aSa's 20-Year Club

Five employees celebrate two decades of service and reflect on their roles at aSa.

Michele Albert

Hire Date: May 3, 1982
First Project: Programming Cash Receipts Screen in DOS Commercial
Current Title: Director, Business Systems
Reflection: I'm very glad for all the opportunities I've been given and all the lasting friendships I've made. People I met on DOS installations years ago I'm still friends with today. I have soared with the eagles and hooted with the owls.

Linda Barker

Hire Date: September 8, 1985
First Project: Programming Customer Listing Report in DOS Commercial
Current Title: Senior Software Consultant/QA Analyst
Reflection: Looking back over my time at aSa, I would have to say that the primary reason I stayed on is that I was never asked to compromise principles or standards when dealing with customers. The company philosophy and mine were always in sync: deal honestly with the customer and put them first, because there wouldn't be an aSa without them. Customer service was always one of the most rewarding aspects of my job, and I have, over time, forged relationships and collected fond memories that I will always value.

Tim Berg

Hire Date: December 2, 1985
First Project: Programming a stand-alone Varying Bar application
Current Title: Vice President, Business Development
Reflection: I've had the opportunity and privilege to visit many rebar shops in North America and parts of the world, to gain first-hand insight into the production process. Through my travels, I see how aSa software helps companies produce more with less — more estimates, more bar details, and more steel with less man-hours. Our products can do this because they are innovative and intelligent, and because they connect to shop machinery providing automated fabrication. I enjoy meeting people and helping them do their jobs better.

Cathy Friend

Hire Date: March 4, 1985
First Project: Programming schedules for Interactive Detailing
Current Title: Vice President, Software Development
Reflection: For me, it's about the people here. It's about working as a team ... rallying around challenges together. Team effort is what lets us overcome obstacles and develop products that our customers rely on every day to run their businesses.

Frank Zambotti

Hire Date: May 21, 1984
First Project: Programming in DOS Commercial
Current Title: Director, Systems Integration
Reflection: Long ago, aSa made a commitment to research and development ... to keeping the company at the forefront of technology for the rebar industry. It has been interesting to see the evolution of aSa software from the DEC microcomputer environment, to PC-based DOS systems, to the Windows applications of today. I don't know where technology will take us 20 years from now ... but I **do** know that we are committed to being there.

Success Story

Family Business U to Improve Produ

Whitacre Engineering takes advantage o of integrated aSa Scheduling, Shearing,

The LePages are the fourth family to own Whitacre Engineering since the company was established in 1920. Over the years, the business has found success by adapting to changes in its industry. For example, Whitacre was originally founded to engineer, distribute, and install a clay tile flooring system, but the operation transitioned into reinforced concrete as the building industry changed. More recently, the company is adapting by taking advantage of new technology — particularly aSa production solutions.

Whitacre Engineering is owned by brothers Keith and Todd LePage. Keith explains that they looked carefully at "software and equipment" when making decisions about improving operations.

Whitacre Engineering works closely with rebar placing companies to provide "seamless service" to its customers. Above, ironworkers install rebar fabricated by Whitacre.

Uses aSa ction

f new technology; sees the benefit and Opto-Shear Console solutions.

Above, at Whitacre's Ohio facility, an employee automatically updates on-hand inventory by scanning bar coded bundle tags with a radio frequency scanner. The Bundle Inventory application, aSa's newest module, integrates with aSa Production and Material Tracking to record and track heat/mill cert information. Below, a Whitacre shearman fabricates steel by following the aSa Opto-Shear Console's on-screen prompts. Whitacre recently installed aSa controllers in its Canton, Ohio, and Syracuse, New York, fabricating shops.

"Historically, shop procedures haven't changed drastically over the years, but software has improved greatly," says Keith.

Whitacre, which is located in Canton, Ohio, and Syracuse, New York, has used aSa Bar List and Tagging software since 1995. Recently, Keith and Todd made the decision to add aSa's Shearing module, as well as three newer aSa applications: Scheduling, Material Tracking, and Bundle Inventory.

According to owner Keith LePage, Whitacre Engineering invested in aSa Shearing software because it allows users to optimize easily and efficiently, yet is flexible enough to handle unexpected run-in work. He goes on to say that even shear operators with little experience can achieve great results with the aSa Opto-Shear Console.

Keith explains that his company had looked into optimization programs in the past but found applications "either too complicated to use or not able to easily accommodate run-in orders." He says that aSa Shearing is a good solution because it "allows us to optimize but has the flexibility to break in with quick orders. It gives us a degree of latitude in the work we do."

"Reducing scrap is important in this time of rising steel costs," Keith points out. He notes that although Whitacre's use of Shearing is "in its infancy," he can see the potential for improved shop productivity. He adds that aSa Scheduling is "great for communicating" and that it "helps us to plan ahead so that we can get the good numbers from optimization ... to get the yield we want."

aSa Opto-Shear Consoles were recently installed in Whitacre's Canton and Syracuse shops. (A second console will be installed in Canton in 2005.) Keith says aSa controllers "remove barriers to allow shearmen to achieve great results." He explains, "With the aSa consoles, you can take someone off the street and get him up to speed (in minimal time) because the information is right there in front of him. Otherwise it could be months or even years before you have confidence in a shearman's ability."

Speaking about his company, Keith stresses the fact that Whitacre is more than simply a material supplier. "What sets us apart is our ability to provide seamless service," says Keith. "To meet the contractor's demanding schedules, we closely coordinate quality placing drawings, fabrication, and delivery with qualified placing subcontractors. This minimizes the scheduling required by the contractor's project manager," he adds.

Whitacre supplies material for projects in northern and eastern Ohio, northern West Virginia, western Pennsylvania, and central Upstate New York. High-profile projects have included Cleveland's Jacob's Field, Browns Stadium, and Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame, as well as the Syracuse Carrier Dome. Currently the company's largest project is the AEP Mitchell Power Foundation in Moundsville, West Virginia, a 4,000 ton job.