

RPM Revival 'Reviving America's Treasures'

By Kit Phelps

"Reviving America's treasures one piece at a time," is RPM Revival's slogan. The business can revive everything from little things such as a milk can or patio furniture to a semi truck and trailer to a 150 ton and 120 foot industrial crane.

Located in south Tipton at 36 Spruce Street, the business was started by the Amosson family in 2018, after purchasing the building and equipment in 2016. "The first year we were just getting our legs under us," Randy Amosson said. "In 2019 we doubled sales. And in 2020 we were 70% over the year before."

Randy worked at Bandag for 30 years and was VP of Customer Support. Then he worked at John Deere Dealerships for 10 years, including eight as the CEO in Muscatine. A few years ago, he thought, "If I'm going to have my own business, I'd better hurry up and do it."

Randy didn't just bring his business experience to RPM Revival; he also has the lifetime hobby of restoring things. While growing up in Goldfield, Iowa near Ft. Dodge, his family either fixed things or made what they needed. He said his father used to say "One man's junk is another one's treasure." Randy has restored cars, trucks, tractors and has a large shop at his home south of Tipton, where he still has the first car he owned, a 1970 Dodge Charger.

RPM Revival works on area farm equipment, industrial equipment and trucks. One of their biggest customers is the Iowa DOT for their snow plows. They also do regular collision bodywork. Although they have had business brought in from northwest Iowa, most of their clients are within a 60 mile range.

The 60 foot by 120 foot building includes a paint booth that is 20 foot by 60 foot with a 16 foot height. When necessary it can be opened to the room behind to become 20 foot by 120 foot- the second largest paint booth in Iowa. The other half of the building is for assembly and repair and the office area. Behind the building is another building for sandblasting or other media blasting.

"It takes good people to do this and I have a great crew," Randy said. He has five full-time employees at this time. Alicia Wulf is the office manager, Curtis Kuehl is an all around technician and helps with everything, Faron Drager is the blasting technician and Steve Suhomel and Doug White are the paint and body technicians. Randy tells everyone he is the owner and janitor. But he also does interiors, electronics, mechanical work and is the general manager of sales and operations.

When a piece comes in for full restoration the

first step is disassembly where it is inspected and taken apart, repaired, welded and rewired. Then it goes to another building for blasting.

Different jobs require different blasting materials. Besides sand, some of the media they have are walnut shells, crushed glass and glass beads. Water blasting is used on thinner materials. The air compressor used for blasting produces 350 cubic feet per minute. The process is dusty (or wet) and requires a suit and helmet. The building is not heated or air-conditioned, so Faron also has a 30 degree regulator so that when it's cold he can be 30 degrees warmer and in the heat of the summer he can be 30 degrees cooler.

RPM Revival also has portable blasters so they can do projects off site such as grain bins. Randy said one of their unusual requests was a man who asked them to sandblast the interior of his barn so his daughter could get married there.

After a project is blasted and prepared for paint, it is moved to the body work and painting department unless the client prefers to do this part himself. RPM will do as much or as little as the customer wants.

"Without good body work, your paint isn't going to look good. There are a lot of good painters out there, but more rare are excellent body technicians," Randy said. "Our guys are good at both." Steve and Doug have over 50 years of experience between them.

A new purchase has been a paint-mixing machine. They can match any color including faded paint. They also have a machine for filling aerosol cans so that the customer can apply touch up paint.

The final step in the restoration project is re-assembly. With the crew he has now, Randy said they can work on multiple projects at a time.

RPM Revival has been so busy that Randy plans to start building another building south of the present one as soon as the weather is nice. He has already purchased and dismantled a paint booth from a former body shop to be used in for smaller projects in the new building. This summer he will be hiring more employees.

Randy's wife Christine helps with the financial aspect of the business and his son Alec helps with the technology aspect. RPM Revival is on Facebook and their website, rpmrevival.com, displays a lot of before and after photos of their work.

Right now Randy is the only sales person and he plans to hire someone to help. He has no intention of retiring but he wouldn't object to taking a few days off.

"I'm enjoying it so much. I'm having a blast," Randy said, "I wish I had done this a lot earlier."



RPM Revival owner Randy Amosson



Before



After



Before



After

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