

Transpec DIGEST



Autumn Edition 2012



BPW TRANSPAC PTY LTD'S MAGAZINE FOR CUSTOMERS, COLLEAGUES AND OTHER FRIENDS WITHIN THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY.

FUELLING THE TROOPS



The Pilbara region in Western Australia has some of the world's most ancient natural landscapes dating back two billion years and stretching over 40,000 square kilometers

See story pages 16 - 17.



Seriously Economical

When you experience the economical virtues of owning the BPW air suspension, axle and trailer EBS package, be it for on or off-highway use, it's easy to see why BPW is still the leading innovator in its field.

Australian transport companies, large and small, have proven time and again that BPW costs you less to operate per kilometre, than comparable systems, over the expected life of the trailer running gear.

Importantly, that equates to reduced service times and replacement parts, less vehicle time off the road, less stress and aggravation to all concerned, and with serious dollars being added to your bottom-line.

For your 'peace-of-mind' experience the BPW advantage... as BPW really does offer you...*the Best Possible Way*



Transpec

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Minding The Fleet

The recently released BPW TEBS Trailer Analyser feature is a very user-friendly tool that graphically displays all sorts of information about how both the trailer and the truck driver are handling their day to day road freighting tasks.



BY simply plugging into the BPW TEBS diagnostic port, using a laptop, which has been preloaded with the Trailer Analyser software, transport companies can quickly and easily access a comprehensive range of operational information, that when studied and acted upon, can dramatically improve both the safety and cost related performance of a fleet.

Actual and accurate reporting by the BPW Trailer Analyser is displayed with 'easy to read' full colour graphics, as opposed to a tabulated format which can often be hard to decipher.

The system monitors all functions of a trailer, like the number of ABS brake actuations, the times, pressures and energy of brake applications, average and maximum speeds, distance and time travelled, how often the trailer was driven loaded, indication of weights over the suspension group, steer and lift axle operations, the number of EBS roll stability interventions that take place during each trip, even storage of repair in service intervals and spare parts listings.

The BPW Trailer Analyser literally provides a 'health check' on certain aspects of a trailer's performance. The system is even designed to enable the fleet operator to compare one trailer to another trailer, driver to driver, to produce a much safer and more cost effective road transport service outcome.

When fully appreciated, the BPW Trailer Analyser can be the road transport operator's best friend, by giving vital information to constantly monitor and improve the company's driving culture, assist with procurement decisions and the maintenance procedures of the business, all with the aim to improve safety and better utilization and performance of both the truck and the trailer.

The BPW 'optional' Trailer Analyser software/hardware products are available from all BPW Transpec state branches. ■

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Since establishing its operation in 1967, Dampier Salt Limited (DSL) has become the world leader in the reliable supply of quality solar salt.

AS a joint venture between Rio Tinto, the Marubeni Corporation and Sojitz, Dampier Salt Limited has three operations located in Western Australia. One each at Port Hedland, Lake MacLeod and Dampier, another major industrial Port in the north west of the State. The company is headquartered in Perth.

The approach to their salt production involves extracting seawater at the Dampier and Port Hedland sites and by harvesting naturally occurring underground brines at Lake MacLeod, and then using the evaporative powers of the sun and wind to crystallise sodium chloride salt in a series of bundled ponds called crystallisers.

Sun and wind energy comprise around 99 percent of the total energy required to grow, process and ship the salt. That being the case, Dampier Salts sustainability strategy is founded on the concepts of long-term operational viability and maximising the use of renewable energy sources.

Collectively all three sites produce around 10 million tonnes of salt each year, a sustainable harvesting process that, due to the well executed stock management policy and the freight management and environmental practices, operations are predicted to continue well beyond the next 40 years.



SALT OF THE Earth



So respectful is Dampier Salt Limited towards their environmental protection responsibilities, at all three production sites, that the company would stop production rather than harm the environment.

The majority of the salt produced is used by the chemical industry for processing and manufacturing products for the automotive, construction and electronic sectors. Such products include plastics, glass, detergents and soaps, textiles, industrial chemicals and for food processing. The salt is even used to de-ice roads.

Dampier Salt works with many suppliers to source a range of goods and services, none more important than the transport of the salt from the massive stock piles to the various Ports for shipment worldwide.

Support Vehicles Australia (SVA) has been producing highly innovative bottom dump trailers for Dampier Salt's three operations since 2005. So far over one third of Dampier Salt's fleet of fifty cubic metre trailers have been supplied by SVA. All are currently employed as triple road-train configurations, each capable of delivering up to 210 tonnes per train.

Each trailer is built using high grade stainless steel sections designed to withstand continuous and maximum capacity loads. The bottom dumping process features a single 'full length door' which produces a fast and expedient discharge action.

To assist in the on-site servicing of the bottom-dump trailers, and other mobile equipment, SVA has taken a Dampier Salt prime-mover and turned it into a service vehicle consisting of specialized spill containment hydrocarbon tanks to adhere with DSL's strict environmental policies, and sophisticated pumping equipment to get the service work done as quickly and efficiently as possible. To also keep the trailers in service to deliver their cargo on-time, 27 tonne, 150 mm solid beam BPW axles are used in conjunction with SVA engineered walking-beam suspensions. In order to achieve the maximum amount of reliability and value-for-money, these axles have been the 'first-choice' for DSL since 1995 for the design of their new trailers and the upgrading of the existing fleet.

Of the many key factors for Dampier Salts' choice of SVA transport equipment, safety and reliability were paramount.

As a core value, Dampier Salt Limited seeks to achieve a sustainable injury-free workplace by recognising their employee's health and safety. Having a state-of-the-art and proven road transport operation is a key part of being able to realistically deliver that policy. ■





Brian Pritchard with Rhys Harnett, BPW Transpec Transport Efficiency



COLLABORATIVE EFFORT PAYS OFF

Pan Pac Forest Products Limited is a Japanese owned, fully integrated forestry company, located in the Hawke's Bay region on the North Island of New Zealand.

THE company manages the cutting rights to 33,500 hectares of plantation forests, exporting wood chips and fibre to Oji Paper (owner of Pan Pac) for the manufacturer of newsprint and board grade products.

This environmentally conscious logging and processing enterprise manages over 450 employees, 115 of which are truck drivers in charge of 73 transportation vehicles that move timber, in one form or another.

One of their many haulage operations involves moving a quarter of a million tonnes of 'baled' wood-pulp a year over a dedicated 40 kilometre round trip to the Port of Napier.

In an endeavour to improve the productivity of this specific road transport activity, Pan Pac, in association with the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and road freight contractor, Emmerson Transport Limited, began conducting trials in 2008 using a hybrid B-Train set up as part of the NZ Government's Heavy Permitted Motor Vehicle (HPMV) work.

Pan Pac's Forestry and Logistics manager, Brian Pritchard, along with Forest Products manager of operations, Neil Weber, were instrumental in progressing this innovative HPMV operation towards reality.

"I guess you could say I've been the referee in the project, working alongside the two trailer manufacturers, Kraft and Fruehauf, and Emmerson, to come up with the optimum unit design that meets all the legislative criteria of safety and performance," said Neil.

Emmerson was selected in 2010 to provide the HPMV service to Pan Pac and along with Ian Emmerson, and the selected trailer builders, a 7 axle quad/tri B-Train, incorporating a BPW steer axle, was designed, built and tested.

The final road trial was completed on December 29th 2010, which included high and low-speed turning tests, both of which passed with flying colours.

The 24.8 metre long, 62 gross tonne combination, carrying 144 bales of wood pulp as 6 individually strapped pallets, commenced operation 'under permit' on Tuesday January 10th this year, and according to all involved, is meeting all the required expectations remarkably well.

"Kraft Trailers was instrumental in coming up with the idea of the 7 axle B-Train and as such worked with both TERNZ and NZTA to get their design approved. This process involved a number of high and low speed turning trials to ensure the total combination stayed within the required 120 degrees swept path.

Owner and managing director of Kraft, Graeme Kelly and the company's production staff, worked relentlessly on the project for 15 months, eventually delivering the high tensile, low profile chassis, which is equipped with the latest BPW air suspension and on disc braked axles, the centre quad axle group being fitted with an automatic 'oscillating self-steering' system.

"Once the chassis was officially approved, Kraft worked closely with Fruehauf NZ Limited to produce the top half of the B-Train trailers. To



ensure that the required productivity gains were met, Jeff Mear, along with the Fruehauf crew, developed a load-rated restrained 'quick release' side curtain system which opens and closes without the use of the time consuming intervention of conventional buckles and straps. That, along with Fruehauf's adjustable side restraining headboards, allows Pan Pac to safely load, unload and transport the cargo with a minimum of time and effort.

"I have to say the collaborative effort and expertise between both trailer companies, to produce the end result, was crucial in securing a successful outcome," said Neil.

Since the venture had 'ticked' all the boxes, especially the various mandated axle group weights, the vehicle has been delivering around nine loads a day to the Port's warehousing facility.

As for the benefits of the project, Pan Pac, according to Neil, has seen a significant productivity increase of 30% over and above the previously used transportation system resulting in an extra 12 tonnes of freight being delivered with each load.

"We're meeting all our export delivery criteria along with the planned productivity gains, which translate into significant savings due to the amount of reduced trips, and with improvements for the environment and safety in the work place. It's a win/win result for everyone," concluded Neil. ■





TRUCK LOAD OF WORK

According to Guy Paragalli, hard work never hurt anyone, because he says that is exactly what has greatly contributed to the growth and consequent success of his New South Wales based haulage business.



Guy Paragalli

“I started off driving a second-hand Volvo doing excavation work and then in the afternoons I would drop off a few loads of landscaping materials to make some extra money. That led to buying an old loader and a small yard which I stocked with sand, soils and gravel. Then when I had some spare time over the weekends, I'd also look after the mechanical, service and refurbishment of the gear I was running,” said Guy.

Not content with his around-the-clock workload, Guy began to expand both his garden supply deliveries and excavation activities by purchasing a truck and dog trailer combination, of which he now owns seven, mainly of the Hercules Trailer variety.

For Guy, he says the first seven years establishing the business were the toughest, loading the trucks at the break-of-day and working late through the evening to balance the books, the breakthrough occurring when he decided to expand his operation to support a growing landscaping industry.

Today Paragalli Haulage supplies both the commercial trade and the mums and dads with a huge range of garden based materials.

“We provide a variety of soils for growing lawns, plants and vegetables, even for clean fill purposes. Other supplies include mulches, manures, all types of sands for the building industry, concrete mixes, bagged cement,



lime, river stone, ornamental rocks, pebbles, bark, quartz, even granite. And we are still very much engaged in excavation work such as site cuts and the transporting of bulk materials to and from large commercial building developments and sub-divisions."

To control the diversity of the jobs at hand Guy employs his own drivers, runs a large fleet consisting of semis, rigids and dog trailers, operates screening plants and manages a quarry from which he sources his materials.

His reasoning for the diversification was simple, "I can keep the trucks going with the addition of our landscaping supplies, especially if it rains and our quarry and construction work gets bogged down. I even have our on-site holding yards weather proofed with road base so I can still manage our landscaping business throughout the winter months."

In keeping his service levels alive, come rain or shine, Guy has seen his business flourish, which has been no mean feat, given the constant and often short notice turnaround times of the daily delivery schedules.

"We have set the business up for our customers, not ourselves, to get the loads to their destination on time and without fail. In our line of work our clients depend on us so they can meet their deadlines and for that reason we simply can't afford to let them down."

Guy says he and his crew are completely reliant on their trucks and trailers to maintain the service levels their customers have come to expect.

"I won't entertain using anything but the best available transport equipment, regardless of the cost or weight penalties and once proven; I've stuck to specific brands of trucks and trailers, some for over twenty years. As for running gear, BPW is my favourite axle and suspension provider and I've come to that conclusion because I've used other makes, none of which have tracked, performed or lasted as well. When BPW is on the road I never have to spend money keeping it on the road," said Guy. With the daily challenges of managing consignments, keeping an eye on

costs like fuel, tyres and maintenance, complying with all the industry standards and controlling the cash flow, Guy says he leans heavily on the support of his office staff and drivers. Their collective effort, he says, has built and protected the company's reputation for delivering a quality 'at-call' highly personalised service.

"I've been very fortunate over the years to have had a good crew on the job, including the backing of my wife, Narelle, who looks after the book work. Although it's meant a lot of hard work, long hours and at times a great deal of stress, it's great to know you have built up a sound business model that can only get bigger and better." ■



RACE TO THE TOP

The Gold Coast based, V8 Supercar team, Tekno Autosports, is an Australian racing team which was established in the early 2000's. Tekno began as a Porsche racing team; piloted by Steve Webb. As the 2000's progressed the team's emphasis shifted from Steve to his son, Jonathon, which laid the foundations for his climb through the ranks of Australian motor racers.



Michael 'Mick' Shortus

JONATHON achieved some strong results in the Porsches finishing third in his best ever season in 2005. As for Tekno, the business transitioned into the second-tier Fujitsu V8 Supercar Series and in 2007 operated a Ford Falcon driven by Jonathon with the assistance of Stone Brothers Racing. In 2009 Tekno supported Jonathon in his first Fujitsu V8 Supercar Championship win, the car prepared by former racer Mathew White's team.

2010 marked time for a change; Tekno linked with veteran Queensland Ford racing team, Dick Johnson Racing, for Webb's first full time run in the V8 Supercar Championship Series. They achieved their first win at the Sydney Telstra 500 in their Mother Ford V8 Supercar. Jonathon's 2010 debut season included 9 top ten race finishes an astonishing multiple performance record.

In 2011 the race company moved away from their relationship with





Dick Johnson Racing to become an independent single-car team, maintaining their sponsorship links with Mother Energy Drinks.

To achieve the level of competitive success required to mix it with the other established V8 teams, Tekno Autosports employs one of the industry's most respected and proven support crew led by team manager Bruce Jenkins, backed by chief engineer Dr Geoffrey Slater and mechanics, Steve Greer, Richard Greaves and Nathan Reakes.

Responsible for all the freighting logistics, both in Aussie and overseas is transport driver Michael 'Mick' Shortus. Mick pilots a 26 metre B-double, equipped with BPW running gear, to all race meetings around the nation and when parked-up at the track, he and his crew look after the tyre management of Jonathon's Ford V8 Supercar.

The B-double 'A' trailer is used to store the tyres and toolboxes while also acting as a catering facility and driver preparation room. The 'B' trailer carries all the pit-wall sections, spare parts and importantly, the

racecar. Together with the on-board equipment the truck and trailer combination is worth around \$2,000,000. (AUD)

"For my part it's crucial that I get the vehicle and its cargo to the various race tracks on-time and in prime condition. For that to happen I rely heavily on the performance of both the entire rig, of which BPW highway series trailer axles and suspensions play a pivotal role. Without over stating the fact, the stability of the rig is brilliant, in particular both trailers, as they hug the road so well that at times you can't even feel their presence," said Mick.

With Jonathon's wife, Kobe, as operations manager, John Dunlop, acting as commercial and PR manager, and team trainer and physio, Philip Young, completing the line-up that supports Jonathon in preparation for each and every round, the scene for Tekno Autosports future looks pretty good for many successful V8 Supercar Championship seasons to come. ■





STRETCHING THE ENVELOPE





The commencement of one of New Zealand's largest privately owned freight forwarding ventures was triggered by an unexpected phone call which company owner, Greg Haliday, received back in early December 1992.



“HAVING sold out of a partnership arrangement I was contemplating my next move within the freight industry, which I had served for many years in sales, when the home phone rang. The agitated caller, having exhausted his forwarding alternatives, was desperately seeking assistance to move some pallets of fragile product down to Nelson on the South Island. That was just the motivation I needed to make some hard decisions, so with the support of my wife Diane, we were off and running with a new business venture,” says Greg.

During Greg's roles, within a number of nationwide freight companies, his self driven attitude and performance had obviously made an impact with customers like the one who had called, who recognised his ability to think laterally to provide innovative solutions. He was also well-known within the industry for his commitment and his access to a wide range of transport options.

Greg and Diane originally ran their business, Mainstream, from a small office in the commercial suburb of Onehunga. It was common in those early times for Greg to be flat-out on the road with sales calls, diverting the pickup calls to Diane at home where she was also looking after two toddlers.

“Business grew and fast, due to word-of-mouth,” said Greg. “We were given all the difficult jobs, urgent, perishable, fragile, late orders and time-sensitive. It was challenging but we always got the freight to its destination in one piece and on time. And the customers kept coming back.”

Being based in Auckland, Mainstream's early business days were focused on offering a 48 hour service to the South Island by road, at a time when most operators used slower rail or coastal shipping modes. This expedient service quickly led to the opening of their Christchurch branch in 1994.

“Because our customers were looking for a national one-stop-shop solution we also began building up the business on the North Island and depots in Hamilton, and Wellington were added in the later 1990's,” Greg told us.

At the same time the company made another major commitment purchasing its first fully owned and operated truck, a significant step for Greg and Diane, as up until that point, they had out-sourced all their transport services.

“After that we again grew pretty quickly, so we consolidated the operation and concentrated on establishing our own unique systems and services, which Diane helped considerably through her IT expertise,” said Greg.

After just two years of moving its first consignment, Mainstream customers' included an increasing number of blue-chip accounts reliant on exceptional and consistent service. As such, many of Mainstream's original customers are still with the company today.

By the mid 2000's Mainstream began broadening its infrastructure through acquisitions, starting with National Express, a rival freight forwarder, then Manawatu based C.W. Murray Transport and most recently, Network Storage and Distribution; now renamed, Mainstream Logistics.

Today the enterprise consists of 7 domestic branches and multiple regional runs, operates significant logistics facilities in Auckland and Christchurch and also offers international forwarding through Mainstream Global, for general freight and GT International for special projects and vehicle transport. The business owns all their transport equipment, such as the Fruehauf supplied 22.3 metre four axle truck and five axle trailer unit pictured here, which operates on BPW axles and the soft-riding Airlight II airbag suspension.

“We are now fully established to source products from anywhere around the globe, bring them to New Zealand to warehouse and distribute them for our customers and as seamlessly as possible.

“Our main game and expertise is providing cost effective, integrated distribution solutions, all highly specialised to meet our customers' needs. We do that by listening and thinking outside the box, never frightened to invest to achieve the best solution for all involved,” says Greg.

As for the future, Greg sees more acquisitions, more International growth, and more investment in infrastructures like their planned new and expansive premises in Auckland.

Above all else, Greg says both he and Diane, along with the company's board members and loyal staff, will always work towards offering ‘a point of difference’ when it comes to freight forwarding, logistics and international services... no matter where the project or customer is based. ■

There are not too many 'home-grown' commercial trailer manufacturers that can deliver such a diversity of innovative road freighting solutions, and with such personal pride, as the Western Australian based company, General Transport Equipment (GTE).

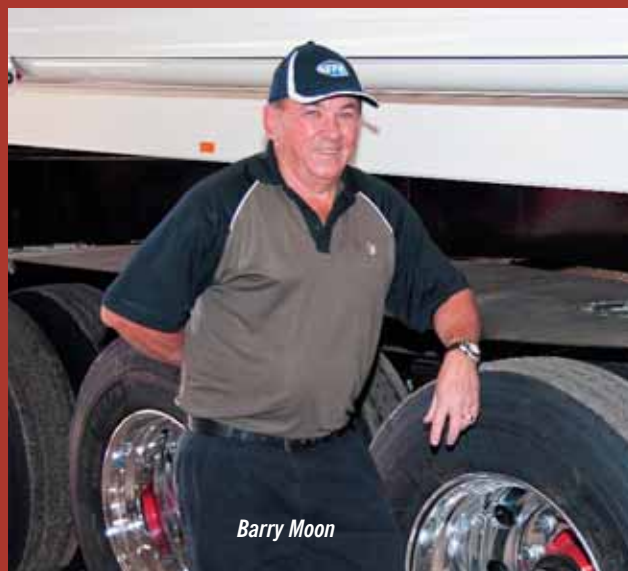
UP FRONT AND PERSONAL

CREATED in 1979 by the three current directors, Adrian Page, Russell Fletcher and Barry Moon, GTE is positioned within the State's top three trailer body-builders offering just about every major form of medium to heavy duty road transport trailing equipment.

"We have the proven design and engineering skills, along with the production capacity to custom-build semi trailers through to multiple road-train configurations, specifically created to carry general dry freight, bulk commodities, dangerous goods such as chemicals and fuel, heavy mining equipment, minerals and ores of all descriptions, refrigerated and chilled produce and over-dimensional loads, and with all the productivity and efficiency benefits now demanded by a highly competitive road based freight industry," said sales director, Barry Moon.

All three director/owners have been involved in the dynamics of the road transport industry's trailer building business, even before they established their own company, as all were previously employed by Freighter Australia.

"Although we each have individual portfolios and responsibilities



Barry Moon





within the organisation, collectively we work well together to produce the best outcome for our customers, first by delivering a product they can rely on and secondly, backing that product with an honest, trustworthy service," said Barry.

The firm has established two locations in the Perth suburb of Kewdale. The larger of the two is dedicated to the manufacturing process which uses state-of-the-art components, materials and construction methods which includes modern spray painting booths.

The designs for both new and modified equipment are performed by an in-house team of dedicated transport engineers who use the latest in computer software such as AutoCAD and Inventor. Almost every trailer is customised to cater for their clients' individual operational needs, from the desired payloads to the types of products being carried.

"I believe our product diversity and in-house capabilities are unmatched anywhere else in our field. Take our platform trailer range as an example. We supply flat tops, drop decks, extendables, skeletal, curtain-siders, low-loaders and machinery trailers to be used for either metropolitan, line haul or road-train use.

"Then there's our end-tipper range which caters for the bulk grain market, the general purpose cartage of sands and aggregates, the delivery of commodities like metals or explosives, and our heavy-duty models produced to handle raw mining products for either on or off-road use. We are also seriously involved in producing water, fuel and chemical tankers, side-tippers and dolly converters in either single, tandem or tri-axle configurations," Barry said.

To support all their products in the field, GTE's second purpose-built facility is set up to offer an extensive range of trailer and tanker repair work together with maintenance back up which includes a 24 hour on-site mobile emergency service, if needed. The company's engineering skills are capable of large scale repairs, chassis crush and straightening, the de-gassing of tankers and the fit-out of both trailers and trucks of ancillary componentry such as the electrics, pumps, hydraulics, turntables and wheel guards. All service work is supported by a comprehensive range of 'off-the-shelf' genuine truck and trailer spare parts sourced from original equipment suppliers such as BPW Transpec.

All of GTE's manufacturing, repair and service activities are fully certified under the required industry standards, as Barry says, "Quality Assurance is built into every process with programmed inspections carried out by our team of highly trained and experienced designers, engineers and mechanics.

"We have over 70 staff, many long term employees who turn out an array of products specifically developed for West Australia's harsh operating conditions and for the many clients who have believed in us by using our trailers from the day we opened our doors.

"Our customers tell us they have been very happy with what GTE has been able to achieve for their specific transport needs, sighting our ability to supply custom-made equipment capable of delivering the best outcome for their business. We'll also continue to assist each and every customer with a straight-down-the-line service approach so they know they can rely on our promise to deliver," concluded Barry. ■

FUELLING THE TROOPS

The Pilbara region in Western Australia has some of the world's most ancient natural landscapes dating back two billion years and stretching over 40,000 square kilometers. It is also one of the country's richest mining areas for precious metals and iron ore.

EXTRACTING the minerals requires a lot of energy from both men and machinery, energy that needs to be renewed by companies like Fuel Trans Australia.

Fuel Trans, run by Steven Crawford, was created through a wealth of previous related fuel distribution experience passed on by Steven's father and also self-initiated industry related business ventures. Even by the fact that Fuel Trans was further developed by Steven following his acquisition of the local Port Hedland based

transport firm, Maisey Haulage.

"We've more than doubled the existing fleet since we took over Maisey four years ago and will continue to chip away at the market offering traditional good old fashioned customer service," commented Steven.

Operating double, triple and quad road train configurations, Fuel Trans delivers diesel, petrol, Avgas, Jet Fuel and lubricants for Reliance Petroleum, the Australian BP distributor.

According to Steven the delivery task has its moments, especially



Craig Brewer

during the wet season when flash flooding can hold up his trucks and drivers for days at a time.

"Most of our consignments take up to 24 and 48 hours to complete because of the multiple drop-offs to the likes of outback cattle stations, mine-sites, major and regional airports, service stations and roadhouses.

"Each driver is dedicated to a specific prime mover and is responsible for looking after the rig and his own safety, which includes plenty of on-board provisions at hand, just in case of unexpected flash flooding.

"It's a good thing we have some of the industry's best trained and most dedicated drivers behind the wheel so we can keep the tanks full and bowzers flowing, no matter what the conditions are," Steven says.

With fuel being such an essential commodity, Steven and his crew rely heavily on their Kenworth trucks and tanker trailers, which are supplied by Marshall Lethlean, Holmwood Highgate and Tieman Industries.

"The way business is run these days it's all about the just in-time process, so it comes back on us to keep the fuel flowing, which is tough on the equipment," Steven said.

To take the guess work out of the performance of his fleet, Steven does all the trailer and most of the truck maintenance and service

work in-house. He also insists on standardising on Kenworth trucks and BPW trailer running gear because he knows when working in the unforgiving Australian outback there's no room for either complacency or error.

"When you're in control of 53 metres of road train with 160 tonnes of freight on-board consisting of around 130,000 litres of hazardous liquid, you can't afford second rate equipment. In my experience both Kenworth and BPW stand up well to all the required on-road safety and performance levels, and when everything is kept well serviced and maintained, can make a 10 year rig still present and operate like new," says Steven.

Company driver, Craig Brewer, who has a dedicated delivery run of aviation fuels to the likes of the Newman mine, says his quad roadtrain never lets him down.

"I can travel up to 1900 kilometres in a single trip with most of the run over pretty rough off-road conditions. If it wasn't for the quality of the gear and that Steven is right on-top of the maintenance, we wouldn't get the job done consistently and within the allocated time frames.

"The thing that is always in the back of my mind is the importance of keeping our customers happy. After all, without the fuel everything stops," said Craig. ■



Steven Crawford



HATS TO THE

Twenty years ago four young enterprising gentlemen joined forces in Rotorua to create one of New Zealand's most successful and long standing trailer manufacturing ventures known as Roadmaster.

SYMBOLISED by their 'red bull' logo, Roadmaster has since become an icon within the country's road transport industry, an effort that Pat Mear, Lyall McGee, Ross Bell and Bill Lacey are all proud to have been a part of.

The firm's first engineering efforts were 2 and 3 axle steel body trailers built specifically to cart fertilisers. New orders soon picked-up with 3 and 4 axle tippers being added to the production line. Then along came the curtainsider, first as a semi trailer, and eventually in B-Train builds. Along the way flat tops, heavy duty low loaders, truck bodies, tipping and logging skels, even refrigerated rigids and trailers were all part of the diversity of Roadmaster's engineering skills. All that was made possible by the company's in-house design team, assembled to ensure the users of their products achieved optimal and cost efficient transport solutions.

Together with developing smarter and more economical ways of moving freight, Roadmaster provide a diverse range of back-up services, including chassis straightening, truck body and trailer re-builds, refurbishments, insurance work, general repairs to wheel alignments, all backed by sound warranty protection.

From the very start, the company has succeeded as a market leader because everyone involved in the business has done their best to give their customers exactly what they want, especially the confidence in knowing that back-up support is just a phone call



OFF RED BULL



away. It's a culture that, in the industry's hey day, saw Roadmaster as the nation's number one trailer producer.

To reflect on their past achievements, and reaffirm the future direction of the business, on November 11th, 2011, Roadmaster held a 20 year celebration attended by customers, suppliers, staff and all four original partners.

Ross Bell, Roadmaster CEO, on the night commented that the company was well poised to meet the next 20 years as a major player in the New Zealand road transport manufacturing sector.

"I wish to thank Pat Mear (who recently retired) and Lyall McGee, for their 20 years of joint involvement in Roadmaster and welcome Meryn Morrison as our new administration general manager. I would also like to thank Bill Lacey for his ongoing commitment as an employee," he said.

Then Ross paid tribute to Mike Donnelly, who died suddenly in August last year, for his role as operations manager and subsequently general manager. Finally Ross welcomed Colin Patchell on board as the firm's new general manager of operations. "Last but not least, I must acknowledge the contribution that all of our staff, suppliers, and importantly our clients have made towards the success of Roadmaster," he concluded.

We also caught up with Roadmaster engineer director, Lyall McGee, who commented that the business is completely committed to re-investing and improving operations through the likes of up-skilling their engineering department.

"We've seen and made lots of changes over the last 20 years taking plenty of calculated risks in investing in equipment, people and buildings.

"Although it was tough in those early days, and subsequently during the downturn periods, we all pulled together and worked hard to make the company what it is today – a people business that delivers on its word," he said. ■



Over sixty years ago Claude Amey and his brother, Les, started a rudimentary transport business in Queanbeyan, a regional centre in the Southern Tablelands in south-eastern New South Wales.



Allan and Bruce Amey

UPHOLDING THE TRADITION

THEY began Amey Bros as wood merchants harvesting and carting the local timber, and when that wasn't enough, the brothers moved into carrying livestock, then fertilisers, which eventually led to handling landscape supplies.

The small family concern ended up owning fourteen trucks that at times moved hay, bagged wheat, wool and when necessary, even general freight.

Sons of Claude, Allan and Bruce, grew up watching all of this transport activity transpire, lending a hand to open the farm gates, sweeping off the trailers and basically doing whatever they could, just to be involved.

"By the early 1970's Allan and I were old enough to get behind the wheel to help dad out, but unfortunately times got tough so we were

forced to find other work," said Bruce.

It wasn't long however before Allan and Bruce were back driving for Claude delivering fertilisers and landscaping supplies throughout the local area and when Claude eventually retired in the late 70's his boys bought the business with all the responsibilities and contests that went with it.

Since then the brothers have serviced their clients well, ranging from delivering bulk materials to Commonwealth owned construction sites, domestic housing estates to landscaping firms, both big and small.

Amey Bros is still located just fifteen kilometres from Australia's Capital, Canberra, which was established in 1908. The entirely planned city of approximately 350,000 inhabitants, which has been designed by the influence of the 'garden city movement', features





some outstanding structures that both Allan and Bruce have, in their small way, helped develop.

"We've supported projects like the National Museum, War Memorial, the National Art Gallery and the old as well as the New Parliament Houses, delivering all kinds of soils, gravels and sands," said Allan.

The brothers prefer to run three axle truck and dog combinations so they can easily get in and out of the tight building sites, and by unhooking to use just the truck as a flexible, more cost effective, delivery option when the job dictates.

Originally Allan and Bruce operated rigid vehicles and a tandem-axle pig trailer but gravitated to the three-axle truck and dog combinations to gain the extra freight. Over the years the firm has purchased a range of trailer body makes, the latest being Muscat engineered, but have always insisted on BPW running gear and Edbro tipping hoists, saying they've learnt the hard way.

"We've had a couple of goes at running other type axles and suspensions but none have come up to scratch like the BPW which on one of our trailers has lasted over ten years without having to replace the bushes or bearings," said Bruce.

There are now seven trucks in the fleet, five of which are driven by company drivers picking up and delivering the landscaping materials from as far east to the coastal city of Ulladulla and down south to

Moruya, almost two hundred kilometers away.

Although the workload isn't as back breaking as it was in the earlier days, the business of appeasing their customers' late orders, according to Bruce, has become even more demanding.

"When we first took over from dad we had the week's delivery schedule all mapped out. Nowadays, with the advent of the mobile phone, the un-announced orders start ringing in from six in the morning," he laughed.

One thing's for sure, the level of Amey Brothers' honest and reliable service has stayed consistent.

"We can't afford not to be on top of our customers' requests, some of which have been with us since the early 70's. That level of support just hasn't happened either. It's occurred because we will never short-change or leave our clients stranded. When you look back over the years it's all been about people, the people we love to service," Allan said.

Helping to cement the brothers' efforts has been Allan's wife, Nanette, and Bruce's wife, Jen, who together have kept tabs on both the administration and financial activities of the family concern.

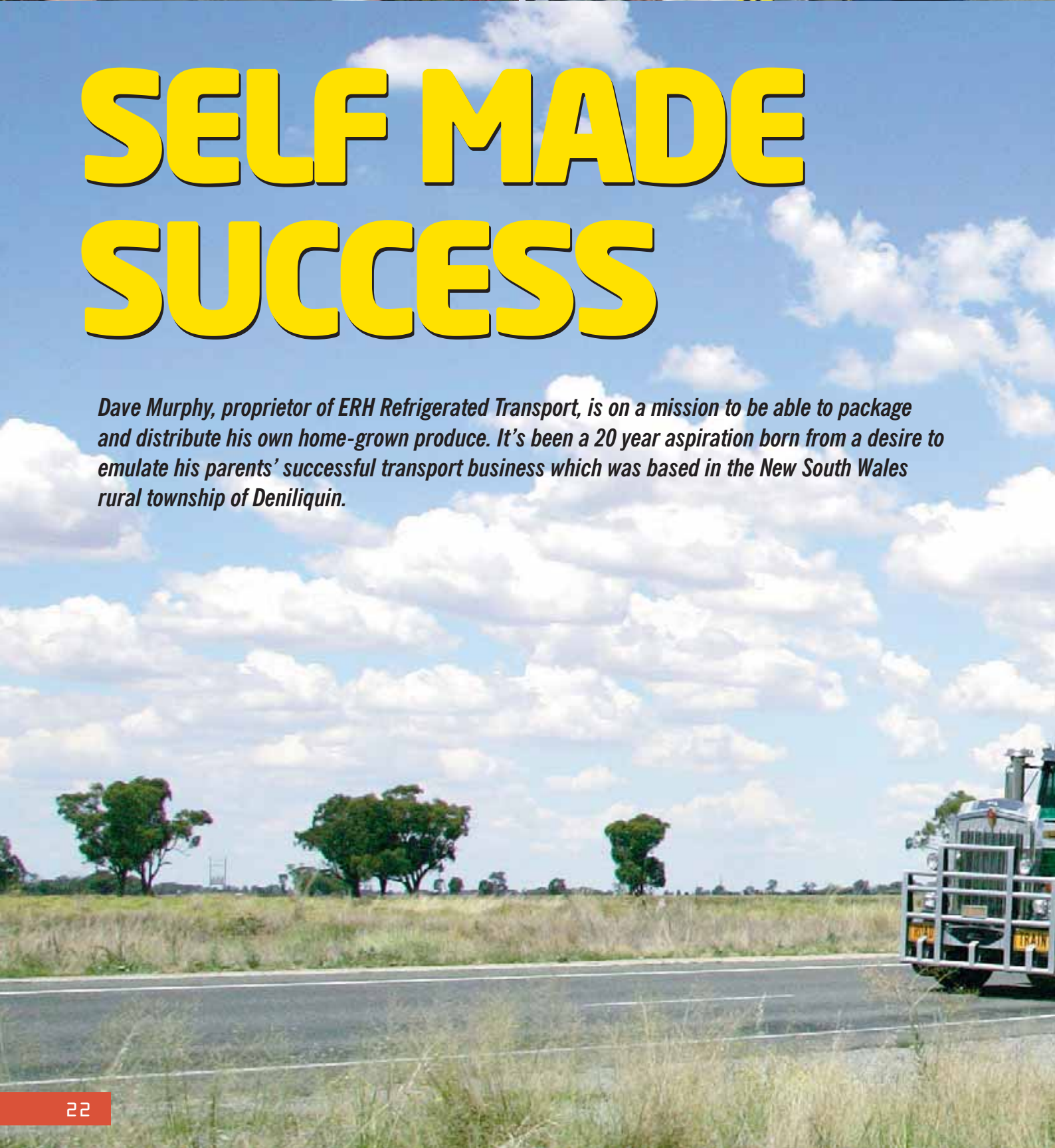
"Our wives have worked hard behind the scenes, sharing both the gain and the pain. Without them we simply wouldn't be where we are today," Allan and Bruce both agreed. ■





SELF MADE SUCCESS

Dave Murphy, proprietor of ERH Refrigerated Transport, is on a mission to be able to package and distribute his own home-grown produce. It's been a 20 year aspiration born from a desire to emulate his parents' successful transport business which was based in the New South Wales rural township of Deniliquin.



THE Murphy family has been involved in trucking since the turn of the century when Dave's great grandfather, James, and his great grandfather, Norman, established J. Murphy & Sons to service the local farming community's needs to cart livestock to the railhead for distribution beyond.

It was an enterprising operation which was eventually taken over by Dave's parents, Alan and Kay, which at that time, as well as carting livestock, was heavily involved in hauling general freight back from Melbourne for the local business community.

"I was twenty years of age when my folks helped me set up my own road haulage company by providing a second-hand trailer, based on the condition that I took care of the cost of procuring the truck. The agreement resulted in me eventually getting behind the wheel of a Scania to cart bulk grains, mainly rice, from the local farms and storage facilities to the processing mill. Once the grain season finished I use to travel just about anywhere to secure a load, and it often meant having to go as far north as Brisbane," says Dave.

Over time Dave grew and diversified his transport services carting cattle feed to the northern markets and general freight as far west to Perth. In essence, to support the business, he would commit to move whatever he could for almost anyone. But when the price of fuel skyrocketed in the late '90s Dave couldn't make ends meet, in fact he says he almost went broke.

"To survive I had to scale down the fleet and consolidate, carting bulk milk to Sydney and refrigerated produce, such as packaged dairy and meat products, up and down the east coast to the capital cities.

We even established a Type-2 road-train operation to competitively service the northern markets," said Dave.

These days ERH, (an abbreviation for Edward River Haulage, referring to the river that flows past Deniliquin) operates around thirty refrigerated vans, picking up freight from the various factories and farms, delivering the cargo direct to the cold stores of some of the county's major food growers and distributors.

To do this effectively, Dave and his crew have to constantly keep their

finger on the pulse of the business to ensure they maintain the essential time-sensitive service levels their customers so often demand.

"We are forever talking to our clients so we can collectively plan ahead to avoid a potential delivery hiccup, and sometimes that means being up-front and honest about the reality of the desired freight expectation. I've always believed, if you can't identify and sort out those difficult transport issues ahead of time, you've lost control of your business, and if you don't have the time to put out the daily fires, if or when they occur, then your business has become too big."

Helping ERH manage the freight task are a number of loyal longtime truck, trailer and equipment suppliers.

"We have mainly stuck to the same truck, tyre, trailer, fuel and running gear providers from the day I got behind the wheel. I've always insisted on quality equipment because we don't have the luxury these days of taking vehicles out of service because of an un-scheduled breakdown. So we buy Kenworth trucks, Lucar vans, Thermo King refrigeration plants and BPW axles and suspensions. It's all good gear that's heavy duty so you can run it trouble-free for a very long time," said Dave.

With two decades of trucking under his belt Dave knows only too well that the truck, trailer and all the add-on componentry have to work in harmony to get the job done best, long-term, and for the lowest operating price.

As for his goal to eventually take full control of the business of supplying his own produce, Dave says his stone-fruit orchards are coming along quite nicely. ■

Pictured above right, Shane Miers (left), ERH national refrigeration manager, with Aldo Tumolero, company driver of 7 years. Aldo operates this Lucar Van road-train mainly between Brisbane and Melbourne. With BPW axles and suspensions on-board, he says the entire rig handles like a semi, it holds the line around corners that well.



The similarity between the jobs of moving coal around the South Island of New Zealand to hauling bulk materials in the north of Western Australia is like comparing chalk with cheese. It doesn't get any more different says Kiwi born, Wayne Marnane, who moved 'over the ditch' 13 years ago to drive for Jamieson Transport.

LAND OF PLENTY

“I started working for Ross Jamieson out in the gold mining township of Kalgoorlie driving road trains. Eventually Ross moved the business north to Port Hedland where it now consists of 30 sets of quad road-trains hauling iron ore, magnesium and bulk materials to assist in building the regions road network,” says Wayne. Ross Jamieson began his road transport career moving cattle in B double stock crates around the coastal township of Capel which is 200 kilometres south of Perth. His move to operating roadtrain side-tippers to service the mining industry grew from the increasing global demand for Australia's high yield commodities, a trend set to grow to keep pace with the fast developing Asian and third world countries such as China and India.

To keep up with the export production targets, especially for the iron-ore deposits, Jamieson Transport run their fleet night and day, six days a week, every week of the year. Each train delivers around 110 tonnes of ore per trip, stock piling the ore at the Port where huge holding deposits feed the constant arrival of the tanker ships.

As workshop co-manager, Wayne sees the punishment the job dishes out on the equipment.

“We place aside one full day a week for each of our Tristar and Boomerang built trailers which are all set up on BPW heavy duty drum braked axles. The reason for BPW is because it's a simple axle to work on and it's tough.

It has to be to survive road temperatures of up to 70 degrees Celsius and the constant running in the wet or dry.”

Wayne works alongside workshop co-manager, Robert Broderick, also from New Zealand, and a team of mechanics to keep the gear in top condition, as their transport operation is a vital link in the mining industry's supply chain.

“As I started out driving for the company I knew how important it was to keep the vehicles in good order because there's nothing worse than being stranded in the middle of nowhere due to a break down,” said Wayne.

With the extremes in weather to battle, the long hours behind the wheel and the isolation of the outback, not to mention the bush flies, life as a road transport driver in this part of the world requires the old-style art of trucking.

“When I first started over here most people called me ‘Kiwi’ and coming from the land of the long white cloud, I quickly found that trucking in Aussie was very different. When your tyres explode, due to the heat, you alone do the wheel and tyre changing. When you're stuck in a flash flood you need to have the necessary water and food to keep you going, and when you're shift is up, you need a sleeper cab that feels like home.

“But if you're looking for adventure, don't mind the dust, heat, flies and mud, and you're lucky enough to land a job with a great family company like Jamieson, then you'll be well rewarded in many ways.”

To all his Kiwi trucking mates Wayne says, “If you want to really be the ‘king of the road’ and don't mind the hard yakka, then get yourself over here.” ■





Wayne Marnane



Robert Broderick





(Left to right) Tieman W.A. State manager, Calvin Ridley, Norm Dickson and Vince Niceforo, Tieman dry bulk sales manager.

Norm Dickson knows only too well how tough the trucking game can get when engaged in running a mid-size fleet of tanker trailers from his Gidgegannup based business, 40 kilometres north east of Perth in Western Australia.

HE started driving trucks in the early 80's as a one man operation, which over the years has blossomed into one of the State's premier dry bulk powder transport service providers. Dickson Road Transport (DRT) these days concentrates on moving cement products throughout the vast Pilbara regions travelling over 1,600 kilometres south-east to deliver his cargo. Up until recently the DRT fleet consisted of standard steel built tankers. That however was before Norm contacted Tieman, having heard of their aluminium dry bulk O.M.E.P.S tanker range. Norm had also seen the Tieman aluminium fuel tankers operating over many years in the State's rugged 'off-road' conditions. He also figured that, as nobody operated heavy steel tankers in the fuel industry anymore because of the poor payload returns, it was only a matter of time before the dry bulk industry moved to aluminium tankers.

SEIZING THE MOMENT



"I knew immediately that going to aluminum was the way of the future for us, especially after seeing Tieman's new O.M.E.P.S tanker, as it had all the features to give us the distinct advantages we were looking for," said Norm.

It wasn't long before Norm was the proud owner of a Tieman 36.5 metre long AB-triple tanker-trailer combination which arrived in December last year.

Custom designed for Norm's dry bulk set-up, the tri-axle lead trailer offers a maximum capacity of 28 cubic metres using one compartment, while the two tri-axle dog trailers provide a total of 43 cubic metres each. All-up the combination grosses 118 tonnes. Each trailer has a semi oscillating plate to reduce stress in the tanker, with all airlines being polished stainless steel for a great looking finish.

All three tankers are built using a solid steel fabricated suspension sub-frame bolted to aluminum bottom extrusions, a light weight combination that promises to go the distance over some of the Australia's roughest roads.

Based on a light weight 5mm aluminium alloy shell, including torispherical 8mm ends, the tanker is able to discharge the cement powder through a combination of 'world patented' oval shaped cones and standard circular cones, controlled by an AKD pinch valve. Aeration cloths are used in all tankers to maximise the discharge rates.

"Apart from looking great, this AB Triple, with its significant tare



weight savings gives us around a 7 tonne payload advantage each trip. Over the operating life of this combination, that's huge extra revenue for us every year," said Norm.

And if that didn't excite Norm enough, the discharge time simply blew him away.

"To discharge two of the tankers only took an hour, that's half the time it takes us using any one of our other heavy steel tankers."

For Norm, he says the safety features of the Tieman combination is also a highlight. "Looking from an OH&S point of view, it was yet another reason we went for the Tieman brand.

The O.M.E.P.S combination, supplied by Tieman, is equipped with collapsible safety rails which are pneumatically operated and connected to the braking system designed to make working on the vehicle as safe as possible. An aluminium catwalk, running the full length of each barrel on the driver's side, is also included. Side impact protection completes the safety package.

As part of the reliability requirement, Norm insisted on using the BPW heavy-duty OM 'off road' airbag suspension, axle and drum brake system, stating, "We do a fair bit of off-highway work so the tankers had to be built to a heavy-duty spec, and I'm confident, that with the BPW gear on-board, the unit will easily stand up to the task."

To date the Tieman experience has been good for Norm, so much so that he is considering upgrading DRT's ageing steel fleet with the O.M.E.P.S. design.

"As well as all the savings and safety features you also need solid back-up service, especially when you're out back in this part of the world. Both Tieman and BPW are renowned for their strong support network of qualified people, which for us is a must." ■



Ray Ablett



CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK





Driver, David Rapley

The Victorian country township of Drouin, a two hour drive south east of Melbourne, was the birthplace of the Australian interstate freight forwarder, Abletts Transport.

It was back in 1954 when founder, Arthur Ablett, drove his Leyland Comet carting sawn hardwood timber from Bairnsdale west to Melbourne. The arrangement was so sound that a few years later Arthur moved the family to Bairnsdale. It was there he gradually built up the business by continuing to transport timber which led to supplying plantation pine from the north of the State at Bendoc for the then massive Snowy Mountains hydroelectric scheme.



FIVE years later, with seven trucks in tow, Arthur decided to move further north and purchased a yard in the New South Wales town of Queanbeyan, a site, although six times larger today, still remains the company's main depot. "I remember the old days well, waiting for my father to get home on the weekends so I could wash his truck, that way I'd get to drive it," said Arthur's son Ray, who is the current managing director.

Ray Ablett eventually got to drive professionally for his father up until 1977 when he brought his own truck, a late 1960's International, and embarked on an interstate transport career of his own making.

"A few years after I started up I approached dad for him to consider joining forces because I felt it made perfect sense to amalgamate our companies," said Ray. And so in 1981 Abletts Transport was formed, a move that quickly gained momentum.

Year after year more trucks took to the road, the majority still carting timber for the building industry. Ray made comment about the number of business milestones that took place along the way, like the rapid extension of their original yard, the purchase of Cooper's Transport with the establishment of a depot in Melbourne and Sydney, and in 1990, the creation of a large transport syndicate known as Combined Distribution Management (CDM) formed by five companies to give the likes of Abletts competitive tendering for large national contracts.

"Our main transport operation and workshop is still based in Queanbeyan with support depots at Yennora in New South Wales and in Dandenong, Melbourne.

"The distribution and warehouse functions we provide are serviced by over fifty trucks with a range of B doubles, singles and rigid trailers, crane trucks and tailgate loaders, all handling freight ranging from timber, paper reels, auto parts, ingredients to make the Coca Cola products, through to containerised loads for the export market," says Ray.

Having learnt the ropes through experience, Ray was adamant that there was no room for complacency in the trucking game, saying unless you run the business by the book, you'll never survive.

"You've got to do it right by making sure you have the best people and equipment in place. So we manage and look after our ninety or so staff the best way we can, put in systems that measure our running costs and operate and maintain only good gear. I class BPW in the category of good gear because we never have issues with either their axles or suspensions," said Ray.

To keep on top of all of the company's transport activities Ray has two of his sons, his brothers and daughter all based in key management roles to take care of the necessary accreditation, cost controls, safety, employee and customer relations, and the day to day movement of the trucks.

Ray admits that when he first started out he was fairly green when it came to the basics of running a business, other than the task of driving. But he soon came to understand what it took to succeed, via the 'school of hard knocks.'

"You can lose money real quick in this game if you don't keep in touch with the basics and the future direction of the company. That's why I've got good people behind the scenes to back me up. "These days I just steer the business along and keep personally involved with our customers. You could say I'm now in charge of good times and parties," laughed Ray. ■

Abletts has never been shy of taking advantage of the latest in road transport innovation. The company was first in Canberra to introduce B doubles and curtain-sided trailers. And their bravado continues with the introduction of two CIMC Vehicle Australian built 36 pallet B double flat-deck curtain-siders, both specified with the latest BPW drum-braked axles and Airlight II air-bag suspensions.

SPREADING *the* WORD

Well respected family business, Sandford Transport Limited, has been moving all types of road freight around the North Island of New Zealand, and for over 80 years. Their Taranaki and Napier based operations include livestock, Ready Mix Concrete, groundsread and bulk transport operations.



IT'S a diverse service built on a high level of commitment, and in a very demanding business environment, which is especially hard on the equipment, and at times the drivers. Napier general manager, Paul Johnston, was lured into joining the company in the year 2000 when he agreed to amalgamate his tipping and spreading firm with the Sandford operation, a move he said has been extremely good for all concerned. "I decided to take the plunge when I was running my own transport service in Taranaki, and after working alongside Phil for five years, took on the challenge to set up the extra activity on the east coast in Napier. Here operate 12 bulk truck and trailer tipping units handling the import and export of over 300,000 tonnes of bulk commodities for companies, such as Ravensdown, which supplies close to half of New Zealand's agriculture fertilisers.

"Our role is to move rock phosphate and other fertiliser ingredients from the Port's 90,000 tonne holding sheds over to the local Ravensdown plant for processing, and then the finished product to the many satellite storage facilities and farms scattered around the Island.

"To carry out this job at times our tippers have to travel over secondary roads that are off-cambered with little, if any, shoulder room.

Many of the tracks are weather dependant, twisty and undulating, to the point where trailer axles can often be left hanging in the air," says Paul.

With that said it's understandable that Sandford's transport division does it tough moving the bulk fertilisers and other materials like sands, gravels and road making aggregates, known locally as 'seal-chip.'



Paul Johnston





"We are called on by contractors and civil engineers to move various grades of aggregates, from hundreds of different stock piles, and I might add, without occurring any cross contamination. It's demanding and concise work with no leeway on the customers' delivery requirements."

Sandford also provide a ground spreading service, primarily to the farming community, which complements their bulk fertiliser delivery division.

"Our preference on trailer builds is mainly through Transfleet, and lately with BPW running gear, driven by the fact that BPW is a well respected axle and suspension identity in the industry supplying a proven design that suits our specific needs well," Paul said.

Those needs, as Paul stated, are reliant on the performance of their suppliers and their equipment, along with Sandford's ability

to respond to the time constraints and fluctuations of their customers' consignments.

Since offering an extended service within the Napier area, and beyond along the east coast, the Sandford operation has grown substantially through, as Paul says, "word of mouth."

"For us service is critical to our survival. Part of our ability to deliver on our promise is that all our vehicles must be built and maintained to a standard so they can go anywhere and do any job. To achieve that requirement our drivers are trained to be flexible in their driving capabilities so they are able to competently handle both local and long distance deliveries. That means safely and reliably moving freight over all kinds of road surfaces and through all kinds of weather conditions.

"That's how we've built the Napier based business, which is still growing." ■





As part of its endless product research, development and testing regime, BPW sends its designers and engineers into the field to observe the workings and end user acceptance levels of the trailer axles, suspensions and braking systems it manufactures and markets.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Understanding the cultural and operating environmental differences of the global trucking fraternity is also fundamental to BPW in the quest to improving the workplace performance levels of its many products. So when Andreas Schlimbach, who is head of the BPW axle and suspension design and engineering department in Wiehl, Germany,

arrived in Australia for the 'down under' experience, BPW Transpec arranged for the ultimate get-to-know-you evaluation. Having discovered the harsh conditions of the road-train business in Western Australia, and the livestock and tanker operations in Queensland we thought it appropriate that Andreas witness the haulage





Rod Pilon with Andreas Schlimbach



demands of the Eastern states by travelling alongside driver and industry road safety advocate, Rod Hannifey.

Rod is in charge of a Vawdrey built, 26 metre curtain-sided B-double equipped with BPW axles, Airlight II airbag suspensions and EBS. He is employed by Rod Pilon Transport and Warehousing based in Dubbo, New South Wales, and travels over 200,000 kilometres a year throughout south eastern Australia delivering general freight.

His part time job, thanks to the generous support of Rod Pilon, is educating the general public about the professionalism of the road transport industry and how best to safely share the roads with trucks. Conversely Rod also has a number of road safety messages for his driving colleagues.

"There are four basic elements to my safety awareness programme which I have been pushing via a number of mediums over the past thirteen years.

"First off is improving the roads by providing information to the various State Authorities as to the cost impact of poorly maintained roads to both the drivers themselves and their trucks and trailers. As a result we see a better standard of road being built and the savings made by road repairs.

"Second is improving road safety by promoting 'sharing the roads with trucks' at the time of licensing for motorists through our Truckies Ten Top Tips programme and for truck drivers through with the Truckies On Road Code. The aim of these programmes are to significantly reduce the number of car/truck related fatalities.

"Our third educational message is raising the awareness of the road transport industry and how significant trucking is to the future of the nation's prosperity. It's very important for the general public to learn how efficient and committed the industry is towards on-road safety through driver training, fatigue management and the advancement in transport equipment technology like ABS, EBS and disc brakes.

"My final quest is to see more and better truck rest areas introduced throughout the country. Not only are there not enough of them but too many lack suitable shade and amenities," said Rod.

To help deliver his messages Rod has contributed to road safety inquiries, written columns for magazines such as Caravan World and Owner Driver, been party to interviews on television and radio and instigated many submissions to government and industry associations alike.

He has a Graduate Certificate in Road Safety, has received a number of awards such as the Natroad Global National Professional Driver of the Year, the Australian Trucking Association's National Professional Driver of the Year and the Convoy for Kids, John (William) Bond, Safe Driver. In 2005 Rod was also the winner of the Queensland Road Safety Award for the Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas.

So it's easy to say that Andreas was in good hands alongside Rod as they drove the 800 kilometre stretch from Melbourne north to Dubbo.

"The distances Australian truck drivers need to travel is truly amazing compared to their European counterparts. The variations of the road conditions are also so different to the likes of our autobahns. Having now seen the workloads placed on the trucks and trailers between the roadtrain haulage operations in Geraldton, the livestock transporters and tankers in Queensland and the general freight needs of New South Wales and Victoria will all help our thinking as we look towards engineering future running gear designs.

"One other issue that stood out strongly for me, and that was the on-road safety concerns of drivers like Rod. He is truly proud of his truck and the company he works for, and very dedicated to improving safety and work conditions for all Australian truck drivers," said Andreas.

Three years ago Rod launched the Truckright Industry Vehicle, again thanks to the support of Rod Pilon. Now when he stops at a rest area or for fuel, the B-double acts as a billboard to graphically illustrate all the on road safety messages he so passionately promotes.

"If I can educate just one motorist or truck driver on how to safely share the roads, and that saves just one life, and if I can get more quality rest areas built, it's all been worth the effort," Rod said. You can see Rod's road safety messages at www.truckright.com.au ■



Matthew Rowe with Murray Gayski BPW Transpec



COMMITTED TO

Michael and Matthew Rowe are up front and personal about their transport and earthmoving hire equipment business, KTEQ, (Karratha Transport Equipment Rentals)

TOGETHER the brothers have a collective knowledge of the transport industry dating back 20 years having both run their own individual road freight service and earthworks operation, respectively.

It was only four years ago that the men decided to join forces to provide transport hire solutions for the road, mining and off-shore sectors. Ever since that moment the company has grown at an unprecedented rate with operations now spread along the north west coast of Western Australia and east to the State of Queensland.

"Our main base is in Karratha with branches in Perth, Geraldton and Gladstone. From these locations we offer a vast range of hire equipment and vehicles backed up with service support, anytime of

the day or night. It's a business based on giving our customers whatever they want, from specialised gear to hire agreements which are both generous and flexible. All our stock is first-class and backed with a national accredited maintenance program. We've got a good group of people looking after the equipment including body and panel builders through to workshop mechanics, all for the sake of keeping our client's rentals moving," says Matthew.

On offer are dollies, flat tops, extendables, drop-decks, side and end tippers, skels, forklifts, prime movers, pilot vehicles, water trucks, excavators, bobcats and even a 'quarantine' and wash service for those vehicles that move between the mainland and Barrow Island, 50 kilometres off-shore.





(Left to right) Dampier depot staff members, Jo Fenton, Theresa Baruffi and Maxine Emery.

THE END

"We quarantine and decontaminate both the trucks and trailers to protect the Island's flora and fauna against the mainland critters. It's all part of the deal we offer," said Matthew.

All of KTEQ's tippers are Roadwest built with the lion's share of the trailer equipment being Southern Cross branded. Over fifty percent of the entire fleet is on BPW because as Matthew says, "The acceptance of their rental business is based on the reliability and performance of the equipment provided. We hire gear that is put to work in extreme situations, on bull dust laden roads, in corrosive mining conditions, and heavy going construction sites. The loads are large and frequent so everything needs to be safe and sound to handle the differing and gruelling work environments."

Matthew was first to admit that he and Michael were most probably in the right place at the right time when they started their rental

venture, but confess it was a bit of a gamble and damn hard going at first.

"Considering we are brothers, we get along well in the scheme of things, me looking after the service and maintenance while Mick handles the finances and purchasing. When it comes to the crunch we cover each other's job spec to keep on top of the workload.

"It's a good arrangement which has so far paid off; I guess we must be doing something right the way the business has grown in such a short time. One thing I must say however, we couldn't have possibly achieved our success without the support of our major equipment suppliers, as they have backed us to the hilt from day one." ■





SURVIVING THE TIMES



Rotorua based log haulage operator, Williams & Wilshier, has been carting timber across the New Zealand North Island since the early 80's and in that time using mostly Patchell Industries built log trailers, many fitted with BPW axles and air suspensions.

LIKE many in their road freight sector the company has endured the dramatic ups and downs associated with supplying timber for the international market.

Managing director, Warwick Wilshier, recalls the difficulties of surviving the downturn in the early 2000's, and in recent times due to the effects of the global financial meltdown. Warwick however is happy to report, that over the last couple of years, business has been more positive with 47 company owned vehicles and 17 owner drivers all busy on the road.

"Our haulage business is equally split between operations in the Bay of Plenty and the Gisborne regions supplying multiple lengths of timber to the paper and pulp mills, sawmills, and to the Ports for export.

"Six big off-highway road-train type units are employed in the forest plantations, the rest of the fleet, which are mainly 8 axle, 20 metre truck and trailer combinations, operate on the highways," said Warwick.

To attain maximum efficiency and safety, trucking companies try to cart 2 packets of logs on their trailers, however under the previous road freight regulations they have been unable to achieve multiples of 6.1 metre logs, which are desirable lengths for both the sawmills and pulp mills.

Those length and weight restrictions have since been reviewed, and thanks to the innovative partnership between trailer manufacturers, Patchell Industries and Williams & Wilshier, the NZ Transport Agency has now granted a permit to operate under a pre-approved agreement, a 22 meter, 6 axle B-Train with the added concessional length of an extra 1 metre overhang.

"The reason for obtaining approval to go to the preferred 23.3 overall length, including the overhang, is so we can load all three bays with 6.1 metre logs," says Warwick.

With a total gross weight coming in just under 54 tonnes, the new unit, which has successfully been operating for 6 months on the State highways, is returning a productivity gain of 25% more carrying capacity, a result that Warwick says all goes well for the future of their business and the New Zealand logging industry as a whole.

"We have also been particularly focused on stability and therefore on-road safety during the development of the project, and to achieve the best outcome, the B-Train is equipped with the latest BPW

Airlight II airbag suspension system with disc braked axles, and the benefits of the EBS anti-roll monitoring system.

"Feedback from the driver has been exceptional, all relating to the unit's accurate tracking, even around tight corners, and the superb trailer disc braking capability.

As for the B-Train's economic performance, Warwick says the company has a long service history on the cost benefits of running BPW and he and his workshop manager are confident that the status-quo will remain.

"Transporting logs requires a much specialised approach. It's therefore important to be innovative, with the most economical result. This new 6 axle B-Train is a perfect example of getting it right, to achieve the benefits of extra weight without compromising safety, while at the same time protecting the structural integrity of the roads and bridges within the restricted operational routes we've been allocated." ■



Warwick Wilshier





WORDS *of* WISDOM

DRT Logistics, (short for Damorange Refrigerated Transport) has been hauling fresh fruit and vegetables up and down the east coast of Australia for almost 40 years, and doing it very well.



A passion for the road transport scene has driven the business from a small two truck operation, back in 1974, to a fleet of now over 60 prime movers and 80 trailers, and the man responsible for the growth, Shane Splatt, still loves to occasionally get behind the wheel.

"All I've ever done is work in the road freight industry, it's in my blood I guess because I was brought up surrounded by trucks, thanks to my parents transport business," Shane says.

Shane has set-up his company to specialise in distributing and warehousing temperature controlled produce with company depots and shared cold store arrangements in capital cities and regional townships spread between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, even across to Adelaide supplying the major food chain stores and the fruit and vegetable markets with a steady flow of freight that their customers can bank on. When there's a call to service their clients further afield, either north to Cairns or west to Perth, DRT Logistics employ tried and tested sub-contractors.

It's no secret as to why the operation has lasted the ups and downs of the industry over so many years as Shane points out, "As long as you know your real costs, it isn't rocket science."

"There are some fundamental basics to maintaining both your service and profitability levels. First and foremost, you have to be totally committed to your customers' freight needs by continually reinvesting in both your operational structure and transport equipment.

If you don't, you can't guarantee either the on-time delivery or the on-board condition of the delicate cargo you're in charge of.

"The main difficulty we face is being positioned to quickly respond to the industry's ever changing supply and demand cycle, and still be cost efficient by running the fleet at over ninety percent utilisation," said Shane.

To keep ahead of the game Shane says he and his 90 odd staff can't go about their business in half measures or it will cost his company big time.

"We spend a lot, probably too much, buying the right truck and trailer equipment to keep both our drivers and customers happy. Our Kenworth prime movers are equipped with the biggest sleeper-cabs and outfitted with all the bells and whistles to make the task of driving as safe and comfortable as humanly possible. Choice of trailing gear, which is mostly Lucar and Graystar supplied, and running on BPW, is used because it is also safe and



easy to tow. Without a word of doubt, I believe the BPW axle and suspension system is by far the best, as I've tried all the others. It's an exceptionally reliable piece of gear that stands up well for our needs. It might be a bit more expensive, but in the long run it doesn't pay us to use anything else but BPW."

Maintaining the equipment is also high on Shane's agenda, with regular 10,000 kilometre interval check-ups and with a no-nonsense approach to avoiding the dreaded downtime.

"We keep a close eye on the parts that do all the hard work. After running about 800,000 k's and going through two sets of trailer brake linings we ditch both the bearings and drums. That way we protect the integrity of our service," he said.

After all the years at the helm Shane tells us his son Scott has now taken on the role as a company director and as such is in charge of running the business.

"Scott's been with me for twenty years learning the ropes along the way, so he is primed to take care of the business now and in the future.

As for my role, I will act as an advisor until such time when I will sit back and hopefully enjoy the fruits of my previous labour. As for Scott, he knows that you have to continually get better at what you do by constantly communicating with your customers, by adhering to all the regulations, by looking after the fleet and by putting the best bums the industry has to offer in the driver's seat. If he does all of that well, it will make his journey, like mine, worthwhile." ■



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Surviving the road haulage game for over 75 years has become an art-form for Stephenson Transport which is based in Waipawa, 50 kilometers south west of Hastings on the east coast of New Zealand's North Island.



HUSBAND and wife team, Septimus and Nellie Stephenson, started off in 1936 as carriers and contractors using just two tray trucks, a Morris Commercial and a D35 International, both petrol driven.

The local road transport industry back then was completely reliant on the rail system. Goods would arrive daily at the township's rail yards where drivers anxiously waited to collect what cargo they could get their hands on. Present day owner, Bruce Stephenson, son of Septimus and Nellie, told us it was first-in-best-dressed, when the train finally stopped there was often an altercation to secure the rights to carry the freight.

"Dad would also have to handload the freight, such as bagged grain and fertiliser, and deliver his load within the 'restricted' 30 kilometre radius to a very loyal group of customers, mainly farmers.

"He also carted massive native hardwood logs which, because of their weight, would constantly wear out the crown wheel pinions. Dad had a saying that he could do the repairs by candlelight in the bush, because he had to replace the parts so often."

In those pioneering times Bruce says you had to be tough and very fit to be able to load the tray trucks with bags often weighing in excess of 80 kilos. There were also no hoist trucks back then, so loose materials such as gravel had to be hand shoveled both on and off the back of the truck.

"What also added to the truck operator's burden was all transport carriers had to be licensed to move the freight, and be governed by a set freight rate. At one stage the local farmers got together and set up their own transport operation to save money, business was that cut-throat."

Over time, four of the couple's sons worked the family's transport service to help grow the business, eventually taking over all the operating tasks.

"In 1964 Don, Winston, Bill and I took over the running of the business and



supporting our folks,” said Bruce. These days Bruce and his wife, Gay, own the company, operating it along with their son Todd and a good reliable staff which can be as many as 50 in the peak season.

When Bruce took the reigns there were 6 trucks servicing the central Hawke's Bay area carting just about every conceivable product, and that included moving livestock westward to greener pastures.

“It took us 8 hours to get to Taupo in those days because of the poor road conditions, and having travelled another 4 hours to our drop-off point we would turn straight around and drive back to the yard. There were no log books to fill-in, regimented loads to adhere to, or roadside vehicle inspectors. But that all changed in the 70's when the industry was deregulated, that's when business got real competitive, even the Aussies crossed the ditch to earn a dollar over here in trucking,” laughed Bruce. But as Bruce says, Stephenson's survived the years because they stuck to what they knew best... and got better at it.

“You've got to always remind yourself that you are in the service industry where keeping in touch with your customers and being there for them when they need you – is everything. Other than that, you must keep a tight lid on your operational expenses, like paying cash for your equipment, making sure its quality gear, and then looking after it.” he said. Bruce's son, Todd, is now actively assisting in managing the company, which is mainly focused on moving livestock across the North Island. Carting a wide variety of general goods is still on the agenda, even apples during the harvest period.

Todd oversees the daily functions of running the business, especially looking after the fleet, reigning in the cost of repairs and service work through instigating preventative maintenance measures and through acquiring quality, reliable equipment.

“We standardised on our livestock units, which are produced by local manufacturer, Jackson Enterprises, who have specialised in building these types of trailers for over 20 years.

“Lately we have also standardised on using BPW running gear, to again contain our service and repair costs. This move has also lead to less downtime,” said Todd.

Both Todd and Bruce agree that today's road freight scene is not that far removed from when the family business first began operating.

“You still have to contend with the long and hard days, you still need skilled and responsible drivers, you still need to go the extra mile to satisfy your customers and you still need to keep your finger on the pulse of all aspects of your business.

“Then and only then can you sit back at the end of the day and enjoy a cold beer, just like dad and mum did all those years ago,” smiled Bruce.■



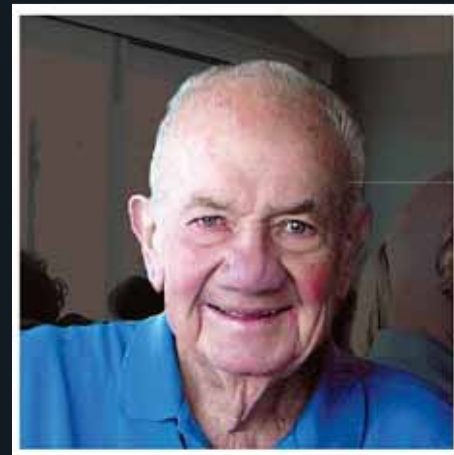
Above: driver Brayden Harris can travel up to 700 kilometres a day from farm to the processing plants carting livestock. He says it's fairly constant work, except over the winter months, driving 6 days a week, 13 hours a day including the required rest-stop breaks. “It's good to be in the cab towing trailers on disc brakes and with the added safeguard of the EBS roll stability feature, especially on our roads.”



TRIBUTE

Ron Richardson

Ron Richardson, founder of R & L Richardson, who recently passed away, will be sadly missed by his wife Lynette, sons, Warren, Bradley and David, his immediate family, industry colleagues, the local community and friends.



He, along with his wife Lynette, back in the early 1960's began what has now become one of Australia's road transport icons.

"It was hard going in those early years, recalls Lynette, with Ron hand-stacking and tarping all kinds of vegetables and stock feed, and then driving his Bedford to the markets and many local farming properties." In the early 1980's David, Brad and Warren teamed up with their parents making the business a true family affair.

In a recent interview for the BPW Transpec Digest Ron told us that the reason the business was still in business, and for more than 50 years, was because of the family unity which provided 'good old fashioned' and honest service.

But it wasn't all work, as Ron was held in high esteem within the Penrith area in New South Wales, making a name for himself by

playing in the rugby league.

No matter what he put his hand to Ron went all-out to make a difference. Not only did he drive the trucks after hours he'd service and repair the vehicles. However, as he got older he wised up, as his favourite saying was "It's best to spend more time in the cab than under it."

"He was always concerned for the well-being of the business and was very proud of his three sons who supported us along the way," said Lynette.

Ron died suddenly in January this year, with over 700 people attending his funeral. Anyone associated with Ron were proud to have known him, a man who loved his family, the community of Penrith and his work buddies – with all his heart. ■



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