

PIECE OF WORK TORCHMATE® SUCCESS STORY

“If you’re going to be in the game you need to have the best equipment to be in the game with.”



Creating Something From Nothing

Piece Of Work was founded in 2018 by Les Baker and his friend, Jacob Stafford. Les is a 15-year veteran of the fire service, he is an engineer with the City of Charleston Fire Department, and adjunct instructor with the South Carolina Fire Academy. Jacob shares similar passions to Les and is full time in the military. The business was originally formed in Charleston, South Carolina, but is now located in Les's home town of Society Hill, SC. Piece Of Work specializes in salvaging and renewing the life of old materials to make meaningful, one-of-a-kind pieces. Les was destined to be the driving force and visionary behind Piece of Work ever since he was a young child. His father has over 40 years of welding and fabrication experience. Les would also go with his friend, Henry to scour trash cans and junk yards for aluminum cans and anything else of value. Together, they made \$1,000 every year simply recovering beer and soda cans.

Before becoming an official business, Les decided to make pieces of furniture for his home. The pieces caught the attention of many which is when Jacob said they should fabricate for others as a part time business. Shortly after, Piece Of Work was born.



Upgrading From Hand Cutting To Torchmate

In the early stages of business, Piece Of Work had limited equipment and were not very efficient. “We would figure out how to make something without being able to cut it. Then we would make it happen by either welding, hand cutting or relying on a third party to cut material for us. We had to turn down a lot of work because we did not have an efficient way to cut material. We knew we needed to take the business to the next level if we wanted to make real money. I always say **‘If you’re going to be in the game you need to have the best equipment to be in the game with,’**” Les said.

Les told us, “I have no formal technical school or fabrication shop experience so I wanted to try out a CNC plasma cutting table for myself. I went to the Lincoln Electric® booth at Fabtech and had them show me how to use the Torchmate CAD software. The software was easy to use and the machine appeared to be simple plug and play. For the most part, the Torchmate table is just that. Once the electricity was on and table was filled with water, it was plug and play.”

A year and a half ago, in early 2022, Piece Of Work elevated their business by purchasing a Torchmate 4800 equipped with a FlexCut® 80. “There’s two main reasons we chose to buy a Torchmate without a doubt. **Torchmate is entirely a single source manufacturer. People underestimate how important that is.** And the second reason is because of the customer support. We had heard great stories and reviews about the quality of Torchmate’s technical support and can confirm it is excellent. Torchmate and Lincoln Electric have proved themselves valuable time and time again,” said Les.

Thriving In a 1-Stoplight Town

Less than 2 years later, Piece Of Work is a successful company that is bombarded with project requests and commission work. “We are known as the guys who can make something when nobody else can. You’ve likely heard the old adage that one man’s trash is another man’s treasure. We live and breathe this at Piece of Work. While building is extremely gratifying for us, the most exciting part is the creative process that occurs before we even set foot in the shop. We love finding new and inventive ways to transform salvaged materials in to appealing, functional pieces,” said Les.

They offer a variety of other services to both commercial and residential clients such as demolition and salvage, residential fixtures, furnishing and decor and even past, present and future crosses. Piece Of Work has positioned itself as a unique business offering high quality, desirable services. This has allowed the business to not only survive in a town with one stoplight and a population of 600 people, but thrive, even more so than when their shop was located in the big city of Charleston. Piece Of Work needs to run their Torchmate table every day the business is open. It cuts at least a couple pieces each day to keep up with demand.

Les said, “Half the process of becoming a good reputable business is learning from projects that don’t go as planned and not being discouraged. 5 years ago, I would have never considered doing the projects I do now.” Today, those projects are relatively easy and straightforward because of the Torchmate 4800.

Thank you to Piece Of Work and Les for telling their story. On behalf of everyone at Torchmate, we are thankful for each of our customers’ business and are happy we are contributing to your successes.

Check out Piece of Work’s social channels. On their Website, they display a wide variety of custom fabrications made from reclaimed or salvaged materials. Customers can contact them for custom or personalized projects. Additionally, Piece of Work posts new content on all of their social media platforms. Visitors will find behind the scenes photos and videos about how the company manufactures such unique pieces. To view their social content, contact them, or for more information about the business, please visit their [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) & [Website](#) pages.



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