

THERE'S MORE HAPPENING THAN THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD...

THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERSHIP EMERGES AT RISLEY
ALONG WITH THE NEXT GENERATION OF INNOVATIVE EQUIPMENT.

AFTER MORE THAN 40 years of leading the region in innovation, Reg Isley has officially stepped aside from his duties heading up Grande Prairie's Risley Equipment and son, Dean Isley, who has been integral to the company's growth in his own role over the last 25 years of his life, is now officially at the reins.

Reg has received countless awards and recognition for his ingenious designs synonymous with the Peace Country. With his wife, Emily as his business and life partner supporting and encouraging the development of his ideas, and later, with Dean's advanced training in mechanical industrial engineering helping to translate and refine what he calls the 'napkin' ideas into blueprints for success, the family has made its mark on all sectors of industry and simultaneously become a part of the economic landscape of their hometown and region.

Inventiveness was part of the very DNA of Reg Isley, the son of local pioneers who grew up pouring over old issues of Popular Science and Popular Mechanics and making motorcycles out of old bicycles when other kids were playing. Dean recalls his colourful childhood watching as his inventive father drew up and fabricated everything from helicopters (to reflect his lifelong passion for flying) to hot rods to every kind of industrial solution needed by local industries in the community.

"It was always an adventure – he was always inventing wild things, that's just what he did, he invented."

It was with his invention of the Rotosaw in 1984 that the family business began its journey to international

success as a result of the invention's unparalleled applications in forestry. The Risley Group went on to find further international success with several other pieces of integral equipment based on Reg's designs, including the Lim-mit, another patented process for delimiting trees, and the Timber King fellerbuncher – now sold all over the world after the company sold the intellectual property to Caterpillar in 2001, which was later double branded.



Dean smiles at the funny way the world works as one of the "Prentice" brand Timberkings' sits in SMS (formerly Coneco) lot, next door to Risley in Grande Prairie, after being born from yet another one of his father's coffee-shop napkin notions.

"We call him the mad scientist," laughs Dean Isley, who says even though his father may be officially retiring from business operations, he won't be far from the premises. "Oh, he's not really going anywhere, we built him his own special shop where he can just continue to design away to his heart's delight. He does it naturally and with full passion, bringing his ideas to reality, that will always keep him young. He'll never stop designing and inventing."

Meanwhile, Dean is already making his own mark on the family business, implementing his own signature style of leadership.

"My real work in the company over the last 25 years at Risley has been helping my father reach his goals with people, process and production," Dean, who studied Mechanical Industrial Engineering Technology at Nait, a training experience that provided Dean with the skill set to understand the dynamic world he would embracing with a father that always lived outside the box.

"The biggest thing that I have learned over time is that you have to be able to see from more than one perspective, and the greatest is your own. After graduating, I was eager to prove to my father my new-found skill set. I immediately began to determine that his first forestry innovation, the "Rotosaw," was overdesigned. Upon pouring over the calculations and presenting them to my father for approval and change, he looked me squarely in the eye, and said, 'Son, you know nothing, you go out to the woods and sit on a stump!' It was his way of saying, understand your environment and learn from your mistakes, a lesson well learned."

What can customers and the community expect from the next generation of Risley equipment?

"To me, that really means going back to the drawing board, if you will; re-examining our core values, values that embrace our mission statement, 'To Step Ahead!' and to improve the lives of our people, our customers and our community. I want to provide leadership that empowers people."

"Changing the guard does not include changing our values; it does mean a renewed goal, and a clear vision. And what is that? "To be the worldwide leader in "Innovative Resource Solutions," says Dean.

Risley is well on track to achieving this goal since 2001 with the company re-investing well over 5 million dollars into the "next generation" multi-purpose, multi-industry mobile tool carrier, called the "E-clips."

"My father had this vision for the machine over 30 years ago, I feel very proud to support this innovation, along with those "exceptional people" who worked with Reg to carry it forward to the next generation.

Dean says building on the working relationship with those "exceptional people" inside Risley will be among his top priorities. His mantra for people and business is simple: "Understanding that there is value in everything we do; that we can be independent and work together simultaneously; that reaching our goals is to be congratulated and rewarded."

"The biggest opportunity we have within Risley is to listen and respond to the ideas of our people, our customers and the communities in which we serve, with a worthwhile product, process or service. To me no idea is without merit. We want to attract people who want to step outside the box.

At the same time, Dean's leadership will reflect his own determination to stay relevant in its growing capacity to meet the needs of the cross-section of this resource based economy.

Staying true to the company's founding vision and mission, with a goal to become the "Worldwide Leader in Innovative Resource Solutions" is what Dean and his team intend to bring to Alberta and the world, one step at a time.

Risley's new leader, Dean Isley, stands
beside their latest innovation - the
Eclips EX300



STEP AHEAD!™

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