production business and points out that R.J. Noble has been working with the company for many years. "Our relationship with Astec has grown and matured over our many years in business. We have looked at other plants, but the support we have received from Astec is just A-number-one," says McGill. "They put a great deal of research and development into their products, and it shows on the production and efficiency side of our operation."

JR (Robert) Gillespie is the plant superintendent for R.J. Noble out at their Corona facility. He has been with the company for many years, and like McGill, he was assertively involved in the implementation and construction of the new Astec drum plant. "Our new Astec Double Barrel drum mix plant is capable of producing 500-tons an hour, and with new legislation like SB1 now in place, I have a feeling we will need that sort of production in

the near future," says Gillespie. "In the past, we have operated our Corona production facility through an asphalt batch plant without storage silos, and we averaged close to 400,000 tons annually over the past five or so years. I believe that we will exceed the 500,000-ton mark within the next year, and our goal is to reach 1 million tons in production within the next five years."

Astec Double Barrel drum plant is a game changer regarding production and efficiency for R.J. Noble. "It is more efficient with the new state-of-the-art motors and components that not only help with added production but also to conserve valuable energy resources," says Gillespie. "We are not burning as much gas or creating as much blue smoke because we are running at cooler temperatures with our new green system." Gillespie points out that because they can produce more tons per hour, they can now better serve their customers with any and all mix designs. "If I have a customer that wants 2,000 tons of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch mix and another requires $\frac{1}{2}$ inch mix, I can easily supply that and store a variety of other mixes in our new high capacity Astec storage silos."

According to Gillespie, the new Astec 500-ton Double Barrel drum mix plant includes six 300-ton asphalt storage silos, five 35,000-gallon CEI oil tank storage silos, as well as a 10,000-gallon CEI emulsion tank. "The majority of the components that make up our new drum plant are an Astec product," says Gillespie. "This includes the Double Barrel drum, the conveyors and screens, as well as the three RAP bins, six aggregate bins, drag conveyor, baghouse, storage silos and scales. We custom designed and built the block house, which is located under the two-level Astec control room." Gillespie continues by pointing out that the blue smoke control system was provided and installed by Butler-Justice, Inc. out of Anaheim. "Most of the components came from Chattanooga, Tennessee, except for the blockhouse and blue smoke control system," says Gillespie. "The CEI tanks came from New Mexico, and everything was delivered safely and without damage or other issues." Gillespie says that there were around 68 loads in all, and Astec sent out a construction crew July 14, 2017 that worked closely with R.J. Noble's six operating engineers. "We began by

[Continued on page 34]

Background: R.J. Noble Company's new Astec drum plant is capable of producing 500-tons per hour.



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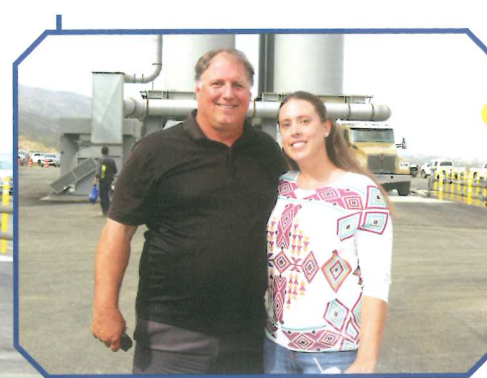
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Points, Top of Silos.**



Above: Terry McGill, General Manager, KaSondra Gonzalez, VP of Admin. & Marketing, Mike Carver, President, Brenda Carver, Austin Carver, VP of Operations and JR Gillespie, Plant Superintendent.



Above Right: R. J. Noble Company new Astec Drum Plant ribbon cutting ceremony catered by In-N-Out Burger.



Top Right: Terry McGill, General Manager R. J. Noble Company with Kristen Davis, Davis Consulting.

[Continued from page 32]

setting the legs onto the newly poured concrete foundation for the storage silos, as we continued building, more components would arrive," says Gillespie. "We then moved on to install the Double Barrel drum, followed by the baghouse which arrived in two pieces." According to Gillespie, the control center was then set on top of the blockhouse, and then the MCC room was put in place. "We finished off construction by installing the feeder bins for the aggregate and RAP, and then lastly the oil tanks," says Gillespie. "This entire process required a lot of hard work and not much sleep, but we had some great minds at work here that made the entire process much more rewarding." R.J. Noble worked closely and affectively with Edison, the gas company, and other permitting agencies.

"We got a lot of help from companies like Davis Consulting and Taylor Environmental

Services who were instrumental in putting together a safe and aggressive plan while working respectfully with all of the various governmental and local entities," says Gillespie. "I also personally received uncompromised support from our owners, who put the responsibility in my and others hands without micromanaging us in the process. Terry McGill and I worked well together, and we had an outstanding crew from our own R.J. Noble team, Astec, CEI, Butler-Justice and other vendors. It is also important that we thank and recognize our wives, who were so very patient during this long and challenging project."

R.J. Noble Company is a vertically integrated company that produces and installs hot mix and warm mix asphalt products, while also providing materials to contractors and government agencies throughout Southern California. The company has a reputation for championing environmental issues that affect

the asphalt paving industry. They also have a reputation for caring greatly for their employees, providing a family oriented atmosphere throughout their long history. R.J. Noble has had as many as four generations of family working for them at one time, and several of these families are still represented at R.J. Noble. These include the Schildts, Wrights, Clearys, Carvers, Stices, Kirbys, McCowens, Mendozas, Rodriguezes, McGheheys, Hiltons, Porters and Carrolls. "Family values, along with safety are the two most important goals for Mike Carver and everyone else here at R.J. Noble," says McGill. "We are here for the long haul and investing in our future through people and equipment is what is going to take us into the next decade." For more information on R.J. Noble Company, please visit their website at www.rjnoblecompany.com or call their Orange headquarters at (714) 637-1550. **CA**