



Tom Daggett grew up with Hutchinson Manufacturing Inc. after his father started the business in 1953. Daggett now leads the multi-million dollar company, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. HMI has undergone tremendous growth, hiring 51 people in the past 15 months.

Tom Daggett is president of Hutchinson Manufacturing Inc., which serves the defense, nuclear and industrial sectors. Daggett attributes the company's success to its diverse capabilities as a custom metal fabricator and its ability to perform different value-added services under one roof.

PHOTOS BY JULIANA THILL

Hutchinson Manufacturing grows in strength, numbers

By Juliana Thill
EDITOR

Eugene “Bud” and Doris Daggett started Hutchinson Manufacturing and Sales Inc. in 1953, the same year their son, Tom, was born.

The first products they made were clothesline poles and picnic table frames.

By the time Tom was 12 years old, Bud Daggett was finding jobs for Tom to do around the plant to keep his son busy. By age 16, Tom had first-hand experience running many of the

processes in the plant from shearing, saw, press brake and weld.

Today, Tom Daggett is president of the multi-million dollar company that still has its roots in Hutchinson, but does business on a global scale, primarily serving the defense, nuclear and industrial sectors.

In six decades, Hutchinson Manufacturing has grown from a handful of employees to more than 150. It has expanded from 2,400 square feet of office and production space to 100,000 square feet of manufacturing space where employees can perform virtually all fabrication, machining and finished assembly processes onsite.

“Our company mission is, to be the company of choice. We mean that to our vendors, our suppliers, and to our employees — current employees and prospective employees,” said Isaac Marceau, vice president of operations.

The company saw tremendous growth under Bud Daggett’s leadership, until his death in 1995. And Tom Daggett has been instrumental in continuing to steer the company toward future growth, looking for strategic investment opportunities to diversify and grow in the metal fabrication industry.

“I’ve gotten a lot of satisfaction out of seeing the business grow and become

diverse in the capabilities, being able to do new and different things. That’s what I’ve gotten my enjoyment out of,” Daggett said.

That, he said, and “staying in business, too. There have been some real roller coaster times, but things are going extremely well right now. The thing that has kept me in business is to take on debt and pay off debt. I’ve always paid debt, because if you go into a recession with a lot of debt, you can have big problems,” Daggett said. “That’s a factor.”

Hutchinson Manufacturing celebrated its 60th anniversary May 1, the day the company started, with a public open house and an employee celebration.

“It’s a big day for us, 60 years,” Daggett said.

Though he was born into the business, Daggett joined the company as general manager in 1978. In 1991, he became president and has continued his father’s legacy in growing the company. Other Daggett family companies

include May West, C&A Pro Skis, Pride Engineered Plastics, and Pride Assembly. In 2010, Daggett opened NuCrane Manufacturing in Hutchinson along with partner PaR Nuclear, which is owned by Westinghouse.

Rapid growth

As Hutchinson Manufacturing honors its past, Daggett and his management team continue to look to the future. The company has been growing fast and furiously in the past 15 months, both in employees and operations as work ramps up.

“HMI is growing rapidly. Today, we are at 156 employees in the office and shop combined. That’s a growth of 51 employees over the last 15 months. That’s pretty substantial growth,” Marceau said. “Part of that growth, or a majority of that growth has been due to very complex machining that we have taken on in-house for our customers. In the last 15 months, we have increased our machining staff by 210

percent. That includes programmers, machinists and supervision in this area. So that's been a huge part of our growth."

Much of the company's growth has been driven by sub-sea oil work. One of the company's customers, FMC Technologies of Houston, Texas, makes up 49 percent of its business. Parts Hutchinson Manufacturing makes for FMC can be found "about 9,000 feet below the surface of the ocean, safely harvesting oil and natural gas," Marceau said.

FMC will "drill it, cap it, and this (the part Hutchinson Manufacturing makes) controls the flow," Daggett said.

In two of the past four years, FMC named Hutchinson Manufacturing its global fabrication supplier of the year, Marceau said, "and they're putting these systems in around the world, so we're pretty proud of that."

Production growth

Hutchinson Manufacturing has served a broad range of markets for decades.

Hutchinson Manufacturing doesn't design parts for its customers. Instead, "our customers give us a design, an engineered drawing, and a database of information regarding materials and inspection criteria," Marceau said.

"Our process engineers and drafters will take their design and make it manufacturable," he said. "Our engineers are more of design-for-manufacture ability engineers — knowing the capabilities we have in-house, what is the most economical way we can fabricate this part that still conforms to the high level of standards our customers are looking for, and keep the lead time



Isaac Marceau, vice president of operations at Hutchinson Manufacturing Inc., said a separate building on its property is where surface preparation, painting and assembly takes place. "Basically, if we can fabricate it and build it, we can paint it," Marceau said.

as short as possible."

Because Hutchinson Manufacturing focuses on custom jobs, it doesn't use robotic welding, Marceau said. "We don't do the high production-type stuff that a lot of area shops might do. We have such a wide variety of large weldments, that at this point, robotic welding doesn't suit our needs, but we have discussed it."

Instead, as a custom metal fabricator, the company offers a combination of detailed quality assurance systems and large capability in sophisticated weldments, machining and coatings for a number of programs supporting the armed services, transportation and energy industries, as well as:

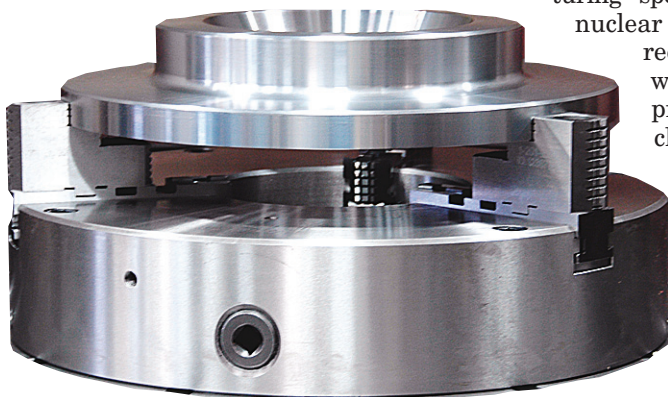
- **Nuclear** — Hutchinson Manufacturing specializes in sizable nuclear metal fabrication requiring certified welding and further processing such as close tolerance machining and sophisticated coatings. HMI is a partner with Westinghouse in NuCrane Manufacturing, a company spe-

cializing in Polar and Cask cranes for the nuclear industry. NuCrane began manufacturing in 2010 and uses Hutchinson Manufacturing for safety-related metal fabrication, as well as painting capability to nuclear specifications.

■ **Industrial** — Whether one of a kind, or contract manufacturing volume runs, Hutchinson Manufacturing specializes in custom plate and sheet metal weldments drawing on its experience in machining and the application of coatings to NACE specifications.

■ **Process equipment** — Hutchinson Manufacturing has the infrastructure to develop, plan, manage and build large complex assemblies, composed of thousands of bill-of-material line items. Its range of processing capabilities and facilities that handle large components makes it feasible to do the complete build in-house.

■ **Testing equipment** — The company works in high-strength low-alloy materials, assembly, paint systems, and load testing capabilities, which enables the company to produce testing equipment for large applications such as a jet engine test stand for new development and production, and X-ray in-process machines.



■ Architectural and art — Hutchinson Manufacturing is a custom metal fabricator. The company starts with a concept and takes the project to installation using computer-aided design, project managers, quality assurance systems, and large capability in sophisticated weldments, machining and coatings.

In a separate building on its property, called the spa, is where Hutchinson Manufacturing does surface preparation, painting and assembly.

“Basically, if we can fabricate it and build it, we can paint it,” Marceau said.

Along with HMI’s manufacturing and production capabilities comes the need for quality, he said, which is a department that also has expanded.

“Our quality department has grown about three-fold in the last two years. We now employ five in the field of non-destructive examination or testing. We have four quality documentation engineers and three weld engineers that

help in developing all these processes and checking parts for performance,” he said.

Some of its customers don’t have an incoming quality department; instead they tell Hutchinson Manufacturing that the parts need to conform.

Hutchinson Manufacturing submits 30 to 210 pages of documentation per part, with the average documentation being about 85 pieces of paper. Some customers don’t double check Hutchinson Manufacturing’s work, but customers do have quality engineers verify the documentation is correct. Nothing ships without the customer approving the paperwork, Marceau said, but then customers basically use the parts as soon as they get them.

Family business

Since its inception, Hutchinson Manufacturing has taken on complex, custom and “one-off” jobs that other companies won’t touch, as well as con-

tract volume manufacturing. Size, sophistication, technical support, and documented proof of quality, with complete material traceability, are what the company prides itself on.

Daggett also takes pride in the fact that Hutchinson Manufacturing not only survived the recession but has thrived. He attributed the company’s success to its diverse capabilities and ability to perform many different value-added services onsite.

“We can cut metal, weld it, machine, paint it. Those are really big things to do under one roof,” he said. “It’s very attractive to a potential customer. A lot of companies in our industry don’t do that. They might be a weld shop or a machine shop or do painting.”

For Daggett, to have followed in his father’s footsteps, and then expanded the business in size, workforce and capabilities has brought satisfaction and enjoyment.

“I certainly have a feeling of accomplishment,” Daggett said.