

## Like Father, Like Son - KnottHead Custom Sawing

By Meg Bull

Even a small operation can be a successful one. Charles De Greek and one other employee, his father, make up the workforce at KnottHead Custom Sawing in Ceres, California. Established in 2010, this fledgling company has already found its niche. “We mostly cut Pine, Cedar, and Oak here in Central California. We build some custom items, such as benches, tables and signs, but mostly what we have been doing is milling dimensional lumber out of pine, decking material out of Cedar, and lots of 2 inch or thicker slabs from Oak, Pine, and Cedar. Each job has been a little bit different.”

And how does Charles manage these jobs? With an LT40 portable mill - an idea inspired by his father. “My dad retired from the local phone company and always wanted a portable sawmill for himself, but with other obligations, he was never able to acquire one. An opportunity to purchase a non-running 1986 Manual LT40 came up. “We knew it was going to need a lot of work to resurrect, but decided to go for it.” After a lot of hard work and assistance from Wood-Mizer reps in California and Indianapolis, the mill was up and running. “One thing led to another and before we knew it we were not only milling wood for ourselves, but for others as well.”

The LT40 seems to be a perfect fit for KnottHead Custom Sawing’s production. “Purchasing our 86 LT40 Manual has allowed us to expand our abilities to cut lumber, wide planks and small burls. We like being able to custom cut sizes that we need or can use, and having the ability to cut wide flitches for making tables, signs, and benches just adds to the versatility we can provide as a business. Having the Wood-Mizer makes it so we can customize portable jobs to what our customers want or need.” KnottHead’s customers have been as varied as the jobs they have done. “We have advertised online a little bit, and hand out flyers and cards as we talk to people about having a mill; we really don’t mill a lot of wood to just sell. Each job, so far, has been different. We have been on job sites for just one day, but we have also had an oak milling job that we worked on for three weeks straight. No two jobs have been alike and all have been interesting and fun, and what better kind of business is there than one that can be operated with family?”

Charles has no plans on slowing down KnottHead’s production anytime soon. They just purchased a LT40 Super Hydraulic sawmill. “We would eventually like to have an edger...and multiple kilns so we can offer drying services.” Charles and his father seem very content with the success brought by their endeavor. “We love having a portable sawmill, seeing something made out of wood, and seeing how happy people get when they see what we are able to accomplish always makes for a good day at day’s end.”