



Charles F. Shotts

1924-2013

Charles F. Shotts, central Oregon lumberman and since 1988, president of Gilchrist Timber Company, was born March 6, 1924, in Quitman, Mississippi. He is the son of Charles Edgar Shotts and Ethel Shotts.

Charlie's father was sawmill foreman for the Gilchrist-Fordney Lumber Company at Laurel, Mississippi. In 1938, the family moved to central Oregon where his father became mill superintendent for the new Gilchrist Timber Company sawmill being built by Frank W. Gilchrist. The company was also building the company town of Gilchrist.

He remembers watching the lumber being delivered to construct the original sawmill building and watching the townsite area being cleared to start construction of the first buildings and houses.

That spring, Charlie attended high school in the small community of LaPine, north of

Gilchrist. In the fall of 1938, he attended high school at the small community of Crescent, just south of Gilchrist, with young Frank R. Gilchrist, son of Frank W., as a classmate. By the following fall, the town and the sawmill were completed and Gilchrist High School had been constructed. Charlie and Frank R. completed their last two years of high school at Gilchrist, graduating in the spring of 1941.

That fall, both Charlie and Frank R. enrolled at Oregon State College where Charlie majored in mechanical engineering for two years. During his summers, Charlie worked first in the Gilchrist service station and later in the sawmill. After a year, Frank R. left college to enter flight training. Charlie left college in 1943 and entered the service for a three-year term in the United States Army. He was placed in a specialized training program and attended Princeton University for two terms before the program was disbanded and he was transferred to the

infantry. His 104th Infantry Division saw action in Germany establishing bridgeheads across the Rhine River and on through Germany towards Berlin. He received a battlefield commission as a second lieutenant. Charlie received Bronze Star and Silver Star medals for action in the European campaign.

On July 22, 1945, while home on leave he married Mary-Elma Allen. They had five children – Marjorie Lynn Taylor, Charles F. II, Carla Marie Hoffman, Andrew Allen Shotts, and Christopher Riley Shotts.

In early 1946 he was discharged from the service and returned to Gilchrist to work that summer at the Gilchrist sawmill. Before he returned to Oregon State College, he was encouraged by Production Manager Jim Applewhite to change his major to civil engineering. Upon graduation, Frank W. Gilchrist offered him a job as a civil engineer for the company.

His responsibilities increased over the next few years until he was named woods boss in 1957. In 1964, he was promoted to woods superintendent, and three years later, in 1967, was given the additional responsibilities of plant superintendent as well.

In 1972, Charlie was given the title of vice president of Gilchrist Timber Company, only the second non-family member to have been named an officer of the company.

In 1988, Frank R. Gilchrist stepped down as president of the company, retaining his position as chairman of the board of directors. Charlie Shotts was named president of the Gilchrist Timber Company to succeed Frank R.

During his more than 40 years as a central Oregon lumberman, Charlie has gained a reputation as an outstanding leader of the forest industry. He has helped guide the company through a major effort of building a new sawmill in the late 1970s with state-of-the-art technology and design. He has been responsible for much of the company's success in withstanding the impacts of the severe recession that struck the lumber industry in the early 1980s. He has helped direct the forest management operations of the more than 100,000 acres of timberlands to assure a perpetual supply of timber for the sawmill, supplemented by the purchase of federal timber from nearby national forests.

Charlie has been active in the forest industry for many years. In 1974, he served as president of the Oregon Logging Congress and in 1976 was president of the Pacific Logging Congress. He was president of the former Northwest Pine Association and the Northwest Forestry Association.

From 1985 to 1987, he served as president of the Keep Oregon Green Association and president of the Oregon Forest Industries Council.

He was chairman of the Public Timber Council for the National Forest Products Association and served on the board of directors of the Western Wood Products Association.

Charlie is a member of the Society of American Foresters, the National Society of Professional Engineers, and the American Society of Civil Engineers. He served on the board of the Central Oregon Community College Foundation and on the board of directors for Liberty Savings and Loan of Eugene.

During the fiftieth anniversary of the Gilchrist community and the Gilchrist Timber Company in Oregon, Charlie directed the writing of a history of the town and the company. He has also been active in serving as a host for visiting foresters and lumbermen in viewing the modern sawmill, the well-managed timberlands, and the unique company town in central Oregon.

In his role as president of the Gilchrist Timber Company, Charlie continues to be well-liked by his employees, respected by his competitors, and honored by his profession.