



NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

# PRESSURE PIPE STEEL FABRICATION LTD.

**HILDA BROOMFIELD** and **LIONEL LETEMPLIER** are two partners making a difference. Their enthusiasm and commitment has brought much needed employment to an area which has traditionally lacked both new business initiatives and jobs. By creating a successful and promising Inuit business, they have made a positive contribution to their home community of Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

One of the major reasons they even considered starting a business was to create some permanent employment to enhance the local community. Having had to leave home 10 years earlier to find work, both were ready to return. They identified a niche in the local market, agreed it was a viable business opportunity, and proceeded to explore it in more detail.

The result is Pressure Pipe Steel Fabrication, which was established in 1991. "We offer customers a high quality standard of high pressure welding and steel fabrication," says Hilda. "We have the equipment and expertise to tackle any size or type of project." Clients are located throughout Atlantic Canada and Quebec.

Hilda is company president and majority shareholder. She handles all administrative and financial aspects of the company. Lionel, a high pressure pipe welder, serves as operations manager and is responsible for developing estimates and marketing strategies, purchasing materials and supervising projects. He also provides valuable on-the-job training for welding students from the College of the North Atlantic.

Both are committed to building a successful and lasting business. "Raising capital was one of the hardest problems we had," says Lionel, "but we ironed things out by working with people. It was difficult because the industry was



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new. There wasn't a steel fabrication facility in the area so it took some time to convince people that our company would really benefit the community."

"We've virtually built everything from nothing," continues Hilda. "We borrowed money from the bank and then put up the building ourselves. It's

the pay-off for all the sacrifice." Such effort might put a strain on some marriages, but Hilda and Lionel actually draw most of their support from each other. Both agree: "If we didn't have each other to count on, we would have never even considered this business."

Hilda emphasizes that the rewards

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been a lot of work, but we know it will pay off in the long run."

They had 12 employees during the 1997 season, and hope to add more in the future as the business expands and they acquire new welding technologies.

Both Hilda and Lionel put in long, exhausting hours, especially since the business is somewhat seasonal. "You have to be prepared to work when work is available," says Hilda. "Someday when the business grows a bit more, we'll be able to spend more time supervising and less doing the actual work. That will be

you get out of a business are equal to the effort you put in. "You have to learn to be patient and to make sure you have good products and good people. We believe the rewards are definitely worth the investment, but starting your own business isn't something you should rush into. Talk to people who have done it. Ask them what they learned in order to avoid unnecessary hardships. Through their knowledge and expertise, your business life will be enhanced. Keep your eyes open and always learn from your experiences."

Broomfield & Letemplier

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