Maine Drilling and Blasting enjoys 40 successful years. Above: Ted Sr. and Judy Purington; below, left to right: Jim, Ted Jr., Bill and Tom Purington.
Poland, ME.

by Mark Scheer

in the late 70’s, each came to eventually become per-
school, we never had to go looking for a job.” Starting
last to join, coming on boar d in 1982.
joining first in 1976. Bill Purington himself was the
manently employed with the company, with Ted, Jr.

A long family history
While MD&B was founded by Ted Purington, Sr.,
and his wife Judy in March, 1966, the Purington fam-
ily’s history with the industry goes back four or five
generations now. “Our family has always been around
this business,” explained Bill Purington, president
and CEO of the company. “My father started this
company, but his father and his father’s father all
worked in this industry.” Purington joked that the
more complex projects proceed smoothly, “Jim span
the Purington family history. This year, they celebrate
their 40th anniversary. And after surviving a some-
times tumultuous past, they are well-poised to lever-
age that experience and continue forward as a solid
leader in their industry.

One of the fringe benefits of doing business in
New England can be the breathtaking scenery on a
worksite.

Poetry in motion: another successful blast at a quarry in
Poland, ME.

contact with customers. Easier said than done in
most cases. However, throughout the northeast, cus-
tomers have come to depend on Maine Drilling and
Blasting for on-time, accurate, quality service. Estab-
lished in Gardiner, Maine, they offer the best of both worlds;
personal, local service with large, high-end capabili-
ties. Getting to this point was certainly not an
overnight accomplishment. Rather, MD&B is the
product of a multi-generational evolution that spans
the regions that need his leadership.” Lastly, Tom
Purington oversees all the quarry operations in
Maine, working from the Gardiner office with Bill.
“Tom is the regional quarry supervisor for Maine.”
Purington concluded. “He is responsible for providing leadership and support to our teams at
the dozens of quarries we do best: provide quality service on a local level,” said Purington. “Our father taught us the fundamen-
tals of hard work, honesty and quality of service. He was a man of his word and taught us always do every-
thing right, no matter what. That was very impor-
tant.”

“Any family that grows up in a business needs to
decide whether they want to run that business as
an entitlement, or as a business,” Purington con-
tinued. “We all knew we wanted to build a strong business, so we made a commitment to understand our individual strengths and weaknesses, and commit to being the best in the areas where we each excel. We are all very good at what we do.” Having
established a new strategic direction and reorganization plan to get the company back on a sustainable and se-cure track, the four brothers embarked on their mission to become the industry’s leader in the
northeast by building the company

In a nod to the sophistication of the business, laser profiling is employed to ensure the most precise preparation for a blast.

In April 14, 2006

Maine Drilling and Blasting Celebrates 40th
Anniversary of Quality Service

by Mark Scheer

Think big, act small: when successfully executed, such a corporate strategy can be very effective for
meeting growth goals while maintaining local-level

The late 1980s economic reality check
By the early 1980s, MD&B had become a very successful compa-
y, remaining dedicated to the principles upon which Ted
Purington, Sr. had founded it: hard work, honesty and quality
of service. Through well-established relationships built with contractors and developers throughout the region, MD&B had grown to generate almost 80

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But that tide took a decidedly abrupt turn
at the end of the 80s, as the real-estate frenzy hit the
proverbial brick wall and MD&B found themselves a
bit out on a limb. “When it finally all played out, the
failure of many banks and institutions took down
down and had some serious discussions and realized we
needed to get smart; get back to the basics of what
MD&B was built on, and a refocus on their core operations of
drilling and blasting. After concluding several com-
petitive acquisitions, MD&B today operates in six per-
mant locations throughout the northeast, and sup-
ports a team of more than 350 people.

Not just drilling and blasting

Poetry in motion: another successful blast at a quarry in
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worksite.
MD&B is structured to address customer needs from two perspectives. "Construction-related needs are a 'one-time and done' project, and can include anything from the blasting of a foundation for a house or a hole for a swimming pool, to the cutting of a mountain to make a path for a highway project," Purington clarified. While construction projects may be considered 'one-time', it is not unusual for their duration to stretch into years, so they can be very long-term, Purington continued. "Our mining and quarry operations provide a service for the continual extraction of aggregate. We currently serve about 130 quarries throughout the northeast, and we are able to consistently meet their demands for aggregate." Construction operations generate about 70% of projects at MD&B.

But Maine Drilling and Blasting serves customers by providing not only the actual drill and blast service, but also by offering a comprehensive approach to every project they manage. "Many companies just do drilling, or just do blasting, or perhaps offer both," Purington explained. "But we're far more comprehensive. We engage in planning, public relations, pre-blast surveys and engineering and technical support; we get involved at every stage of the process. It really isn't just about breaking rock. We meet with the public, attend town meetings, and present the components of what we're going to do. Then, if appropriate, we'll hold regular meetings with a town to hear their ongoing concerns to identify ways we can affect the process and improve the situation."

In addition to public relations, MD&B also brings a wealth of experience and technology to each project. "In the old days, the blaster would puff on his cigar until it was red hot, touch it to the fuse and run like hell!" Purington said with a laugh. But today, blasting has transitioned from art to science: the process is much more controlled and precise. "We can employ several techniques to increase our effectiveness and improve the safety of operations," said Purington. "Knowing where to drill a hole and how to load the explosives is crucial. We utilize a laser profiling system that bounces a pulsed laser beam off the rock face to generate a precise three-dimensional image to help plan our loading process." Ensuring that the drilling was done properly and accurately can also be verified with technology, MD&B uses a Boretrak System, which consists of a stainless steel probe containing gravity sensors. Attached to carbon fiber rods, the probe is lowered into a driller's hole and generates a three-dimensional view of the actual hole by recording pitch, roll and depth. Even the explosives have become more stable, replacing the sometimes unpredictable dynamite of the past. As a result, Maine Drilling and Blasting has not only created a work environment as safe as possible, but the results of their efforts are extremely reliable and consistent. "Over the past forty years, we have performed over one million blasts for a wide range of projects," Purington added. "And the quality of our work speaks for itself. Our customers know that when we do a job, they can be confident it will be done right. It has taken forty years to prove that, but we are well-regarded in this industry and proud of the reputation we've built."

Maine Drilling and Blasting has come a long way in their forty years. From their humble beginning as a start-up, through the chaotic and frenzied growth of the 1980s, to their current position as a mature industry leader, they have maintained the ethics and values that Ted Purington Sr. instilled from day one. For a company that succeeds from their ability to break rock for their customers, the only thing unbreakable to MD&B is their commitment to maintain their reputation as a dependable, high-quality drilling and blasting contractor throughout the northeast.

Ted Purington Sr. on the job at the infancy of MD&B, circa late 1960s.

Mike Machia, lead driller for MD&B, inspecting work at the Rock of Ages site.

To ensure their accuracy, Pete Marcotte, project engineer for MD&B, employs the Boretrak system.

Installing rock bolts is another specialty of MD&B.

The placement of blasting mats on the Sikorsky Bridge project in Connecticut.

Removing waste rock at Rock of Ages in Barre, VT; MD&B have executed over one million blasts in their 40 years.