



RILEY GARDNER MEMORIAL produces 120 square feet of stone each day.



RILEY GARDNER MEMORIAL

A family tradition

Family is at the core of Riley Gardner Memorial. In its fourth generation of ownership, Riley Gardner Memorial of Hamilton was purchased in 1957 by Bob Riley and his son-in-law Kenneth Gardner. It is now owned and operated by Kenneth's son Robert W. "Bob" Gardner, his son Riley F. Gardner and son-in-law Jon Lengefeld.

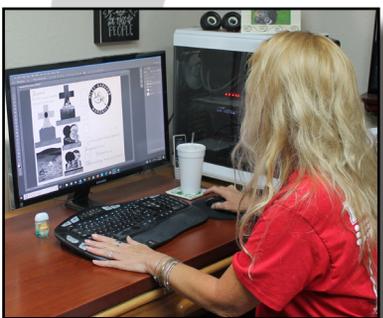
Riley Gardner Memorial was built on family heritage and values to care for families during memorialization process. Customers are families because that's the way the Riley Gardner family sees them.

"We strive to treat families with dignity like we would hope our family would be treated in a time of loss," said Jon.

Kenneth had a vision of supplying monuments to funeral homes so families could conveniently purchase them during the funeral planning process.

"It had never been done before," said Bob. "It was unheard of and not popular. Many companies thought it was a horrible idea."

Kenneth believed in his dream and cultivated relationships with funeral homes in the area. Riley Gardner Memorial now has 16 outlets including its original Hamilton production facility and serves 150 funeral homes across Texas and Oklahoma.



GRAPHIC DESIGNERS, like Kimi Phillips, create unique art to immortalize the memory of loved ones.

In 2003, Riley's return to Hamilton and the company ushered technology into the business. His grandfather's days of penciled drawings and hand-cut stones were replaced with more precise AutoCAD designs. Monuments now include intricate art created by graphic designers then sandblasted, laser etched or even fully sculpted, and hand-painted by artists.

Three years ago, Riley Gardner Memorial purchased Six Spokes Signs. The sign shop not only produces the company's brochures, but graphic designer Kimi Phillips works with families to create unique art immortalizing their loved one's memory.

"It's a personal thing we are doing," said Jon. Riley also began brokering and trading directly with quarries overseas to secure higher quality granite and marble at the best prices.

"People often request Texas granites, like the Sunset Red used in the capital and the Mountain Red from Llano, but the cost can be five to six times more and the quality of our other granites is much higher," said Riley.

"Granite is hard, but it breaks like glass," he explained. "Countertop quality is different than the granite used for monuments. Indoors the inclusions, the flaws and cracks, aren't under the outdoor conditions. Outside they get wet and are exposed to extreme temperatures. It is like grading gems."

The most common granite, Georgia grey, still comes in on a truck every week from Georgia.

Black granite, which is gaining in popularity because of its use in laser engraving, is found in only two quarries in the world in India and China. India also

mines granites in blues, greens, reds and browns. Blue Pearl granite comes from Norway. Most marble comes from Georgia or, on rare occasion, Italy.

"It takes six to eight months for a container to come from overseas," said Riley. "We fill a container every two to three weeks."

Currently, Riley Gardner Memorial produces 120 square feet of stone each day.

Stones generally take 60 to 90 days from the placement of the order to installation but could take up to 120 days for custom orders.

Riley Gardner Memorial has five installation crews that cover 134 counties in Texas and Oklahoma. Installation is included in pricing, and the company stands behind their work, guaranteeing foundation work for 10 years.

In addition to installers, Riley Gardner Memorial employs more than 50 engineers, artists, craftsmen and sales personnel, many of whom are generational as well.

Alice Thompson's grandfather was a stone cutter. She has worked as an AutoCAD designer for more than 30 years with the company along with her brothers Mike, head installer, and Mark, shop foreman. Alice's daughter Trey joined the team in graphic design. The Thompsons are just one of the long-time generational families of Riley Gardner Memorial.

In addition to personal monuments, Riley Gardner Memorial has produced public memorials across the state, including a K-9 Memorial in Round Rock, Fort Hood Memorial and Vietnam Veteran Memorial in Killen.

"Our goal is to create something special for our families that will last forever," said Jon.



RILEY GARDNER MEMORIAL employs more than 30 people in its Hamilton production facility. Many of whom are long-term, generational employees like shop foreman Mike Thompson whose grandfather was a stone cutter.



RILEY GARDNER MEMORIAL FAMILY

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