

Bonney Forge: Investing

Since its founding in 1876, Bonney Forge has been recognized for its manufacturing excellence and high-quality product standards. For the last 144 years, the company has exceeded expectations and earned the trust of end users worldwide. Its dedication to customers' needs and its investment in expanding its manufacturing capabilities has made the company a world leader in the valve market.

Valve World Americas recently spoke with Bonney Forge's Managing Director of BFE, Antonio Sonzogni; Vice President Product Engineering, Specialties and China Operations, Paul Heald; Vice President, Valve Products and Business Development - Southwest Region, Steve Thomas; and Director of Sales Engineering and Valve Projects, Tim Harrigan, to discuss the company's ongoing commitment to delivering great customer experiences.

By Brittani Schroeder and Sarah Bradley

Bonney Forge has a clear mission statement which guides it through everything from its daily tasks to its large projects. It strives "to be the recognized leader in our industry; marketing and manufacturing forged steel valves, cast steel valves, forged fittings, branch connections and other related products, to satisfy our customer's expectations."

To achieve this mission the company's products are manufactured and tested in strict accordance to ASTM, ASME, API, ISO, and other global industry codes. Its use of modern machining equipment and adherence to rigid overall inspection procedures assures exceptional quality products. "While we have a broad portfolio of standard products, we also manufacture specially engineered valves to make sure our customer is getting something that is custom fit to their application," explained Harrigan.

Quality assurance is a key component in the manufacturing process. By bringing in-house, key aspects of the manufacturing process, like forging, machining, assembly, and testing, quality control is kept at the utmost level. In addition to testing, Bonney Forge does not outsource its manufacturing. "Even though we have facilities in China and around the globe, they are still fully Bonney Forge owned and run by our people. It is really important to us to have control over product quality and the production process, and that is the best way to achieve it," said Heald.

Another important focus for the company is its customers. "Service to the customer is key. For our company to be successful, we need to be able to serve the market with high quality products and we need to do it quickly," said Sonzogni. "In the past, a medium-sized project was expected in 48 weeks. Now the timeline is down to 28 to 30 weeks, and we need to be able to keep up with that demand."

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A Global Presence

Being able to supply customers with the same product quality around the globe is of the utmost importance to the company. "We are able to satisfy customers across the board, from Europe to Asia, to North America and beyond," said Sonzogni.

An important part of being a global company is having multiple locations around the world that are divided into manufacturing facilities, service centers, and sales offices. "One thing that makes our company different is the fact that our manufacturing facilities are dedicated to one type of manufacturing only," Heald explained. "One facility's



Pictured here is a 12 NPS Class 900 Bonney Forge gate valve. All of the company's cast steel valve designs are controlled by Bonney Forge's engineering office in Houston, Texas.



Pictured here is Bonney Forge Shanghai, where the cast steel valves are manufactured. This state of the art facility continually year after year is improving output capabilities, not only in quantity, but most importantly, quality.

manufacturing focus is specific product while another facility's manufacturing focus is a different product, and there is some crossover between the two. We believe we can control everything much better if we are focused on specific products at specific locations."

Despite its global reach, Bonney Forge prides itself for its team-oriented approach to thinking of new processes and tackling new projects. "Having a global presence gives us a good understanding of our personnel and our customers. We all think differently, and having alternative viewpoints and opinions is a great advantage to the work we do," said Harrigan.

China Facility Upgrades

Bonney Forge's China facility has been given many upgrades over the last few years. As the site continues to grow, the company has realized the importance of making the facility a state-of-the-art manufacturing factory. "We have new machining centers and new automated test equipment. We manufacture at a highly technical level, and with our continuous upgrades we have made at

our various facilities are aimed towards that goal," said Thomas.

Automation is quite prevalent in the China facility. "If we have more automated operations, we can have processes running around the clock. This is great for meeting the demands of quick turnaround times," explained Heald. With automated processes, the company has more control over the quality of their products. "Sometimes people look at us and wonder how we have such a broad product line. They think we have a gazillion people working at our facilities to get everything ready for our orders. It is the opposite: we have our engineers, but we have the help of automation technology to make sure we can get our product out on time," Heald continued.

Coupled with numerous upgrades to manufacturing capabilities, Bonney Forge's continued third-party testing of every shipment ensures their customers receive defect-free product.

The company has also made a number of advancements to its cast steel valves at the China facility. "We are focusing



Pictured here valve bodies mounted in Bonney Forge's in-house magnetic particle test bench, this test utilizes a wet fluorescent liquid to detect flaws.

in Quality, and the Future!



on making a broad range of cast valve types, sizes and pressure classes and offering cryogenic cast valves," said Harrigan. "We manufacture up to 36-inch valves at Bonney Forge Shanghai."

The Fast Track Program

The FastTrack program at Bonney Forge was designed with customers in mind who require a quick turnaround, from order to delivery. "We find that some customers come to us when there are valve shortages on a project, or when they have very special valve specifications," explained Heald. When a customer needs a valve made with specialty materials, Bonney Forge can do it quickly due to its large inventory. The company runs the program from both its forged facility and its cast facility, which aids with ensuring shorter lead time. "We do not want to wait around for an order and then order materials to start production. We plan our raw material and finished product inventory based off of our history and the material changes we see in the industry.



Shown here is the new, in-house, state of the art, automated heat treatment furnace and aerated quench tanks thermally stabilizing a fresh batch of F347 Stainless Steel forgings.

We are always looking ahead for what could come down the line for us, so when we get an order, we can complete it quickly," said Thomas.

"The program is a success," Harrigan relayed. "We continuously have orders for FastTrack. It is great for customers who need a really short lead time, and we are more than happy to help them out."

The FastTrack program started in 2014. "An advantage we have is that we are already certified to provide specialty valves, and all our documentation is in order," said Sonzogni. "Having all the paperwork ready makes the whole process go a little quicker, which the customers appreciate."

Integrating Two Facilities into One

At the end of 2019, Bonney Forge made some changes to its forging and manufacturing facilities located in Europe. The vertically integrated forging plant in Bosisio was moved into a state-of-the-art facility at the main plant. Everything is now under one roof in order to optimize its product throughput. "We completed the move of our forge shop, which was located about an hour drive from the main manufacturing facility. We merged the forge shop and the production shop together, and it has been very beneficial for us so far," Sonzogni explained. "As of January 2020, we were fully operational."

At its previous location, there was no potential to expand the forge shop, which limited the company. "The forge shop was located in a residential area, and there was a lot of concern about the noise coming from the facility. We were only able to run three presses at a time, so that we did not exceed the allowable noise level," Sonzogni relayed. "We also could not run any shift work because of the noise curfew. By moving to the present location, we are able to run all of our presses at the same time and incorporate shift work. And we invested in an all new automated heat treat process." The process to merge the forged and production facilities took approximately 18 months to complete.

A Specialty Company

By designing and manufacturing specialty products for its customers, Bonney Forge sets themselves apart from other manufacturers. The company creates more than just gate, globe and check valves. "We make anything from an upstream to a downstream valve, and anything from a special chemical service valve to a special high pressure and temperature service valve. We are very versatile," Heald admitted. "People see our standard list of products and think that is all we do, but we make a lot of specialty products that are not in our catalogue. We work closely with our customers and get them the products they need. Having multiple factories helps us to do this."

When a customer comes to the company needing a specialty valve, Bon-



Pictured is Bonney Forge Europe, where all forged steel valves are manufactured, but that's not all this facility does – Bonney Forge Europe also manufactures engineered to order valves for critical applications.



Pictured here are forged Alloy 825 gate valves undergoing in-house Dye Penetrant testing.

ney Forge's engineers are prepared to design a solution that will meet all of the client's criteria. "Having control of the process from start to finish ensures the compliance and quality of the valve," said Thomas. "All our cast valve designs are done in the USA and then they are sent to our global manufacturing facilities."

When asked about how the company maintains their competitive pricing, Heald mentioned, "We base our pricing upon efficiency and productivity. We continually invest in new equipment so that we can be more efficient in our operations. We have done this for many years, and we will continue to do it for many years to come."

Harrigan added, "Our motto is The Best Value, Price, Quality and Service, all the time and we work to have the best of all three classifications. We hold all our facilities to very high standards, and if a product does not pass a test, we will not let it out of our facility. Regardless of what facility the product is coming from, they all have the same quality standards to abide by."

Final Thoughts

Bonney Forge will continue to grow and invest. Bonney Forge will continue to improve the company's operations in every aspect; this includes capacity, efficiency, productivity and quality. "We invest in our people and facilities every year, and that is what

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will continue our success throughout the years," said Heald.

"We are constantly considering where there may be a gap in the industry, and we are finding ways to fill those gaps," Sonzogni added. The company continues to remain established in global markets.

In a collaborative effort with manufacturing, engineering, and sales, the Bonney Forge team continuously discusses ideas for growth and how the company will pursue those goals. "We never want to be complacent," Thomas added. "We want to continue to grow and find ways to streamline processes. We have an open door policy for our customers, and it will always be that way."

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the profiled company and do not reflect the position of Valve World Americas.