TRUMPF Express
MAGAZINE FOR SHEET METAL PROCESSING IN NORTH AMERICA 1/17

THINKING BIG:
Large format laser cutting in Mexico

HOMECOMING:
Carey Manufacturing competes with its world-class precision

HUNGRY FOR MORE:
Heat and Control grows with efficient manufacturing

BURNING HOT

Sherwood fans the fire with precision fabrication

TRUMPF

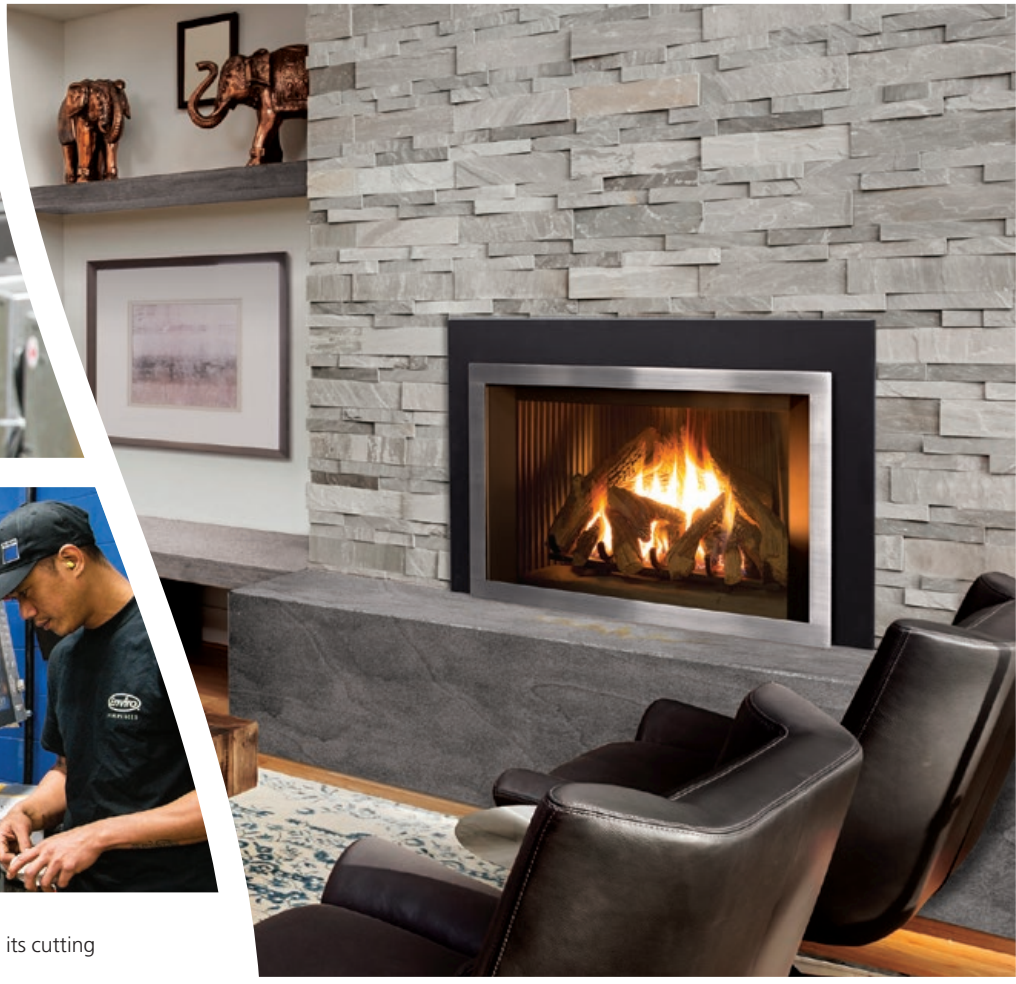
Peter Brix, Maintenance and Cutting Division Manager at Sherwood Industries.

Warming Ways

Sherwood Industries LTD. fuels its business with modern fabrication equipment

From its quiet location in Western Canada, Sherwood Industries, owned by Cherbel Yousief and Stuart O'Connor, has become one of the largest hearth product manufacturers in North America. It is a manufacturer of freestanding, fireplace inserts and fireplaces which come with three fuel options, wood, wood pellets and gas (propane or natural gas), all under the Enviro brand. Sales are through distributors that supply dealers and also provide feedback to help drive product development. All work is done in-house by nearly two hundred employees located in beautiful Victoria, BC on Vancouver Island in Canada. Being on an island can create some logistical challenges but Sherwood is fully content to remain a part of the community that has helped build its success.

For over 25 years, Sherwood has developed products that are not only highly efficient and attractive heat sources with unsurpassed quality and craftsmanship but also full of modern niceties. These include innovations such as the Proflame 2 system, electronic pilot ignition, flame control with modulation, fan control with modulation, dimmable light control, thermostat operation, split flow to operate multiple burners independently, and others. Keeping pace with modern times is the mindset of Peter Brix, Maintenance and Cutting Division Manager. When Brix joined the company seven years ago the shop was long overdue for new equipment. "I was originally brought on board to bring the maintenance division up to standard, and I was extremely busy just keeping machines running due to the age and wear and tear of the equipment." Something needed to be done to improve things so with the approval of Sherwood's owners, he started an initiative to upgrade the equipment piece by piece. With a background as an industrial mechanic, Peter started researching which machine to purchase first. "New machines would give us more capacity with less manpower and are faster, better and more reliable."



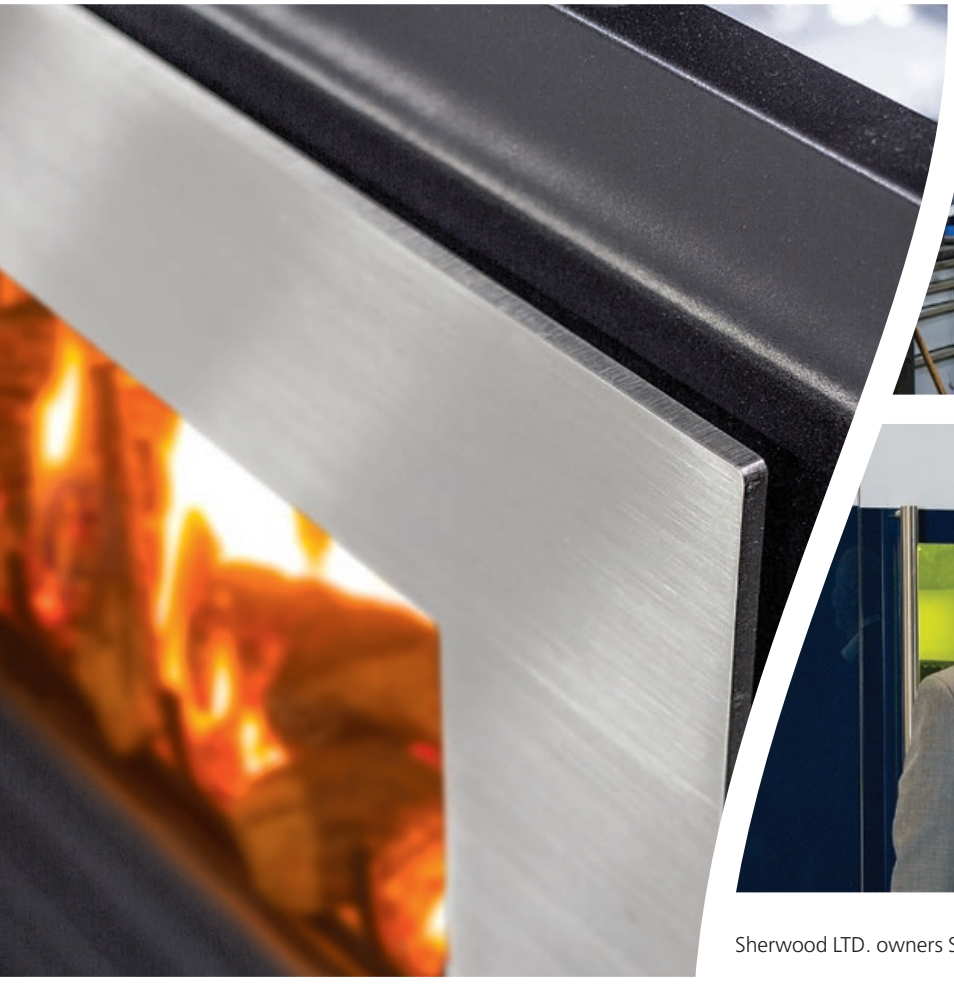
With the latest laser cutting equipment, Sherwood has expanded its cutting capabilities and lowered its manufacturing costs.

MODERNIZATION, STEP BY STEP

Brix approached each machine type with an open mind not ruling out any manufacturer. Favoritism to any name brand was out. Each machine type he was to purchase would need to be selected on its own merits. "While it is nice to deal with the same manufacturer, speed, production and precision was what I was after." His experience as a mechanical/ electronics tech aided his meticulous research which covered every aspect of the new equipment. "From machine performance, investment costs, hardware technology to the software and maintenance – I stuck my nose in all of it," he explains. It might seem extraneous to repeat the process for each offering and each manufacturer but Brix asserts, "In the end every machine won its spot on its own merit – and it just happened that every purchase went TRUMPF's way."

Modernization began with punching since time studies revealed this process was still the faster and cheaper way for Sherwood to process parts. "Even though the TRUMPF machine was a bigger initial expense since we also had to invest in new tooling, the payoff was substantial. Tooling changeover takes just minutes on the TRUMPF machine so we immediately regained 2-3 hours of production per shift that we had been losing on tool changes with the old machine. Above that, on our products, the TruPunch is 25-40% faster than the competition," explains Brix who now maintains two full sets of tooling to facilitate even faster transition from thick to thin material. The rotating punching head also enabled Sherwood to increase productivity. "We punch all day long without having to change the punch tooling and that saves a lot of time. In addition, we don't have nearly as much grinding as tool life is significantly longer," he asserts.

With punching under control, Brix moved on to address Sherwood's bending capabilities. Two servo-driven TruBend Series 7000 electric press brakes were chosen for their ability to process small parts very quickly and efficiently and a TruBend 5085 was selected to round out its forming capabilities. The company's three new TRUMPF press brakes are now able to do the work of its eight old ones. Brix says the time savings from the quick release tooling alone made the machines worth the investment and other progressive features just added to it. "The safety features of the new systems keep our company moving in the right direction as far as operator safety and the enhanced graphics at the control HMI make it easy for operators to run through the bending sequence." Brix explains this is especially important given Sherwood's remote location. "Our old machines required an operator with a lot of experience to



Sherwood LTD. owners Stuart O'Connor (left) and Cherbel Yousief (right)

run but even inexperienced operators learn the new machines very quickly."

Sherwood's most recent step toward modernization was to replace its old CO_2 laser cutting machine with a new TruLaser 3030 fiber. "We knew any fiber laser would be faster and more efficient than our old CO_2 lasers but we determined TRUMPF had the better and more reliable product – and the software is incredible." Brix says his machine operators especially appreciate the Drop&Cut feature which enables them to easily cut short runs or single parts from remainder sheets without the need of a programmer. With the new machine, Sherwood also significantly reduced its gas consumption by cutting with shop air. "A lot of companies don't even know they can cut with shop air, but it works very well for us since edge oxidization is not a concern," he explains. With the use of shop air, our gas consumption will be drastically reduced over nitrogen cutting. We still use oxygen to cut steel plate – mostly 0.3125" or 0.25" – primarily used in the production of wood stoves.

HIGH-EFFICIENCY FABRICATION

A wide range of product offerings keep Sherwood's customers happy; and with modern machinery the company can better accommodate short run changes and on-demand production. "We have increased our flexibility in fabrication so we are able to run a more diversified part mix and still keep up," explains Brix. "And the added capacity has allowed us to take on a bit of contract work as well." This work can be planned around Sherwood's busy season since hearth products tend to be manufactured from March to November for distribution and sales prior to winter. With so many exciting changes in place it would be easy to sit back and bask in the glow of modernization, but Brix still has his eyes set on the future. Or as he simply says, "We're not done yet!" □

PLEASE DIRECT YOUR QUESTIONS TO:

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A MODERN VIEW

WHO:	*Sherwood Industries, Saanichton, BC, Canada. Founded 1989. www.sherwoodindustries.ca/*
WHAT:	*Premier manufacturer of wood, gas and pellet fireplace inserts and freestanding stoves sold across North America.*
HOW:	*TruPunch 5000, TruPunch 2020, 2 x TruBend 7036, TruBend 5085, TruLaser 3030 fiber*