

# BPW TRANSPEC DIGEST

BPW TRANSPEC PTY LTD'S MAGAZINE FOR THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY.

AUTUMN 2014



**TRANSPEC**  
ENGINEERED TO LAST

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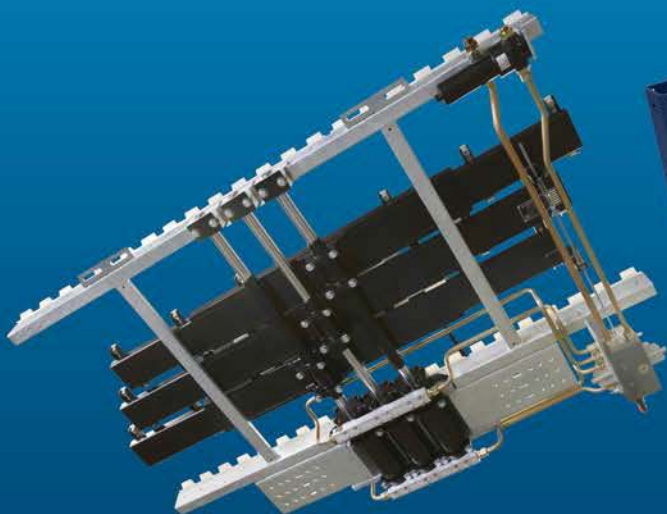
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BPW TRANSPEC DIGEST - AUTUMN 2014

## From the MD



Hello and a warm welcome to the first issue of the BPW Transpec Digest for 2014.

The response we received from many of you after the release of the new-look Digest was overwhelmingly positive; I hope you enjoy this one as much. We have an extra-large issue this time, to coincide with the Melbourne International Truck Trailer and Equipment Show. This will be an exciting show for BPW Transpec as we release the BPW ECO Cargo VB spring suspension, BPW landing gear and BPW ECO composite air tank to the Australian market. These three new products extend the BPW range and move us closer to BPW's goal of being a 'system partner'.

This column is somewhat bittersweet for me as it will be my last. You might be aware it is my intention to retire this year and Monday 31 March will be my last official day as MD of BPW Transpec. I welcome Stefan Oelhafen and Olivia Corrado-Micich to the roles of Joint Managing Directors. Stefan will manage Production and Sales, while Olivia will manage Finance, Commercial and Operations. The Board has recognised modern business has evolved such that specialisation in management positions is advantageous and the dual MD roles reflect that directive. You can read more about them both in 'Landscape.'

My time at BPW Transpec has been very rewarding and enjoyable as I've watched the industry in Australia grow and change. Any professional role is not without its tougher times, but fortunately they have been few and far between. I leave BPW Transpec and the industry with many fond memories of great people and good times. The support I received from customers and colleagues during my 28 years as MD of BPW Transpec is much appreciated and it would be impossible to thank each one of you individually. Any industry and company is only as good as the people in it, and we have some of the best.

Thank you and Auf Wiedersehen.

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An admired figure in the transport industry, Ken Baldock will be sadly missed by his family and many friends and colleagues.



**Welcome Olivia Corrado-Micich and Stefan Oelhafen to the roles of Joint Managing Directors. Olivia will manage Finance, Commercial and Operations, while Stefan will manage Production and Sales.**

## Olivia Corrado-Micich



With a background in finance and economic and experience in commercial roles in various large manufacturing businesses, Olivia Corrado-Micich joined BPW Transpec in 2004 as Commercial Manager and became Finance Director two years later. Olivia said the plan for the dual MD roles largely came about as part of the 2012 brand refresh process, which highlighted the need for more specialised resources in the company to support BPW Transpec's vision. "The BPW board and owners also recognised the need for the joint MD role as part of their own strategic business planning that was occurring simultaneously in Germany. Stefan Oelhafen and I have well-aligned values and vision so it works well." Olivia's areas of primary responsibility as Joint Managing Director are Finance, Commercial and Operations.

Olivia has overseen significant changes to the business, in recent times one of these has been storage capacity improvements in Melbourne "We achieved a 29 percent increase in storage available for parts and equipment. This project is now extending to improvements in pick and kitting assembly in the warehouse and is being complemented by the work undertaken by

Stefan in axle assembly. We have the reality of shipping lead times for our product from Germany, so we want our Australian processes to be efficient so our customers get the best possible response and service."

When asked about challenges for the industry and the BPW Transpec business Olivia said that "post the Global Financial Crisis there has been a disappointing negative bias of Australian banks, which has affected the ability for many companies in the industry to forward plan and access the necessary funds to grow. Quite often the decision to spend more initially is the right decision for the medium to long term, but the availability of funds places emphasis in the here and now. Occupational health and safety laws and management accountability have also impacted the industry. We need to communicate and demonstrate our quality and reliability, which is backed by a company that is visible, accessible and prepared to stand by its product".

When not working, Olivia likes to compete in distance running events and has developed an interest in road cycling, and as time permits enjoys travel and snow skiing with her family.

## Stefan Oelhafen

It was a chance conversation with a colleague at a previous employer in Singapore that led to a meeting with someone from BPW who was visiting from Germany. A short time later, Stefan Oelhafen was working for BPW, heading up the Singapore operation. Five and half years later he moved to Wiehl to work for BPW in the head office, beginning with responsibility for the global aftermarket business, and ending up with that and the agricultural OE business in Europe.

"Every five years or so, I get an itch and think 'what can I do next?' Five years is a good time frame – you can bring in new ideas, things happen and you can really see the results. It was always my dream to work in Australia one day but there are not many opportunities, so when that door opened I put up my hand. It was not a difficult sell to my family, but without the support of my wife and two teenage children I would not have accepted the position."

It is support that is mirrored at BPW Transpec as he steps into the role of Joint Managing Director. "It is a clearly defined role and I'm responsible for Production and Sales. By working together as a team, Olivia and I sharing visions, we support each other on joint decisions. We both see many

opportunities for growth and expansion for the company, especially in our core business and in line with BPW Germany's strategy as a 'system partner'. The Australian market already responds well to suppliers of complete packages, so we will be exploring other trailer components to align BPW Transpec's offering with the larger, global strategy."

"There are also more opportunities for agricultural equipment and developing trailer technology jointly with local builders here rather than importing it. There are challenges, however, and while Australia may be geographically distant, it still needs to remain competitive in a global business environment. The answer is not just to manufacture in low cost countries and import here, we need to look for solutions for customers to improve their productivity and provide real customer benefits"

In his leisure, Stefan is a keen runner and tennis player, and enjoys spending time with his family. "Living and working in Australia is something I always wanted to do, Australians are lovely to work with. My family and I are also very much looking forward to doing more travel around the country; it's beautiful."







## German Directors' annual visit

In late January, two of the Directors of the BPW Transpec Board visited the Australian Head Office and state branches for the annual board meeting. Touring the manufacturing facility in North Laverton, they were told of, and could see, the significant improvements that have taken place in the warehouse to increase our supply chain efficiency.



## Happy birthday and happy 25 years of working at BPW Transpec Ted Drzal!

It would be a rare thing for someone to celebrate their birthday and their work anniversary on the same day, but for Ted Drzal, Manager – WA, they are one and the same. "When I got the job with BPW Transpec, David Sinclair (now Manager – Queensland and NT) hired me. He said I could start the day after, but I thought 'why not start on my birthday?'" Congratulations and happy birthday Ted! We wish you many more years of success.

## Big move

After ten years in the suburb of Belmont, we have outgrown our surroundings and are moving the WA branch of BPW Transpec. From Tuesday 18 March 2014, the new address is:

1021 Abernethy Rd,  
High Wycombe WA 3057

Phone (08) 9454 4000 Fax (08) 9454 4111

We hope this move causes no inconvenience to any of our customers and offer our sincere apology if anyone is affected.

# MELBOURNE ITTES

The 2014 Melbourne ITTES is set to be an exciting show with BPW Transpec showcasing three new products being released to the Australian market – BPW landing gear, the BPW ECO Air tank and the new generation BPW ECO Cargo VB mechanical suspension.

## BPW Heavy duty landing leg

The heavy-duty landing leg was specifically designed for the taxing local environment, featuring a long screw-on plate that will protect it against lateral forces, and a reinforced band on the shaft.

“The new landing leg is light to ensure maximum payload, and is maintenance-free for the first three years in operation when using BPW ECO-Li 91 grease. Additionally, its low wear and corrosion protection is impressive,” Stefan Oelhafen explained.



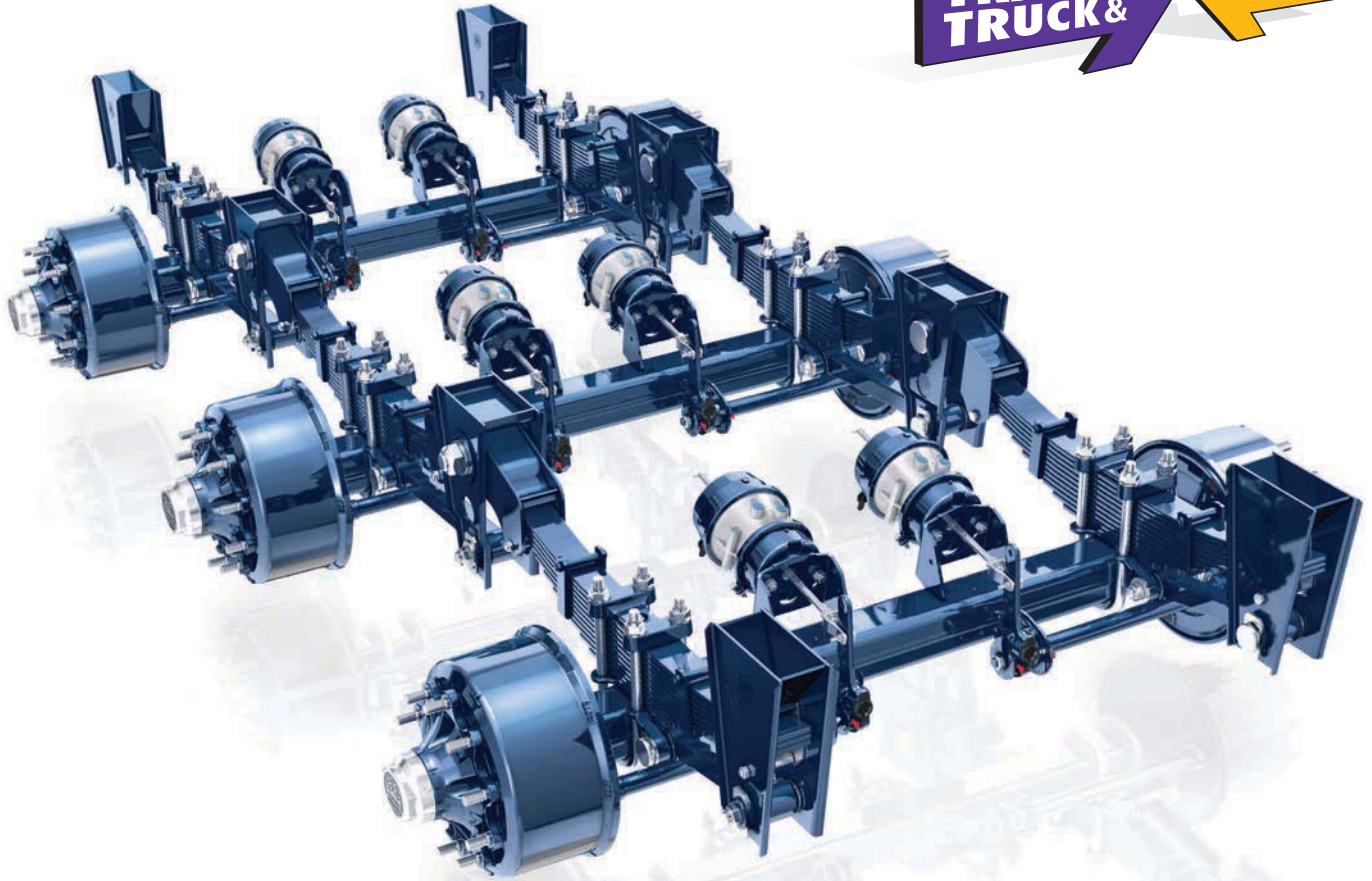
## ECO Air tank

BPW Transpec will also bring the new ECO Air tank to Australia, which was first shown at the 2012 IAA in Hannover. Made from fibreglass reinforced with composite material, the tank provides a 60 percent weight advantage over steel, is maintenance-free and will easily outlast any kind of metal-based tank. Stringent testing required for pressure vessel tanks has successfully been completed and certified by TÜV in Germany.

### Your advantages at a glance:

- Weight saving of up to 60% compared with a conventional steel tank
- Higher loading capacity
- Higher life expectancy
- Corrosion-free
- Easy to assemble
- Modular body
- Available from 30 to 120 litres
- Recyclable
- Easy to stack





## BPW ECO Cargo VB mechanical suspension

In addition to the new products, the next generation of the ECO Cargo VB mechanical suspension system will be released. "The new VB suspension has been designed to be able to cope with difficult road conditions and can be quickly and easily repaired if required," Stefan Oelhafen announced.

Both assembly and track setting have been simplified by employing tried and tested technology from the high-volume BPW air suspension series. Designed to cover the nine to 12 tonne range, the ECO Cargo VB model has been fine-tuned to be easier to maintain and provide peace of mind for those operating under extreme conditions both on the east and west coast of Australia.

### Your advantages at a glance:



Cost-effectiveness

- Lower tyre wear through precise track setting and optimum positioning of the connecting rods
- Increased life expectancy through optimised positioning of the connecting rods
- Fewer spare parts due to improved utilisation of parts within the BPW series.
- High spare part availability through more than 3,200 service partners
- Higher efficiency in production process through flexible and rationalisation of the product range
- Clearly distinguished from pirate versions thanks to the engraved BPW logo



Assembly-friendly

- Improved track setting through technology from the tried and tested high-volume BPW air suspension series
- Built-in bolt anti-rotation lock on equalizing beam and connecting rod bolts as standard.
- Engraved assembly information
- Easily accessible bolt connections



Robust

- Low-wear, replaceable, one-part wear plates
- Low ride heights with overslung suspension with maximum ground clearance possible
- Spring design optimised and synchronised to the area of application





# CREAM OF THE CROP

Words by Jim Darby

Scott Harvey and his wife Regina started out in milk haulage with one rig in 1996. They now run 45 prime movers, 70 trailers and have more than 100 people on the payroll. They're doing something right.



Scott Harvey

"I used to drive for dairy companies and basically they said 'why are you doing this for someone else?' Why don't you put in for your own contract and buy your own truck?' So I did," Scott said.

"We bought a truck and a Tieman second-hand tanker and put a driver on – he's still with us today, and from there it's basically just grown." Headquarters for SRH Milk Haulage is Rutherford, 35 kilometres north-east of Newcastle in the New South Wales Hunter region. From there, they pick up milk off-farm and deliver it to factories over Queensland and New South Wales and run a separate operation in Western Australia.

"The first tanker I drove was an 11,000-litre single axle. Now we've got an eight wheeler with a tri-tri-tri on it, along with anti-rollover system, ABS, disc brakes and computer sensors, you know what I mean?"

Those computer sensors mean that the trailers, in Scott's words, "are virtually smarter than our trucks."

When they pick up from a farm, the sensors send information about the load straight back

to the computers at Rutherford. They'll know exactly how much milk was picked up from a particular farm, what its temperature was and who the driver was. Each morning, they go through the data, verify the information and send it on to the customer.

As with most things related to primary production, the work has its challenges. Good weather means a good run for SRH, but bad weather can make for poor productivity out of the paddock.

"There's a lot of Mother Nature involved in what we do," Scott says. "The weather has a huge impact on the cows and their production. There are a lot of peaks and troughs to work with."

They must work them well though – SRH's customer list includes some of the biggest names in food and dairy in Australia: Lion Nathan, Murray Goulburn, a2 Australia, Norco, Hastings, Richmond Dairies and Brownes.

It was Lion Nathan that got them into the west. "They're one of my biggest customers over here and they asked me to go over there and have a look. We went over there two years





The Tieman food grade transport pocket road train, which can move up to 66,500 litres of milk

ago and then we got approached by Brownes over there to cart for them, so we saw the opportunity and just went with it."

In Western Australia, they're using Tieman pocket road train rigs (see breakout for details) and they're a very efficient unit for the job


That rig will do three loads a day from Brownes' factory at Brunswick Junction south of Perth into Balcatta, one of Perth's northern suburbs – it's about a 360 kilometre round-trip.

"Our payload is 66,500 litres and that's about as big a rig as we can run on those roads," Scott says. "It's a pretty big truck to be going through a major city. You couldn't run that over here. I wish you could, but you just can't! Those configurations they use in WA, that's the way to move product, even off-farm. We've built three pocket road trains bulk milk collection combinations for that same job. They're legal with about 53,000 litres of milk on them."

On the farm, they can pump straight from the front trailer right through to the rear trailer – that means using one hose and a couple of valves.

From 53,000 litres on the pocket road trains and about 66,500 litres on the larger transporter in the West, a B-double set-up in their East Coast operations will haul around 37,000 to 43,000 litres depending if you run HML. "It's still only one prime mover, but there's a huge difference in what it's carrying."

Keeping pace with technology and operating equipment with state-of-the-art levels of safety and efficiency has benefits all round. It's good for the customers, it's good for other road users and as Scott points out, it's also good for the drivers.

"You look after your people and they look after you. We give them the best gear, Volvo trucks, anti-rollover, the whole lot. We would hope that's the safest thing we can put 'em in." 

## THE TIEMAN FOOD GRADE TRANSPORT POCKET ROAD TRAIN – THE LARGEST BUILT OR USED IN AUSTRALIA, AND POTENTIALLY THE WORLD!

On its WA runs for Brownes, SRH Milk Haulage can move up to 66,500 litres of milk on the pocket road train set-up built for them by Tieman. Both trailers run on BPW ALII D36 tri-axle airbag suspension, with vertical rear shock absorbers and non-alignable hangers. On the B Trailer there's a draw bar and removable tow eye along with a fixed pivoting ballrace turntable. The rig also has a Ringfeder Type 202AUS automatic trailer coupling for road train applications.

On both trailers the axles are BPW standard track axles with 10-stud 335 PCD steel hubs and one hubodometer along with chrome hub caps, while the braking system is also from BPW; disc brakes which work with a BPW

Transpec supplied EBS braking system.

"As a rule I use Tieman trailers and BPW axles and suspensions," Scott Harvey says. "I've always specified BPW. The gear works and works well, people always have parts for it and their service levels are what you're looking for."

"BPW is also staying up with technology; working to make their products lighter but stronger. One thing they've done is drop their spring sizes and in doing that they've halved the weight in 'em. It's a good product, there's no doubt about that."





# HEAVYWEIGHTS

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*



Michael Crookston: His focus is finely tuned to the roading market.

**If you trace the origins of Crookston Heavy Haulage's founder, they go a long way to explaining his achievements and ambitions.**

**M**ichael Crookston, now 37, grew up on a farm in New Zealand and has that pioneering and entrepreneurial edge you'll find among Kiwi farmers. Add to the mix his mother's Dutch origins and you get some of the attention to detail that comes from those parts.

And he continues to draw on his parents. "I get a lot of support from my dad in New Zealand," Michael says. "I speak to him pretty much every day and he helps me out a lot – he does the same kind of work in New Zealand for Porter Hire, a huge company that works mainly in earthmoving throughout Australasia.

"He's the sounding board for me – Dave Crookston is. I wanted to make my dad proud so that's why I called it Crookston Heavy Haulage. He's the person I want to be proud of me, him and my mum. They're amazing people."

Michael's mother, Anna, runs accounts and administration for Michael at Crookston Heavy Haulage's depot in Penrith, in Sydney's west.

Michael surrounds himself with talented people. Shaun Wilson – well-known to many in transport having worked as a manager for some of the biggest operators in the business,



## "IT'S ALL ABOUT RELIABILITY. WE'VE HAD ZERO PROBLEMS WITH THE BPW AXLES, WE JUST DON'T HAVE TO TOUCH THEM."

the likes of McColl's, Linfox and Toll – is now the Operations Manager for Crookston.

"He's well up on regulations – and you know how they change. He's taken that worry out of the operation for me. You know, he used to be my boss at Kingstons when I worked there as a tow operator.

"I'm extremely lucky to have him on board – the team we've got now is really very good.

axles and they all perform just as Michael would like – "all the parts are cast, not welded, and that makes a big difference.

"It's all about reliability. We've had zero problems with them; we just don't have to touch them. The oldest float we have out there has done over a million Ks and we're re-building it now and as far as the running gear itself goes, we haven't had to touch it until now.

needing earthwork equipment moved around.

"I want to keep growing. We've tailored ourselves to the roading market in Sydney and I'd hope we have a very good name in that market – people are coming to us and wanting us to be in partnership with them and I'd hope that keeps going.

"For the last four years I've put on one full



Three rigs from the seven-strong Crookston Heavy Haulage fleet on location in Penrith.

### BRAKE DANCING – DISC V DRUM

Disc brakes are typically more expensive than drum at the outset, but it's their longevity and low maintenance that makes Michael Crookston a disc-brake convert.

"Some trailer builders just have a mindset that drum brakes are it, they're the way to go, but for what we do, with 30-, 40- or 50-tonnes sitting on a float, disc brakes are the way I want to go. They're fantastic," Michael Crookston says.

"I like them for serviceability, for kilometres and, with 99 per cent of our work on-road (not on dusty bush tracks), dust isn't really an issue and replacing the pads is not all that expensive when you need to do it.

"Brake-fade is also a big one for me. Every trailer I have has disc brakes because there's such a big safety aspect. My guys aren't going to have to be adjusting brakes on the side of the road, so it's safer for them and I know those trailers are going to stop, so it's safer for the public.

"Maintenance is another thing. I don't have to adjust them, that's the main thing I like, all we do is poke our head under there; poke a little camera in and make sure everything's OK, take the wheels off and check 'em, but that, literally, is all you have to do."

Our main struggle is with drivers. The guys we've got are fantastic and they get rewarded well, but I've got three positions available at the moment that I need filled urgently and I'm just not finding the right people"

It was with Kingston that Michael bought his first truck; he was driving an interstate run for a freight company when he saw the chance to buy a truck from Kingstons and contract himself back to them as a towie. He did it, and before long saw the opportunities. "I thought, 'I might build my own,' so I did." That was 2003. "I had no contracts and no customers, but I built my own trailer and off it went."

Crookston Heavy Haulage now has seven prime movers, six floats and a drop-deck trailer. Other than one tri-axle, all his floats are quad-axle with the rear two axles steer axles.

He fits all the trailers he orders with BPW

"We only replaced one set of discs; it's amazing what we got out of them. I've never touched the wheel bearings, never touched the pads. We'd check them over and service them, obviously, but we never had to touch them otherwise. They take some punishment those floats"


With his existing team of drivers, Michael runs an extensive and ongoing training program, covering issues like drug and alcohol testing, safety training, load restraint and safety around power lines. "It's a positive for the drivers, but it also sends a very clear message to our customers that we're here to stay and here to do the right thing. We're not a backyard operation," Michael says.

Those customers have a broad spread, but the majority of them are looking to Crookston for haulage related to road and motorway works, with a smaller number

unit per year. Last year (2013) we put two units on. We've been turning work away for the last few months, but I'd rather say 'no' than say 'yes' and not be able to deliver or not be able to deliver to the customer's requirements.

"Managing growth is extremely hard, but we make sure we live within our means. I've already ordered our next trailer – we'll build up our customer base so it has plenty of work and then we'll put another one on and so-on, that's how it works for us."

Michael isn't one to look back. Asked if he'd do anything differently if he had the first 10 years of his business over again, he says "probably nothing, I did it the way I wanted to do it."

So what's his advice to others on the same path in what can be a tough industry? "Treat people well, be nice to them and they'll usually be nice back." 



# BEYOND THE CONVENTIONAL



*Words by Mark Pearce, photographs supplied*

**Led by the innovation of Denis Di Pasquale (Tuff Trailers) and developed with Tridac through BPW Transpec, the new ground-breaking, 8x8 steerable low loader is a trailer beyond any platform design ever built. A first of its kind in many respects, the high-tech world of heavy-duty transport is reaping the rewards from another Tuff premium product.**

**B**oilermaker by trade, Denis Di Pasquale has maintained the mind of an innovator from the very beginnings of his career. During his apprenticeship years he would design parts and pumps and build small trailers for local farmers and motorbike shops. Back then Denis had already decided he was going into business, with the ambition to build the elite low loader.

In 1994 there were simple low loaders on the market that had full widening and low loaders that had outriggers but Denis wanted to be different; he wanted to build a low loader with deck winding. He went from Brisbane to Gatton to Toowoomba and back in order to pitch the idea.

"Most people thought I was a 20-year-old talking rubbish, I'm sure of it," laughs Denis. By the middle of that year Denis came away with a set of contracts to build a quad-axle low loader. Six weeks after design, when



Denis Di Pasquale and his wife Nicole at the 2013 Swedish Prize in Stockholm Sweden. Tuff Trailers were placed 2nd for their Monospine Load 'N' Lift Deck Widener.





all was done and dusted, Denis fitted new name to the gooseneck stating it was a 'Custom Built Tuff Trailer'. That was the moment Tuff Trailers was born.

Track forward to 2007 when Denis endeavoured to get another hi-tech low loader platform module off the ground. He approached specialists like Tridec and BPW Transpec for collaboration on design and equipment; however (if you'll pardon the pun), the industry was extremely 'tuff' prior to the Global Financial Crisis.

"People wanted rows of eight back then but it was very difficult to make it all happen. Most of the world was busy, everyone had two-year lead times, and by the time the financial crisis hit, the project waned and I never got off the ground," says Denis.

Since 2007, Tuff Trailers has been evolving rapidly, building everything from quad-axes with low riders, load and lifts, and easy lift tyre carriers, all inclusive of fully patented designs. With more and more features built into their trailers, the Tuff

brand continues to prove its craftsmanship time and time again. In addition, the company has grown a whopping 50 percent over the last two years, emerging with trailers on the roads Australia-wide, as well as PNG and the Solomon Islands.

It was on Hamilton Island in Queensland when Denis's original platform concept was suddenly re-ignited. Denis was having a break with his family "to become human again", as he puts it. "Yet sometimes the joy of running your own business can mean doing a deal on holidays, for as it so happened, Jeff Hart from Hart's Transport in Mackay (QLD) rang me while I was visiting the island."

While Denis was having a drink and a conversation, Jeff said, "I need a platform, can you build me a platform?" To which Denis replied, "I've done a lot of groundwork on building a platform." Jeff was adamant; "I don't want anyone else's design - I just want Tuff!" Denis said "Well you can have a Tuff, we'll make it happen!"

Before long, Denis went to Tridec and with the close collaboration of BPW Transpec, the parties decided on the best way to move forward in terms of steering angles and clearances.

"BPW Transpec was an important part of the initial negotiations to get this project going again," recalls Denis. "I went back to BPW Transpec because what they had to offer was the best. We evolved some designs into what we needed, so we just needed drawings to design it into the platform."

Tridec had never created a full widening steering set-up so everyone collaborated and did the necessary cosmetic, structural, and electro-mechanical research until they were all 100 percent happy. Ruud Knook from Tridec made a special trip out to Australia to endorse the platform and assist in the final commissioning of the unit. The outcome was a steering geometry that could turn up to 55 degrees as opposed to other steering systems that only turned 45 degrees.



# TUFF TRAILERS • QLD

**"IF YOU'RE GOING TO BUILD SOMETHING AND PUT IT INTO THE MARKET, IT HAS TO BE THE BEST". DENIS DI PASQUALE**



"The steering geometry is set at 4.2metres wide so it's a happy medium between closed and full width ensuring that the platform had optimal tyre wear no-matter what the width is set at," explains Denis. "If you're going to build something and put it into the market, it has to be the best, which is a tall order... but you can't aim to build something better unless you look at what is

already out there, and that's exactly what we did. The time came when we said, 'Right – now let's build ours.'"

Manufactured in a record time of three months, the 8x8 (rated at 196 tonne) includes a new patented tyre carrier that operates at the push of a button, lowering six wheels down to the ground for change-over. It carries twelve spares on the

carriage with 100 wheels on the complex configuration, including a 2x8 dolly. It is also the first steerable platform designed with BPW, complete with ABS/EBS, running on BPW NRDZP 12010 BL ECO-Plus 17.5" axles and BPW ECO-Master auto slack adjusters

Denis is a proud man. "So many people and organisations all over the world have





enquired about what this low loader can do," he says. "Everything about it—the axles, the suspensions, every component—had to be the best, no ifs or buts. It's a first of its kind in many respects and there's no doubt that BPW is a premium brand and we needed a premium product for the end user."

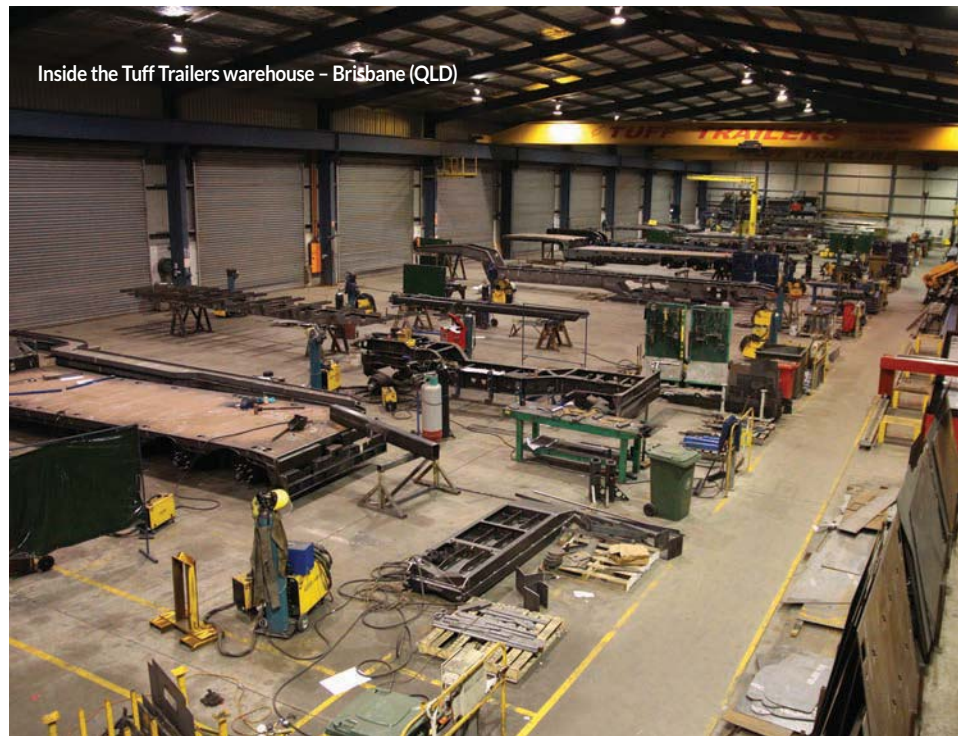
Jeff Hart, who has loved trucks and trailers all his life, began purchasing trailers from Tuff just three years ago. The 8x8 is now adding value to his large and diverse fleet of Tuff trailers. The 8x8 was acquired to cart the mammoth D10s and D11s, dump trucks, diggers, and all the other big boys throughout the state of Queensland for his mining customers.

"We've put all our Tuff trailers through their paces and they don't let us down," declares Jeff. "I'm used to hiding under the radar but this unit has brought a lot of attention. This whole process has been about building great relationships and from my point of view it was about offering the best service for my customer... It's already brought in more business for us so there's no complaints at this end."

Driver Danny Watts, who was the heavy haulage champion from the hit TV show *Outback Truckers*, has been on the road with the low loader since early this year.

"It's quick, easy, and safe," he comments. "I can be walking around my trailer with the remote control watching every move and this way I know nobody is standing at the back of the ramps. So there's a lot more safety features and a lot more innovation, which is going to change the way the modules operate."

"The steering and suspension tracks spot



Inside the Tuff Trailers warehouse – Brisbane (QLD)

on. There's no floating left or right when you're cutting back in off the corner, this thing comes back in dead straight. It's so quick and precise."

The chains and dogs, supplied by Tuff, are RUD certified and made in the 120-gade ice range—a world first


"The dog chains are fantastic," continues Danny. "Every time you wind them up they automatically clean themselves. The chains themselves are heavy to use but once you lock them in, they stay tight forever."

The trailer is equipped with all the accessories a driver could dream of and practically everything on the platform is remote-controlled.

"Everything underneath is uncluttered and the overall trailer itself looks simple,

but with the design of the tyre carrier this Tuff will start to make other people think about how we start lifting and changing tyres on trailers in the future. The remote engineering just makes it so much easier for the driver," says Danny.

Tuff was placed behind Mack Trucks at the 2013 Swedish Steel Prize in Stockholm last November for their modern Monospine Drop Deck Widener Load 'N' Lift, a design that widens to 4 metres and delivers a lighter tare weight, a stronger chassis and deck design.

There's a saying: "Fortune sides with he who dares". Anything the Tuff engineering team builds, they aim high and sometimes that means daring to build beyond the conventional. 



8x8 steerable low loader – a high-tech collaborative engineering design between Tuff Trailers, Tridac and BPW.



# SMOOTH OPERATORS

Mobile phones ring incessantly in Keith and Karen Picone's family home. Gornroamin Transport logistics is run from a kitchen table in Healesville, 60 kilometres east of Melbourne. Cheeky parrots and garrulous magpies watch on, long-term residents on the property's back porch, waiting for a coffee break and a feed.

*Words and photographs by Emily Weekes*

**T**ransporting bitumen is a tricky business. But that's what appealed to Keith in the first place. With four bitumen tankers and one fuel tanker, Gornroamin Transport is an energetic family business, with a team of excellent drivers who deliver bitumen on time, on temperate and to meet any specification

"I always wanted to do either gas or fuel, because that's where the elite drivers went," recalls Keith. "That's where the big money is. Doing the dangerous goods."

After working in the industry for 15 years, Keith remembers seizing his first break

in bitumen transporting when he worked at Boral as a relief driver. "They had a bitumen tanker which they were going to sell because it wasn't making any money. It had been running at a 32 percent loss," says Keith, "and the driver left."

"They put me in it and within a couple of months it was running at a 65 percent profit!" laughs Keith. "I got out seven years later."

With a background in dangerous goods driving, Keith takes great care when hiring and training new staff for his business. As he sees it, transporting bitumen is a lifestyle

choice. A task that is complex, unusual and often unpredictable.

"It takes six weeks to train a driver to do bitumen, at least. And our drivers are on a generous salary with eight weeks off each year," says Keith. "The problem is these days we don't have the supply of young people coming through the transport industry, but fortunately we found three new drivers through an employment agency last year and they're all working out really well now."

Keith even decided to buy bigger trucks so that his drivers could have more room on the road. With 300 millimetres more height







**“TRANSPORTING BITUMEN  
IS A LIFESTYLE CHOICE.  
A TASK THAT IS COMPLEX,  
UNUSUAL AND OFTEN  
UNPREDICTABLE.”**

and flatscreen tvs above the door, along with a microwave oven, fridge, air-conditioning and a dvd player, he hopes that it will be easier for drivers to stick with the job and develop new careers.

“If you’re going to be away all week you want to be able to sit on the edge of your bed and put your pants on, instead of lying on your back,” says Keith. “Our drivers might sit on the side of the road for eight hours in 40 degree heat without a tree in sight, so we have to make it as comfortable as we can.”

A typical workday might involve driving a load of bitumen to a spray crew. If they’re only spraying narrow roads it might take them four hours to spray 6,000 litres of bitumen. Gornroamin’s tankers hold 27,000 litres of bitumen, which shows the hours that might be involved while waiting for a job to be done.

“It’s the most bizarre industry,” says Karen, who takes care of all of the logistics. Their drivers might be rerouted due to a bush fire or delayed because of unusual terminal facility

opening hours and clashes with the timing of mandatory rest breaks. “We just have to ring the customer and tell them it’s going to be late because we won’t let the drivers do anything illegal. It’s a real juggling act.”


Keith admits that he’d love to develop a new bitumen tanker design, to keep plumbing that would normally be outside in the elements, inside the tank. This would reduce the incidence of bitumen “slugs” getting caught in the valves, which can create havoc for drivers on the road.

In terms of axles, BPW has been their number one stockist since the beginning. “A wise man once said the easiest way to make money is save money. A guy I worked for years ago told me that BPW are the best axles money can buy,” says Keith. “When we bought our first tanker, it came with BPW axles and I’ve just stuck with them. Our oldest trailer is 10 years old. They work extremely hard over the season, but we haven’t replaced one bush yet, not even a wheel bearing.”

If running a business from home and managing 99 percent of all maintenance issues isn’t enough of a logistical challenge, Keith and Karen are also active SES members. The phones ring constantly as Karen carries out her SES duties as Unit Controller, Staging Area Manager, Divisional Commander and Emergency Management Liaison – although thankfully not all at the same time.

When Karen’s son died of leukaemia at 14 years of age, Keith felt that he could never repay the millions of dollars Victorians spent trying to save his stepson’s life. He signed up immediately. Thirteen years later, the SES is as large a part of their lives as their business, Gornroamin Transport.

The business has to fit around SES calls as Keith and Karen’s daughter steps in if they are deployed elsewhere. But the best help comes from an unlikely source.

“Our two-year-old grandson is an excellent stress relief officer!” adds Keith. 



# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

*Words and photographs by Mark Pearce*



32,000 litre Kennedy built water tanker, fitted with BPW Eco Plus and Ringeder couplings at Ostwald's Houstons road quarry.



Among a fleet of 26 prime movers and 102 trailers, including single drop decks, quad dogs and A-B triple road trains, supported by up to 50 sub-contractors and 1,200 experienced employees, Ostwald Brothers is one of Australia's largest companies working the resource and infrastructure industries. When it comes down to principles, they're in the business of building powerful partnerships.





# OSTWALD BROTHERS • QLD

**P**roudly determined to outperform expectations, the Australian-owned family company Ostwald Brothers specialises in servicing civil engineering and large-scale resource projects for the coal seam gas, mining, energy and water sectors. They also offer a tailored approach to their transport and bulk haulage operations for both government and private enterprises across the state of Queensland.

In order to meet the full range of diverse client needs, Transport Operations Coordinator Athol Carter manages Ostwald's large fleet of vehicles to offer supply chain solutions for every customer that walks through the door.

"We're headquartered here in Dalby on the Western Downs and this is where it all started back in 1990. We've got quite a few large projects on the go across the entire state and we're now looking to move interstate as well to help service our clients. So wherever our clients go, we go, and we tailor a service package that suits them," says Athol.

At just 31 years of age, Athol is a third generation road transport industry man who has spent his working life entrenched in the transport game.

"I've been around trucks since I was a kid through to working with my father as a teenager. We actually used to transport and deliver BPW products for the Transpec Brisbane branch. Since then, I spent eleven years as a professional driver on multi-combination work for the general freight,

resources and cattle industries throughout North Queensland, Central Australia and the East Kimberley region. I've been with Ostwald Brothers since June 2011, and I'm loving the challenges of logistics, business development, right through to finding the best supply chain solutions for our customers," he explains.

When asked about the bigger challenges of dealing with the peaks and troughs of trade – including the intense coordination required to supply millions of dollars of equipment to customers one week and then major adjustments the next – it's clearly apparent that Athol not only has the specialised skills needed to keep the company effective, efficient and profitable, but also the ethics that for an integral part of his well-connected, winning team.

"First and foremost, I love the people I meet in this industry and I'm constantly dealing with fantastic individuals and experts every day. I'm also continually learning from my staff and suppliers, be it logistics, mechanical or product-related issues. But we don't just exist out here to build infrastructures like roads and gas-fire power stations and the like. Our core belief is to build powerful partnerships, and we build those powerful partnerships in every facet of our business, right from the start," says Athol.

It's due to this highly held value that Ostwald Brothers has had a long-standing relationship with BPW products for more than fifteen years.

"It's really been about our relationship and support over the years with Geoff Huddy at the

Brisbane office" he comments. "Number one for us is pre-sales service and Geoff loves to be a part of our operation and understand what we do and what we need at the coalface.

"As a National Heavy Vehicles Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS) accredited operator, it's great to have the comfort of BPW who not only supports us as customers but also supports the industry with their world-class workshop maintenance and training programs. Those ongoing refresher courses help us enormously with our selection of equipment and procedures, and most importantly the experience gained from that training determines a lot of our overall operating compliance measures and integrated safety management systems that we put in place."

A central objective that Ostwald Brothers has prided themselves on as a family business is purchasing and operating marquee brands such as Kenworth prime movers, Drake and Haulmark Trailers for their heavy haulage division, Hamelex White trailers for their truck and dog quads, Kennedy trailers for their water tankers and Azmeb tippers which make up their side-tipper fleet

"From our 102 trailers, around forty to fifty percent of them are on BPW. We're also a major user of their airbag suspensions. We have a varied kit in that we've got everything from old-gen, to new-gen, ECO as well as ECO-Plus, with everything on drum brakes. We've also got Ringfeder which are standardised across the fleet" says Athol.

**"OUR CORE BELIEF IS TO BUILD POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS, AND WE BUILD THOSE POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS IN EVERY FACET OF OUR BUSINESS,"**

The Azmeb side tipper unloading/loading gravel at Ostwald's Houstons road quarry.







Situated north east of Dalby, we visited Ostwald's Houstons road quarry: a hard rock, fixed plant operation which supplies all their construction materials for the Surat Basin and Western Downs region, which in turn services all the CSG infrastructure, road works, concrete plants and sub-division work with gravel and hard rock.

"In 2013 we carted two million tonnes for our haulage operation, which supports our construction materials," Athol explains. "We load the trucks, we haul the materials and we load the trains – we're virtually an end-to-end logistics provider. We operate in varied


geographic conditions where everything changes by the minute and we've chosen a product like BPW for the fact that it handles every one of those conditions."

Ostwald Brothers has been growing at a rapid rate over the last few years as they continue to service the coal seam gas and resources industry. Through that diversification, their clients have also been growing steadily; thus, it's an inevitable necessity that Ostwald Brothers raise their fleet capacity to live up to the performance standards of excellence and on-time delivery services.

"We see ourselves looking to ever expand

and increase our transport operation," Athol adds. "One of the key decisions we made at an executive level last year was to standardise our acquisition of goods, which has now been awarded to BPW."

The company is about to acquire 24 new axles for the fleet, plus 12 and new 32,000 litre water tankers to work their roads crew, supporting the CSG infrastructure. In regards to business relations, there's a strong sense of a bright future going forward.

So if you're wondering where the next industry boom is going to come from, 'watch this space.' 



Athol Carter, Transport Operations Coordinator





# OUTSIDE THE CARROT PATCH

The wholly Australian owned company, Rocky Lamattina & Sons Pty Ltd, produces arguably the tastiest crop of carrots in the country. The well-managed family business has emerged as an icon in the fresh produce industry, but they've also had to 'think outside the carrot patch' in order to process up to 600 tonnes a week, all year round, and become the most consistent carrot producers on the continent.

*Words and photographs by Mark Pearce*





Renowned for its Mediterranean climate of dry summers and mild winters, Mildura is a region of natural beauty and rich soils, growing most of Australia's almonds, pistachios, olives and carrots. It's no surprise then why a family with Italian heritage was attracted to the Murray Sunraysia farmlands of Wemen (75 km south-east of Mildura) to pioneer what is today the most consistent production and packing plant of Australia's tastiest carrots. "My father, Rocky, came to Australia from Italy in 1952," says Company Director Angelo Lamattina. "He farmed about ten lines of vegetables with his father and two brothers for many years in Melbourne. They grew their business to a certain stage but as I was getting a bit older Dad had the idea to go out on his own with his sons. So he sold his share of the business to his

brothers in Melbourne and we moved to Wemen in 1991."

At that time when land prices were reasonable and water was plentiful, the three brothers, Angelo (eldest), Phillip and John, started to build the business, helping their father sow, harvest, wash and pack vegetables with the main aim of getting the optimum amount of growth from the land.

"Originally we bought a 200 hectare property and built a packing facility. The first year we grew 25 hectares of carrots and a few potatoes and broccoli. Slowly we continued to grow more and as time went on we needed extra land, so we bought another 200 hectares," recalls Angelo.

The business continued to expand, eventually purchasing 6,000 hectares; however, the all too common farming





## **“YOU JUST NEED TO LOOK AT HOW YOU’RE DOING THINGS AND WE ALWAYS ASPIRE TO MAKE EVERYTHING SMARTER.”**

story of ‘struggling financial yields’ that the Lamattina family experienced prompted the company to start specialising in carrots.

In the meantime, the drought hit hard between 2000 and 2010, which knocked around every farmer in the Mildura region. Water prices for irrigation sky-rocketed and the quality of harvests during the forthcoming summer periods were poor to say the least. However, the daunting drought opened the door for Angelo and his brothers to think laterally, leading the company to a discovery of effective sustainability.

“With the drought at the time, we decided to buy another 6,000 acre property down in Kaniva (350 km south-west of Wemen) to grow carrots in a cooler climate during the summer. So today we harvest the Kaniva crop from February through to June, and we harvest the Wemen carrots from July through to January. Since we’ve been doing that, we can now grow good quality carrots all year round,” explains Angelo.

In order to cultivate quality carrots as well as specialise in a certain size of carrot, Rocky Lamattina & Sons carries out numerous control measures to ensure superior taste. But really, it’s the years of experience in

farming, machine technologies, innovation and imagination that has prepared them to be the best and most consistent grower.

“The thing is... you can’t cut corners, and that goes for the entire running of the business. You need to be as innovative as possible. You just need to look at how you’re doing things and we always aspire to make everything smarter because that’s how we know we can become more efficient and better,” says Angelo.

Rocky Lamattina & Sons supplies to the central markets in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, using a fleet of 14 Kenworth prime







The Lamattina Top Fuel Dragster Photo supplied

The boys in the patch. From left to right: John, Rocky, Angelo and Phillip Lamattina. Photo supplied.



movers and 17 B-double sets to move 600 tonnes a week. Focusing all their energies on production excellence, the company shifts an average of 25 B-double loads a week, travelling nearly 4.5 million kilometres a year across the eastern seaboard. Equipment efficiency on their trailers has played a major factor in keeping the fleet trouble free, a Angelo explains:

"We were running a different brand before we went to BPW and every time we came into the workshop and needed to buy a part, the axle was different, the suspension was different, even the spring was different. We were going round the merry-go-round so many times and we got stuck, and eventually we got burnt. We thought we were saving a dollar but we learnt our lesson.

"I said to myself, 'Hang on a minute, we can't keep doing this. If we put a product on a trailer or if we want to sell that trailer and we can't get axles or suspensions for it, all of a sudden we're devaluing ourselves.' So we made a decision ten years ago to go BPW for not only piece of mind, but because we were able to specify what we wanted from the hanger to the rotor, the disc brakes, right through to the end."

The day-to-day running of their complex carrot operation includes employing 90 staff who play an important role in making sure customers get their carrots delivered on time. Phillip and John manage the farmland and growing side of the business while Angelo oversees the sales and transport logistics, as well as the processing and washing of the carrots. An extended additional department of the business that Angelo manages is their juicing factory located in Mildura.

"We export the juice mainly to the overseas Asian markets. It's no easy mission but hard work and performing with smart people is only part of our story. The biggest thing in our company is trust. My job allows me to make sure we are efficient in every

department, be it sales or growing, or cleaning or juicing. I communicate every day with every department to make sure we're all on the same page, but that also means not interfering too much with the people who know their job. My main task is about delegation, making sure our machine technology is running correctly, and ultimately it's about trust in the people," says Angelo.

Talking of machine technology and trust, you need an abundance of trust if you're also running your own Top Fuel racing team; the pinnacle sport of drag racing.

Brother Phillip Lamattina drives their Top Fuel dragster (pictured) and last year younger brother John also began racing during a couple of meets around the country. Philip's son, Rocky, who races a junior dragster, is the next generation likely to experience the quickest accelerating and fastest speeds over a quarter mile.

"The racing is a good little thing for us where we can get away from carrots for a couple of days and see Australia every now and then. It helps a little bit with marketing the company as well, because it's interesting how many people you meet in different industries through the sport. There're so many people in business that race, and they've all become a big extended family for us," declares Angelo.

Italian heritage and strong Lamattina family values have been ingrained in the DNA of the company from day one. As Angelo clearly articulates, there's one central interest at heart above all else: there's nothing more important for people than good food.

"We are very passionate about what we do and we pride ourselves on the best tasting carrots in Australia. That passion gives everyone in our business a sense of pride and at the end of the day if you're not proud about what you're doing you might as well give it away."





# THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Identify a problem and find a solution. It is never that easy in practice. But put in some painstaking work and develop a New Zealand collaborative partnership and it can work. We visit and talk to some key players in such a partnership to find out how it all came together.

*Words by Mike Isle*

**T**ranspower's Andrew Renton makes contact by phone just as we are about to arrive at Tidd Ross Todd's head office in Hamilton. He is responding to our request for information about a new mobile substation that is making big news in transport and electricity circles.

Everybody says that it is Andrew's 'baby', and we should be talking to him first. Everybody, that is, except Andrew. Even in the briefest of chats before we meet with TRT, the builder of the two trailers required to transport the substation, Andrew, who is Transpower's chief engineer on the project, is quick to point out that this is truly a collaborative project.

It couldn't have succeeded, he says, without the input and technical skills of, among others, the trailer-builder we are about to meet—Tidd Ross Todd, a company that prides itself on delivering the undeliverable. Tidd Ross Todd is a staple of the New Zealand trailer building industry. The

Hamilton-based company has a long and laudable history within the industry, particularly for one of its specialisations—low-loaders. They built their first low-loader in 1967 and have built countless since.

Bruce and Robert Carden, who run the company today, are sons of one of the founders, Dave Carden.

We are to meet Bruce along with head designer Bevan Olson who ran shotgun on the design of the substation trailer and TRT's trailer sales engineer Glen Harnett who handled client liaison on the mobile substation project.

But first, what are we talking about? What is 'the baby'?

The baby is the largest mobile substation built in New Zealand, and possibly the largest in Australasia. It is not the first (mobile substations have been around since the early 1900s) but there has never been one on this scale, nor with this degree of mobility.

It can be transported on the TRT-built trailers to any one of Transpower's 14 single-unit grid-sites, and bypass the permanent substation for as long as required to safely complete scheduled maintenance. What may have taken up to ten hours of outages per year per community can be reduced to as little as two hours, the time to set up and transfer the power flow to and through the mobile substation, and in some cases eliminated altogether.

The savings in cost to communities together with the minimising of disruption were Transpower's driving motivations for the project and for the hunt by their senior principal engineer Andrew Renton for a workable solution.

In the mobile substation he found it. And also found a great example of collaboration.

Transpower was the end-point customer; Mitton Electronet provided the lead design expertise, Beca New Zealand carried out the protection design, Electronet Transmission





installed and tested the equipment and of course TRT designed and built the trailers. The substation comprises two trailer units. The transformer is on one trailer, a four rows of eight fixed width for the cable roll, and the switchgear and control room are on the second—a fixed width quad. Both have rear steering axles. Combined weight of the units is 113 tonnes. Specialised or modified tractor units are not required.

Both trailers are fully road compliant and require no dispensation. They can be transported easily to any of the 14 Transpower sites in New Zealand and that includes being transported on the Cook Strait ferries.

Those were stipulations of Andrew Renton and his Auckland-based project manager Graeme Winthrop. The BPW running gear is a stipulation of TRT.

Throughout the design and build process, all parties kept in close contact. They had to—each party was providing very specialist skills, not interchangeable. Graeme Winthrop instigated and managed weekly conference calls and there many, many other meetings, as the parties grappled

with challenges of a ground-up design whose benefits to the communities are self evident, but in whose execution became a trial without the latitude for error.

Late last year the mobile substation completed successfully the first of its scheduled maintenance missions. There were no problems and the unit is moving through a heavy maintenance schedule with capacity, if required, to handle emergency situations.

From TRT's point of view it has been an immensely satisfying exercise. They have dealt with a 'great' client Transpower and collaborated with some highly specialised companies. From that TRT learnt or developed new applications and innovations they intend to use on other low-loaders—just what they are, is a closely guarded secret.

There is also now the capacity and technical skills for TRT to build further mobile substation trailers and it is no secret that the company is looking for such work in Australia.

But perhaps the last word should go to the man who was instrumental in its start,



Andrew Renton:

"We started with the precept of is there another way of doing this better? What are the problems? What are the possible solutions? There were obviously answers out there, but it became a matter of getting around a table and finding them. Which is what we did, and which is where this succeeded."





# OUR GREATEST BLESSING

Despite years of extreme Queensland weather conditions and recent industry price hikes that have forced many small transport operators out of the grains market, Mick Guse, a farmer turned fleet-owner, has not only outlasted floods and the snap drop, he also holds some of the secrets of retaining his customers while increasing payload efficiencies

*Words and photographs by Mark Pearce*



Mick Guse - Logistics Manager,  
Guse Transport Services





The grains industry plays a key role in the health of Australia's domestic transport community and just as importantly it competes successfully in export markets, representing nearly a quarter of Australia's total agricultural exports. Yet over the last few years in the northern region of the country (the largest source of Australia's premium, hard high-protein), more and more smaller grain operators seem to be disappearing off the map. Mick Guse, Logistics Manager at Guse Transport Services, explains: "Running any small business is a real challenge but over the last five years smaller operators in the grain industry

have either left the game or struggle just to exist. Most of the smaller companies that carried out harvest work over the last decade or two in the Darling Downs region have gone now due to flood, drought and sharp rises in truck registration and insurance hikes. Even with our small, five-fleet operation we've struggled to pass those costs on. Fuel has always gone up but we haven't been able to re-coup all of those costs either, and driver wages and conditions have inflated but we're not getting any more for carting the materials."

All of these real, recent concerns of operating a small transport business have opened the door for larger operators to move in, shifting up grain haulage prices and shrinking the overall balance of market share. Thankfully, the export market has played a vital role in keeping some smaller players in the industry alive. "Our operation has been pretty lucky through this hard patch over the last

twelve months or so," says Mick. "We've had customers from China come in and start purchasing large amounts of produce, which has lifted the base price, so the farmer gets a bit more for his product. Hopefully it will flow on right through the industry. But what has also happened is you'll get a real knee-jerk reaction where some operators increase their market value and then transport costs suddenly spike and that's no good for anyone. We've got to have some sort of consistency so everyone makes a dollar."

Easy-going and eager to get involved, Mick drove trucks full time for nine years, and then he and his wife Jodie decided to buy a farm in Wondai, three hours north west of Brisbane. Thinking that grain farming would be the life for them, the drought crippled that idea quickly, so Mick took a gamble and purchased a B-double combination seven years ago to help 'drought proof' their farming business.

"The idea was originally only going to be

**"THE IDEA WAS ORIGINALLY ONLY GOING TO BE A  
SIDELINE BUSINESS, AND IT JUST TOOK OFF".**





# GUSE TRANSPORT • QLD

a sideline business, and it just took off, so we've been moving into the transport side of things a bit more ever since," says Mick. Today, Guse Transport Services runs five Kenworths, including four Lusty EMS tippers. The husband and wife team employs five sub-contractors to cart grains and fertilisers across the Wide Bay-Burnett region as well as hauling general freight up to North Queensland every week. "We do a lot of grain work in the Darling Downs with a couple of local feed mills and feed lots. But like any transport, it's demanding and customers want it delivered 'on the day'. The key to our success is having good drivers, being on time every time, and getting the product delivered safely. But the real secret to maintaining that success has been a matter of getting our payload efficiencies to the maximum so we can stay in the game," reveals Mick. To guarantee maximum payload

efficiencies, Guse Transport Services recently purchased a Lusty EMS tri axle road train dolly configuration in early 2013 to hook on the back of their Kenworth T909 Director series. Mick comments, "Moving larger payloads has been our greatest blessing."

He continues, "All our configurations are B-doubles and road trains but this is our first tri dolly and we get around 56 tonne payload on it. I think we will go that way from now on because it keeps us stable. We've got permits to go into certain areas of northern New South Wales as well, which traditionally no road train has been able to go before, so it's given us great flexibility to carry into those areas and we've been able to move larger product with the 909 which is enormous for business."

Fitted with BPW axles, disc brakes, the ALII air suspension kit, Edbro tipping hoists and heavy duty Ringfeder couplings, the

tri axle dolly runs eighty percent bitumen work and twenty percent off road, and Mick seems to be enjoying the benefits of reliability.

"We're not the cheapest carriers out there but we pride ourselves on being one of the most reliable. You can't beat reliability. I'd rather spend the money because I like good gear and using good gear for the long-term is so important for us. It's a matter of getting equipment that you rely on to get you through every day of the year, and BPW is the stepping-stone to being reliable."

"With the hoists, you just get into 'good stuff' when you talk about Edbro. You know it works and you can get a good run out of them, and the Ringfedeers, well they're part and parcel of an overall reliable heavy duty kit," says Mick.

The dynamics of where the feed grains are picked up and dropped off is changing ever rapidly in Mick's niche market, but no





matter what the location, the customer demands a reliable service because of current mass storage shortages. The frontline of any service for a transport business is ultimately the drivers. Being a family-owned company, Mick insists on an atmosphere where the drivers (who cart between 1,500 – 2,000 tonnes a week collectively) are treated like family.

"It's awesome working for Mick, I've been with him for more than three years now and he makes you feel like you're part of the whole business," comments driver Mitchell Jensen, while offloading a batch of barley at the Whaka feedlot, just north of Bowenville.

He adds, "I do anywhere from 4-5,000 kilometres a week in the 909. I travel a lot of country from central north Queensland to southern New South Wales and everything on the trailer holds up and handles the rough stuff. With the air



suspension, she stands up around corners like nothing else."

Business has been kind to Mick over the years but as for growing his operation, Mick is moving into a different phase of life, embracing quality time with family on the farm. As he explains, "We've got

great sub-contractors and with five trucks and all the paperwork, that's about all we can handle for a husband and wife team. I've got two little go-getters, Lachlan and Brock, who are seven and five, and they now want to do things with their Dad."



Lusty EMS tri axle road train dolly configuration fitted with BPW axles, disc brakes, the ALII air suspension kit, Edbro tipping hoists and heavy duty Ringfeder couplings.



# CUSTOM SOLUTIONS

**Getting a custom-build right involves a merger of ideas and skills, bringing the best out of the customer and the builder.**

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*

**U**ltimate Plant Trailers is a Geelong-based business specialising in custom-builds. In the words of Sales Manager, Ben Hood, they target the premium end of the market, “clients who are focused on getting exactly what they want, and the quality they want.”

Getting a custom-build right demands a deep rapport between builder and client.

“Everything we do is centralised around custom fabrication. If you contact us for a quote, we have a base model that we start with. Then we discuss what machinery you’re going to carry, what sort of distances it will

be carried over and what kind of terrain, whether it’s urban or rural. It’s all about meeting the clients’ needs from start to finish”

Maintaining the quality in the overall product means it’s important to use quality components. UPT encourages clients to use BPW axles. “That’s based on the quality of the product, its reputation and history,” Ben says.

“Anyone who knows the industry knows the product speaks for itself. BPW stands out for the craftsmanship that goes into its

axles and when you look at the maintenance requirements, or lack of them, BPW axles pay for themselves five times over.

“If I was buying a trailer tomorrow, I would insist on BPW.”

Their market is national, with trailers working as far away as Western Australia, but the bulk of them are in New South Wales and Queensland, states where they’ve been able to get a semi-trailer classification for UPT trailers, meaning they can carry a greater payload. They’re working on a similar classification in for Victoria

UPT trailer-builds with BPW axles.






The business was started by Peter Rose, 25 years ago, who learnt the craft from his father and then went out on his own and eventually formed a partnership with Matt Kayler-Thomson of MKT plumbing.

UPT has a nine-strong workforce and is growing. Ben Hood says they've doubled their output over the last year or so and aim to double it again in the coming year.

"We're aiming for growth of somewhere between 80 and 100 trailers per year over the next three years.

"But you can't just double your workforce and then expect the quality to remain high. We gradually put people on, but only the right people. The team we have at the moment is perfect."

When it gets down to the detail, Ben says UPT sets minimum standard specification including: flush coaming all with ties bars; flush-mounted lights in amps; 5mm checker plate flooring, GR350 steel on all key structural components; 10mm solid front board for further structural integrity and aesthetics; and trailers are sandblasted, primed and finished with two coats of two pack.

This all ties in with their engineered, hand-fabricated chassis which is laser cut with a camber already in it, adding to the product's structural integrity. 



Ben Hood: "If I was buying a trailer tomorrow, I would insist on BPW."





# THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW



Brad Zanow

For more than 50 years, Zanows' has delivered high quality, natural sand and gravel products to the construction materials market; however, in 2011 their Fernvale quarry was devastated by the Queensland floods. Undergoing a comprehensive makeover, complete with a state-of-the-art concrete plant, Zanows' now has the ability to move everything off site, offices included, more efficiently than ever before to withstand whatever nature throws at them.

*Words and photographs by Mark Pearce*





**B**rothers Brad and Darren Zanow began working for their father, Viv Zanow, back in the late 80s and early 90s respectively. When Viv initially retired from his occupation at the Ipswich Council he applied for the pension but during 'the recession we had to have', the government refused to hand out pensions to those who were asset rich even if they were cash poor. If Viv were to retire, he would be forced to sell his land.

Defiantly refusing not to give up his precious land, Viv soon found himself extracting from a property at Peak Crossing, driving a truck delivering top soil and sand, and in 1989 his eldest son Brad decided to give the old man a hand.

Now Zanows' director, Brad remembers,

"Back in those days I was a maintenance contractor in an independent quarry during the nights and on weekends, and so through the weekdays I would help Dad with deliveries, just so he could make enough money to go down the road and buy a paper."

The foundation was set for younger brother Darren, who had just finished a university degree to follow tradition and join the family 'earth moving' show.

"From my point of view, Brad and Dad became very busy at the small sandpit we had so I started helping out, supporting them in terms of book work and getting fuel to the quarry and helping with equipment maintenance," says the now CEO and Managing Director Darren Zanow.

Darren soon began applying for permits to the department of environment, acquiring licenses, and gaining approvals with city councils to begin new sites where Zanows' could extract their sand, soil and gravel.

"We had to do all the permit work ourselves because we couldn't afford to pay town planners to do it. The reason we grew fairly quickly was because Brad and I have always complemented each other in the business. I look after the financial background applications and compliance, and Brad looks after the plant and equipment, maintenance and mechanical side of things. We are both still very hands on in every part of the business, so there's nothing we can't do ourselves to keep the operation going," explains Darren.







A lot of Zanows' early sites were small, on-stream extractions. As time went on, the environmental requirement to move off-stream became a lot stronger and this led to more development approvals, such as their 130 hectare site at Fernvale, west of Brisbane.

"We operate four active quarry sites, including our main depot at Fernvale, and a fifth site that we hope to start by the end of the year. We run a fleet of ten concrete trucks and fourteen tippers. Our main extractive operations now form the largest natural sand and gravel quarry in South East Queensland," says Darren.

Zanows' supplies to the big three multinationals: Boral, Holcim and Hanson, as well as the majority of the concrete plants around South East Queensland. Within their fleet, Zanows' runs two Shephard trailers with Edbro hoists that were purchased in 2005 and 2006, and a more recent 5-axle dog trailer fully kitted with BPW running gear, Edbro hoists and Ringfeder couplings.

"The new 5-axle combination travels all around South East Queensland (SEQ) often carting materials on a 120 kilometre return trip. We've had no problems with the Edbro hoists which came with the dog and when we're tipping it's not unusual for us to do anything between six and ten tips per day, five and half days a week," says Brad.

"BPW makes a heavier duty axle than others and we spec everything a little bit heavier than we actually need, but I'm a great believer in spending a little bit more money upfront on the heavier gear so you can get three times the life. We've done all the mechanical exercises in the past and you eventually come out better for it in the long run," he explains.

Workshop superintendant and equipment manager Ben Standen echoes the long life durability factor of the BPW and Kenworth combination.

"The Kenworth and BPW brands are an ideal fit out for us" says Ben. "When we've pulled apart some of the after-market axles we've had in the past, we've had problems. We can throw it back together but it doesn't last like the BPW gear. We don't use 'cheap charlie shoes' because with the PBS and mass maintenance management scheme doesn't allow us to use after-market gear on braking or steering components.

"The first thing a driver says to me if they do a vehicle change over for the day from towing a BPW disc braked trailer into one of our other trucks is, 'There's something wrong with these brakes!' There's nothing wrong with the brakes, it's just they've been used to the BPW disc brakes on the previous trailer, so you have to remind them that they're not on disc brakes anymore," laughs Ben.

It's been testing times over the last three years for Zanows', ever since their Fernvale depot was devastated by the infamous Queensland floods. The Wivenhoe dam is located just nine kilometres from their





Zanows' new heavy-duty 5-axle combination fully kitted with BPW running gear, Edbro hoists and Ringfeder couplings.

## “I’M A GREAT BELIEVER IN SPENDING A LITTLE BIT MORE MONEY UPFRONT ON THE HEAVIER GEAR SO YOU CAN GET THREE TIMES THE LIFE.” BRAD ZANOW

quarry and being so close to Brisbane’s 7,000 hectare water catchment, Brad and Darren quickly saw the writing on the wall.

“The week prior to the floods we got hit with a big lot of rain,” Brad recalls. “This set the scene for a saturated catchment and an overfull Wivenhoe Dam. Then, 36 hours later, a second lot of rain came down where we had 16 inches in seven hours. The huge releases from Wivenhoe on the Tuesday meant the whole operation went under water for around 24 hours.

Prior to this, we had limited damage, as almost all our infrastructure was high enough to withstand the traditional floods from Wivenhoe. On the day of the big flood, when Wivenhoe Dam dumped a huge amount of water to save the dam from a potential failure, we had to move our equipment three times to higher ground. Up came the water, and in some areas the property it was 16 metres under. So we lost a lot and had to work hard and rebuild.

Most people still do not comprehend the fact that Wivenhoe Dam had to release huge quantities of water to ensure the structural integrity of the dam. Had this not been done, and the dam failed, there was the potential to kill tens of thousands of people and inundate tens of thousands of properties. This was a once in a lifetime flood event,” stated Brad.

The newly reconstructed concrete and extractive industry facility operates with a

state-of-the-art batch concrete plant and other modern production technologies to produce more than half a million tonnes of construction materials per year for the SEQ market. Outside of our traditional markets, the renewed operation produces enough



The Zanow's office before and after the flood

sand for the SEQ roof tile market, who in turn manufactures collectively around 180,000 roof tiles a day using the Zanows’ product.

Before the flood, the 50 staff worked out of a large office block, akin to a comfortable bedroom house. That building ended up out in Moreton Bay, 100 kilometres away.

Today, everything on site is designed and built to withstand a similar event if it ever happens again. They can now move their donga-style office blocks off site extremely quickly by undoing a few wires and dragging

them to higher ground, with furniture and everything else still in the dongas. The extraction, concrete and crushing plants all have removable trailer mounted electrical switch rooms with quick release and can be removed within a couple of hours.

When a business goes through a natural disaster like the Queensland flood and is left with a lot of damage, that business has no choice but to pick itself up, work hard and build again. Brad and Darren are looking at all sorts of different opportunities to steadily grow the business now that they’ve fully recovered.

“Natural sand and gravel extraction is our specialty but we’re doing our best to value-add to the business all the time,” concludes Darren. “We’ve got a farming arm of the business, a residential, industrial and commercial property arm, and we’ve also got a property portfolio of future residential

development that we would like to expand in the future. We did cop a caning in the floods but we’ve still got our customers. In reality you can have the best staff, the best products, the best quarry, but if you don’t have the customers you’ve got nothing, and it’s them who have kept us surviving quite fine”



"The transport industry is a tough gig. If you don't get it right, then you won't be in business for too long," says Kelvin Kalms, the General Manager of CEM International's Fabricated Products Division.

## ENGINEERED FOR SUCCESS

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*

**CEM** is a specialist engineering group which designs, manufactures and distributes equipment for industries including gas storage and distribution.

Wholly Australian-owned, CEM was established in the early 1970s. It was born from an engineering base and engineering continues as its strength.

"The way we market ourselves is engineering and manufacturing excellence. It's what's we've pursued. It's the backbone of the company. For the transport industry we ensure that what we've designed is as safe as it can be, but still provides as much payload as possible.

"The engineering element goes all the way through the process. If you haven't got that, you are going to have problems delivering what you promised. For example, if you get your load distribution wrong, or if the payload calculations aren't what transpires in the end, you have an unhappy customer," Kelvin says. CEM operates through a number of divisions servicing diverse industries. Its Fabricated Products Division supplies all types of gas and chemical type road tankers, LPG storage tanks, gas storage tanks and gas cylinders. They also have an Equipment Division that sells all types of gas control equipment including valves, regulators and associated operational equipment like gas hoses etc.

"Much of the gas control equipment that you

see on our LPG road tankers for example, actually comes from within. So these two CEM businesses, the Equipment Division, and the Fabricated Products Division, they complement each other in some regard," Kelvin says.

The road tanker under construction for Supagas when the Digest visited was completely manufactured on site – "everything on that is made here, assembled here," Kelvin says.

The other tanker, for Air Liquide, is for transporting liquid nitrogen and required a different barrel. "It's for cryogenic service; it's a very specialised industry. We design the tanker, and size it to suit the Australian regulations and have Chart Industries, a global supplier of cryogenic tanks and equipment, make the tanker barrel for us. We bring it into Australia, and then we fit all the operational gear to it in accordance with Australian standards. So it's fully Australian-designed and completed in Australia with all the operational gear fitted here

"We do this because what the industry is looking at is to ensure that they have a readily available Australian source of contacts to go to sometime in the future when they are looking for spare parts, service providers or maintenance providers for the running gear".

More often than not, CEM or its customers will specify BPW running gear for their road

tankers including ECO-Plus axles and BPW braking systems.

"That speaks to a couple of things," says Peter Hansen, CEM Projects Engineer. "It speaks to the product itself, but it also speaks to the relationships BPW has managed to maintain with the customers themselves.

"Bear in mind we're more into manufacture.



A liquid nitrogen tanker close to completion at CEM International's Melbourne base







CEM's Kelvin Kalms (left) and Peter Hansen:  
"we pride ourselves on our engineering ability"

## THE BIGGER PICTURE

Improving an industry by sharing experience and ideas is one of the best ways of measuring the truth in the adage "what you put into something is what you get out of it."

Kelvin Kalms has been in the pressure vessel industry all his working life – that's around 40 years' experience, and CEM encourages Kelvin and other senior staff members to contribute back to the industry. "This company has its roots in engineering," Kelvin says, "we pride ourselves on our engineering ability and we're recognised for it. We are certainly recognised for what we put back into the industry."

That means time spent on committees involved with the writing or changing of code or standard regulations in Australia and involvement with associations that represent industry. "We see it as not only good for business, but also good for the industry," Kelvin says.

"If there's no-one out there taking an interest in these sorts of things, you end up being dictated to about what you're going to produce and how you're going to do it, rather than influence the outcome and get industry input."

We don't do mechanical repairs ourselves. So the customer has to be happy with long term viability, and you know, serviceability if you wish. And I think they get what they're looking for with BPW," Peter says.

CEM puts a premium on safety. "We have seen the writing on the wall as far as EBS goes for some time," Peter says, "but we can't take all the credit, our customers usually want

it. I think the dangerous goods industry has adopted it fastest of all."

"From a supplier's point of view, it's very easy working with BPW," Kelvin Kalms says, "because they understand what we're doing, the drawings are right, we can work together."

At its Melbourne base, CEM has a team of about 30 people working on the factory floor. As Kelvin Kalms says, the core team

"has been in the game for a long, long time."

Kelvin's background is steeped in the pressure vessel industry while Peter Hansen had an operational background with some of Australia's major fleet operators before joining CEM. "I was actually a customer of CEM previously, I've been here about six years and I'm really enjoying the change" says Peter. 🇦🇺



**"FOR THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY WE ENSURE THAT WHAT WE'VE DESIGNED IS AS SAFE AS IT CAN BE, BUT STILL PROVIDES AS MUCH PAYLOAD AS POSSIBLE."**





# CARRYING ON

**The father-and-son team at Pacific Trailers have got the work-life balance sorted. But it took some work to get there.**

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*

**W**hen Frank Brandimarti arrived in Australia in January 1952, he didn't have much in his pocket and he didn't have much by the way of English, but he had a trade and he had a passion for trucks. He'd take whatever work he could find from grape-picking in Mildura to quarry work in Colac. It was in Colac, on Christmas Eve 1952, that he met his future wife Shirley and things started to turn around: "my language was starting to come good. And then work started to come as a mechanic." He'd always been around trucks – in his native Italy, his father had trucks, before the war his father bought a new Alfa-Romeo truck, but the government took that. When Frank was young "I used to wait for my father to come home up this hill. I could run faster than his truck was going!"

Frank worked as a mechanic for a log truck operator in Colac and then for International Harvester in Geelong where he became a supervisor. He even bought a petrol station in Geelong and ran that for a time. Then he bought a truck and worked the run from Melbourne to Adelaide, doing well in the lead-up to the Melbourne Olympics; back-

loading with cement from Port Adelaide for £50; good money at the time.

In the 1960s, Frank went to work for Hoare Brothers in their earth moving business and it was during that time, on nights and weekends, he built his first car carrier on Leyland truck which he'd bought for \$800. "It had two decks and a loading ramp at either end."

Frank had a huge appetite for work. He ran a fleet of trucks, took in mechanical work in his yard and started to build car carriers. "At one stage I had 22 trucks and four mechanics. We did all the maintenance. We'd do anything as long as there was a dollar in it."

Demand grew for the car carriers and Frank even built one of the first truck carriers in Australia – "we used to put five different trucks in it, going to Sydney and I made it so when they unloaded the trucks, I used to put two containers on it to come home."

His son Mark grew up around the workshop. By the time he was 16, all he wanted was to be a mechanic, so he did his apprenticeship as a diesel mechanic.

"When I started with Dad, we made four

carriers for Shields, who had the Toyota contract, we were also making tautliners with a rolling deck, but it just became harder and harder to make a margin on the tautliners," Mark said.

Around that time, they were told Patrick's was looking to place a major order for car carriers. So Mark gave Patrick's a call. He let the product do the talking: "I rang Patrick's, telling them who I was. I said 'my father's built a lot of car carriers; if you looked out the window, you'd see a couple he'd built.'"

"The guy from Patrick's was ex-army, straight down the line. He said 'come and see me and bring your drawings'. But we had no drawings, so I went up there and took some photos with me, saying we hadn't done it in a while. He said things had changed a lot since those trailers. You need moving decks, more safety. But he still gave us an order for three. "A fellow saw one of those carriers, and they became a billboard." They sold some locally in Geelong and sold six to an operator in Bendigo: the business was growing and they needed some systems.

"When we built the first trailer," Mark said,





Pacific Trailers – keeping manufacturing in Geelong.

Right: The Pacific Trailers team on location. At the back from left are Cameron Cooper, Steve Ryan, Ted Attard and Jason Crawford, at the front are Mark, Carolyn and Frank Brandimarti.



“and we were getting it near completion, Dad was already starting the next one. By that time, I thought we should maybe draw it. By the time we were on the third one, I spent a whole weekend drawing it. We started having a bit of an idea.

“We had some really good guys working for us. By the time we got to the third or fourth trailer, they knew what to do without looking at the first one. And it just got faster. We were starting to build them faster than other suppliers, so Patrick’s ordered another five. And then another five.”

Demand has levelled off to a point they’re happy with – around 20 trailers a year. Mark says they could do more, they could double that, but he’s happy with where the business is. Just as his father has a passion

for trucks, Mark has a passion for the surf. If you’re a golfer, you can take Wednesday afternoon off and play golf – it doesn’t matter what the weather’s like, the golf course will always be there. But if you’re a surfer, you’re in the hands of the weather – you need to be able to make the most of the conditions when they come. Mark has timed it – it’s 30 minutes from the Pacific Trailers car park to the car park at Bell’s Beach, on the Surf Coast west of Geelong. “We could do 40 trailers a year in the new shed, we could put a lot more guys on, but if we have too many guys on I can’t go surfing. In probably the last 10 years I’ve tried to fit more surfing in and less working. Now we’ve got good guys and great customers. They know how we operate. They tell us what they want. We still don’t have a

website or advertisements. The reliability of the product sells itself.”

A big part of that reliability goes down to the BPW components they use, including ECO Plus drum brake axles. “They never give us any trouble,” Mark says, “if a trailer comes back for repairs, that’s never something that needs repairing.”

Pacific Trailers has had a look at manufacturing overseas, but decided to stay local and keep the jobs and engineering in Australia.

“Great staff are important. We have a core team who work really well. They all have their own jobs and do them really well ... you know, there’s no better feeling than seeing your own carrier on the road, wherever you are in Australia. 🇦🇺

## HALL OF FAME

Recognising his passion for trucks and his contribution to road transport in Australia, with a life’s work running trucks and building car carriers, Frank Brandimarti was inducted into the National Road Transport Hall of Fame’s Shell Rimula Wall of Fame in 2010.

The citation read, in part: “In 1987, Frank was joined by his son Mark and together they continued to build all types of trailers. Trading under the name Pacific Trailers since the early 1990s they have gained a reputation for the construction of uncomplicated, functional and reliable car carriers. However, Frank’s passion has always been for the truck. While today the carriers are more Mark’s domain, Frank is still arriving daily to ... unravel the mangled mess of another wrecked Kenworth. The delight on Frank’s face when he shows anyone who calls by says it all: ‘you can take the man out of the truck, but you can never take the truck out of the man.’”



Frank and one of his Kenworths – a 1977 SAR; another project of his passions.



# FROM LITTLE THINGS, BIG THINGS GROW

**It was doors that opened the door for Borg Manufacturing. Now they're an Australian leader in panels and components for joinery and cabinets and one of regional NSW's most important businesses.**

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*



**M**ichael Borg is a cabinet maker by trade but he's gone way beyond the cabinets. In 1990, he and his brother John invested in a German door press and started making thermo-laminated vacuum-formed doors at Charmhaven on the New South Wales Central Coast. "From 1990 to 2000, we were purely a door manufacturer," Michael Borg said. "The next big step was in 2000, when we commissioned our first melamin decorating press."

That was at Somersby, also on the Central Coast. It was at this point that Borg went from being simply a consumer of Melamine MDF (medium-density fibreboard) to also being a manufacture and became a supplier of finished board for kitchens and for cabinet makers.

A decade of steady growth followed for Borg Manufacturing as Michael, John and another brother, Darren, expanded



Some of the Borg Manufacturing team on site at Oberon, from left: Leo Margaris, Darren Moore (from Vaudrey Trailers), Darren Borg, Michael Borg and Cade Robertson





Unloading the harvested pine logs on site at Oberon



Two of Borg's logging skel rigs at their Oberon plant

production and established a national distribution network, selling Australia-wide to the furniture and kitchen industries.

They also expanded melamine production to increase the scope of colours and designs in their range and added a facility to produce aluminium-framed glass doors. The next landmark was in March 2010, when Borg bought a major MDF manufacturing facility from Carter Holt Harvey at Oberon, 180 kilometres west of Sydney, over the Blue Mountains and amidst the abundant pine plantations of the NSW Central Tablelands. This added a further 150 people to Borg's payroll, bringing the total number of employees to around 1,000, making the group a very significant regional employer. "We were Carter Holt Harvey's major customer – about 50 per cent of their output was coming to us – they wanted

to sell the Oberon plant so we took the opportunity," Michael said.

"We're still a customer of theirs, we buy particleboard from them that comes out of Mt Gambier and Gympie, but we make all our own MDF now."

Throughout these decades of growth, they've integrated operations across their industry, constantly tweaking the way they do things to improve productivity and streamline their business.

For example at Oberon, where the harvested logs have traditionally been chipped in the forest, Borg has recently moved this operation to the Oberon plant. The advantage is that every piece of the resource is used: "As well as getting the chips from the log for our MDF, we now also get the bark which becomes fuel to power the plant. This was previously left in the forest" Michael said.

"There are also some advantages in haulage,

in getting maximum payload (on a logging skel) versus carting chips in a trailer with a walking floor."

The existing fleet includes 40 prime movers, most of them on a B-double rig, but some running single trailers. There are further trucks in rigid applications involved with distribution in every state. BPW Transpec components are a standard fit in the Borg fleet

"I've always been a fan of BPW and have always run disc brake axles," Michael says. "They work well with the European trucks – Volvo and Scania."

He's also an admirer of the Transpec electronic brake system: "I'm a big fan of EBS as well, and it works well with disc brakes. "Another advantage of disc brakes is that when it comes to doing a brake reline, the trailer and truck isn't in the workshop for 10 hours, like a B-double on drum brakes. With disc brakes, it's there for half that time. We also get much better performance out on the road," Michael said.

The expansion continues. Borg has just installed one of the world's largest melamine presses at Oberon – "This now allows us to value add at the MDF plant and send the finished board directly to our customers. Michael said.

The three manufacturing sites are supported by a 15,000 square metre warehouse and distribution facility at Somersby and a network of depots to cover the entire nation.

From producing doors in a small operation at Charmhaven, Borg now has a huge customer base, supplying wood panel products to end-users in the kitchen, joinery, decorative door, panel and laminate sectors.

Borg Manufacturing's success in a very competitive market is testament to their quality as a business. 



# WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?

**Tony Richardson is a back-to-basics operator, but that hasn't been a barrier to success.**

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*

**R**ichardson Transport carts cattle. "We cart cattle and more cattle and most places we go, there's cattle to come back," says Tony Richardson.

He's an old-school operator – there's no computer on Tony's desk – but the success of his business is proof that the basics, principles like hard work, trust in your people and top service to your customers, don't rely on technology. "With common sense and good work ethics," Tony says, "you can do whatever you want to do in this world."

Tony is from the land, he left school aged 14 to help his father on the family farm. "The only regret I've got is that I should have left when I was 11, because I wasted three years ... Dad and Mum are still alive, they're retired farmers now and they still worry about me every day, so while they're worrying there's no need for me to worry!"

"Dad's me best mate. I worked with Dad for 40 years, we never had a blue. I hope I can say that with my boys; they're my mates and they work for me. I'm their boss and their dad so sometimes it's hard to get it all right, but so far so good."

The family farm Tony grew up on is at Mount Rivers, a small village on the Patterson River in the NSW Hunter region, 50 kilometres from his transport depot at Maitland and now home base for his own family. He worked the farm with his father and brother and early on started carting their own livestock with a small Leyland Terrier."

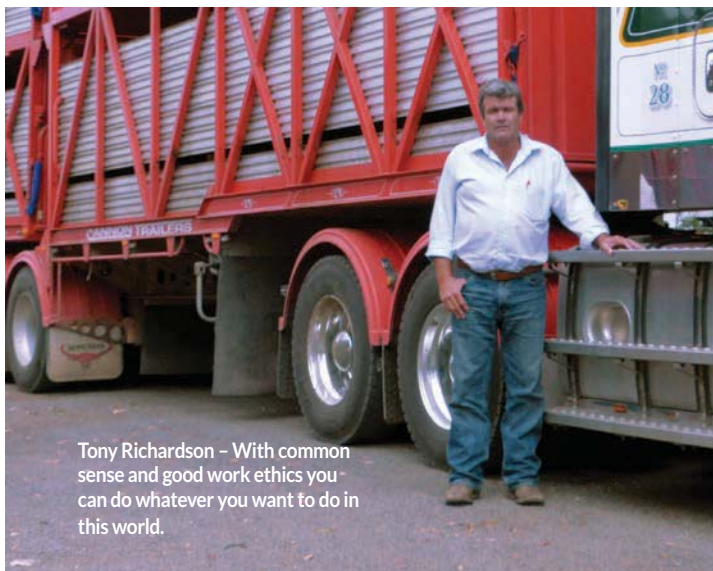
Tony bought his first double-deck stock transporter 20 years ago, increased the fleet to six rigs and then slowly built it up to 11, eventually buying his father and brother out of the business.

In the last 18 months, he's increased the

fleet from 11 trucks up to 18. That rapid growth was based on Tony's belief that cattle numbers in Australia would grow significantly and they have. "I got a bit fair dinkum about it and started chasing work a bit harder. Before that I was just taking the work that'd come my way. I decided it was time to get a few of the bigger jobs, which I've done."

"I try not to undercut others to get a job; there's more to a job than doing it at a cheap rate; you've got to do a good job, you've got to supply good equipment and good staff. I've got 18 of the best drivers I've ever had at the moment and that helps your business a lot."

His fleet now has 16 B-doubles, a semi trailer and a table-top. The most recent builds have been from Truck Art and Cannon, always with BPW running gear specified. Richardson's Transport uses air suspension



Tony Richardson – With common sense and good work ethics you can do whatever you want to do in this world.







**"There's more to a job than doing it at a cheap rate; you've got to do a good job, you've got to supply good equipment and good staff."**

## A LOT OF BULL

The Richardsons move cattle and farm cattle and they also ride cattle. Tony and Betty Richardson's four eldest sons (they have seven children, aged three to 24) have been following the rodeo circuit for the last 12 years. "They're pretty involved with it, they do very well at it," Tony says, "21-year-old Lachie is in America now riding in the world finals in the PBR Bull Ford Tough series, which is the biggest bull ride in the world. He presently stands at No. 20 in the world, so he's going well.

"The other three fellas have their fair share of wins here and throughout Australia. They travel throughout Australia every weekend. It's a pretty good lesson on life – a lot of things that happen to a bull rider will happen in business or in relationships down the track. It's something we've encouraged for the boys; they're country boys and they do very well at it and they've made a lot of

friends all over the world by doing it, but they've still got a long way to go with it."

Because they started so young, Tony expects they'll peak in their bull riding from their mid-20s through to about age 30. "The fellas that are beating Lach at the moment, they're 26 to 30. If they start at a very early age, like my boys did, they'll be at the prime of their career if they get through with a bit of luck without injuries, they'll still be good athletes doing that sport at 30-year old.

"They've all got utes and they don't mind driving them all over the country. They're very, very busy young men, out at the cattle sales and in the country that we run our own stock and doing saleyard work for me, loading trucks and so on. They're not so interested in driving trucks at this stage. They might get into it one day, but it doesn't really worry me if they don't."



Lachie Richardson, bull riding in the US in 2013.  
Photo: Andy Watson

from the BPW Heavy Duty OM/OT-D36 series which bring advantages like reduced tyre wear, enhanced stability and driving comfort and BPW's 'soft-ride' for the cargo. They also fit BPW ECO Plus drum brake axles to all their trailers, which prove hard wearing and long-lasting, even under tough conditions.

"We've had a good run with BPW," Tony says, "we stick with it because it works. It's got a good name, everybody you talk to says how good it is and that's what got me into it in the first place. It's never let us down."

As well as transport and the Mount Rivers

farm, Tony has an 8,000-acre property at Cassilis, about 230 kilometres west north-west of Newcastle. Two of his sons live and work out there. "We run our own livestock there, so we farm and do the stock work and a fair bit of contract mustering."

The current dry makes farming tough, but it makes the transport side of the business busy because there are a lot of cattle to be moved. "When it does rain we might have a quiet month but it doesn't take long to pick up. It's a hell of a big paddock, Australia, and all the abattoirs and feedlots we source from and deliver to, they can't stop, they'll

continue to source cattle and if they have to come from a further distance, then that works in our favour. We'll go as far as we need to, to get 'em, even as far as the Northern Territory in some instances."

As Tony says, "there's no money in carting fresh air," so they have a wide range of clients to eliminate dead-running as much as is possible.

"There's no big profit in transport, I don't know who ever said there was, but if you can pay all your bills and raise your family and have a good life, then it's a good job."





**The success of Semi-Skel Hire is down to service, quality and reliability.**

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*

# TRAILERS FOR HIRE

**G**eoFF Kelly has never advertised but his business is constantly growing. He hires to some of the biggest names in Australian transport and distribution: "We hire out semi-trailers. Every single type of semi-trailer," there are 700 Semi-Skel Hire trailers out on the road as you read this, "and there's more coming, we'll have up to 800 on the road by Christmas."

GeoFF knows where they are, pretty much as a parent knows their children's whereabouts: "There's 10 in Mackay, two in Rockhampton, six in Mildura, three in Barnawartha, 25 in Adelaide and the rest are here in Melbourne." GeoFF prefers to keep them close to home because that way he has better control over their maintenance. Some of his major customers have asked him to expand the business Australia-wide, but it's the loss of

control over quality that underlies GeoFF's reluctance.

The success of West Melbourne-based Semi-Skel Hire comes from its reputation and a big part of that reputation is quality and reliability. His trailers are made by Barker Trailers in Woodend and FTE Trailers in Dandenong and he uses Hammar side-loaders from Sweden.

"We specify BPW gear absolutely and without question," GeoFF says, "we have a drop-deck in the workshop at the moment that's having its first set of (replacement) brakes. That's after 13 years – our record is 16. Longevity and reliability are what it's all about."

"We've actually bought some second-hand trailers, not many, but we've actually taken the axles out and put BPW underneath them

so we know we won't have any trouble with them.

"The best compliment I ever got was once when we'd been with a customer three months and I was out at their place, fixing a air leak on a trailer. Paul Callanan walked up beside the trailer and said 'is that you GeoFF,' and I said 'yeah,' and he said 'these trailers are as good as, if not better than ours.' That was the transport manager out at Mulgrave at Woolworths."

GeoFF says he has never won a single customer by approaching them. Big names like Woolworths, Coles, Tolls, Linfox and Camerons, "they all rang us – we didn't approach them, but if you have 700-odd trailers, you've got to have some customers!"

Growth for GeoFF will come in increasing his standard fleet, but he also has his eye on



Super-B-double combinations. "We've had a couple of Super-Bs for a couple of years, but we're starting to get right into it because they're finally issuing permits to go out with them." Previously they were used in the docks area adjacent to Semi-Skel's West Melbourne depot. Now they can go further in Greater Melbourne – to Laverton in the west and Dandenong in the south-east. Geoff's links with transport go way back. When he was young, his father had a fruit and veggie run, supplying shops between Melbourne and Mildura with a semi-trailer. It was hard work with long hours and if Geoff wanted to see his father, then the best way was to go along for the ride – he'd hop in the cabin on school holidays and help out with deliveries.

Eventually Geoff's dad gave the run away and expanded his business in the wholesale markets in West Melbourne. He'd sold his truck, but then it came up for sale again, so Geoff bought it. "I was 19 and I became an owner-driver. That lasted nine years, then the 1981 recession hit and I ran out of work. I was still working for dad a day a week in the market, but he didn't have enough work for me to go full-time."

Eventually things turned around and they started carting their own fruit out of Mildura. "Our biggest day in the market was Monday. We'd get fruit delivered from Mildura, sometimes 1am, sometimes 4am, sometimes later. It was unreliable. So we started to cart our own and it meant we could deliver into our cool room on a Sunday and have fruit there and ready to go

for Monday's market; we didn't have to wait for the truck."

That made a massive difference to the market business. For five years, they doubled turnover every year. "We got to the point where one Monday we had 2,000 boxes of oranges and 3,000 boxes of mandarins to sell and we sold them all."

In the mid-80s, the government introduced a 40 percent investment allowance and on top of 22 percent depreciation, "you could write off \$62,000 of a \$100,000 truck in the first year. So I bought some trucks, bought some trailers and found some work for them. By the end of the 80s, I had nine trucks and 14 trailers. Things were going well, but then the 1991 recession hit. So I sold the trucks and started selling the trailers; sold five and had nine left."

One of the companies he sold trucks to asked if they could hire three of his flat-to-trailers. "I was working in the market full-time, it was going well, so I said 'hire them now and you can look at buying them in a few months'."

That was 1991 and the start of the hire business. He started hiring curtainsiders to a distribution company in Dandenong that was doing some work for Woolworths and eventually Woolworths signed Semi-Skel. "They initially took 11 refrigerated trailers and 12 months later wanted 20 new ones. I was getting the order ready when 14 second-hand refriges came on to the market, so I called Woolworths and they said, 'get them and we'll take the 20 new ones too.' That was it, off we went."

## A MARKET FOR IDEAS

An economist will tell you a market is a system where parties engage in exchange; usually of goods or services for money, and that it's a process that establishes the prices of goods and services. They're right, but a market can mean a whole lot more on a practical level.

Geoff Kelly puts more than a little bit of the success of his business down to his experience in Melbourne's wholesale fruit and vegetable markets. Working in his father's business, I & JM Kelly, taught him about trust and loyalty, about having the right customers and about giving them the right service.

It's dynamic: "you're dealing with growers and retailers; it's full-on, always a challenge. Business works on a handshake and quality product always sells. We used to bring back oranges from a place called Curlwaa near Wentworth (on the Murray River) and they were that good, after we'd deliver to the shops we'd have 50 or 100 boxes left and would sell them in the market on Monday. And they'd sell in an instant."

Bring that quality back to his trailer hire business and it's a similar scenario: "our trailers are better. We have better lights, brakes, tyres and if something goes wrong, I've got all the parts right here. Customers don't want to wait and I don't want them to wait. We run a service unit. We've got trailers that are 25 years old; we've got trailers that are 25 days old. Every single brake valve they might need is in our service truck. Every one."



Semi-Skel has 700 trailers out on the road and is aiming for up to 800 by Christmas.





A pioneering rig – Laurie Bowtell's five-axle trailer.

**Laurie Bowtell keeps pushing the limits, and a lot of people gain from his efforts.**

# A GROWTH INDUSTRY

*Words and photographs by Jim Darby*

**L**aurie Bowtell runs Port Stephens Gardenland, a wholesale landscape-supply business based at a 25 acre site in the scrub at Raymond Terrace, just off the Pacific Highway about 15 minutes north of Newcastle. With five truck-and-dog tipping rigs, he carts the entire range of landscape supplies – gravel, mulch, woodchips, sawdust “the whole lot” and Laurie says they have “the best soil mix around – with a lot of secret ingredients!”

Laurie has been in this business since the 1980s. It was a fairly simple progression – “years ago my brother and I were landscaping – he had a horticultural background and I had a mechanical background with buses and trucks and so on. We couldn’t always find what we wanted so we bought a truck and started carting our

own materials and away it went ... now we’re here playing in the bush.”

In that time, he’s occasionally pushed the limits, as a pioneer will. He was probably the first operator on Australia’s East Coast to run a 4-axle dog, in the mid-1990s (see sidebar) and he’s been at it again. Laurie’s latest rig, built by Borcat, has a 5-axle dog which gives him a more efficient rig with greater height and length.

The pitfall of being a pioneer is that, with an eye for overall safety, authorities are always cautious. Putting a 5-axle dog trailer in front of them was always going to bring on a pause for some thought. “When we started talking about this one, it took us about 12 months to get to the building stage.” Eventually, Laurie came up with “a ‘spaceship’, we wanted it to be higher and

longer, so we used low-profile tyres and made it a drop-deck.”

The 5-axle trailer can currently only run on prescribed routes, but having broken some ground with this one, Laurie expects it to be easier to get another like it, or even slightly higher. “Ideally sometime in the future you might stick an eight-wheeler on the front of one of these, I reckon that’d be better.”

His fleet of trailers has “all got BPW axles and suspensions” and in Laurie’s words, the edge there is in the fact that “you don’t have to touch them, they’re reliable and dependable and that’s what you want.

“The first brand-new trailer we bought was a 3-axle dog trailer in ’94 – I passed it going up the road the other day. One of the chook farming mobs had bought it and it was still going strong.”





Laurie Bowtell and his son Todd on location at Port Stephens Gardenland. Laurie has three sons working in the business.

Ever since he bought that trailer, Laurie has stuck with BPW. "We're pretty finicky about tyre rotations and when we jack the trailers up to do the rotations, we shake and rattle the BPW gear and we never have to touch it. "There's one trailer out there that's done 1.4 million kilometres and in all that time we've only had to replace three calipers on it and two sets of brake pads because the calipers seized up, but we haven't even repacked the bearings.

"The other thing with the BPW suspensions is you don't change the bushes. We check up on them, but we never have to change them." Laurie also specifies Edbro tipping hoists and Ringfeder couplings. "They're good quality components, and you know, we probably get better life out of our Ringfeder stuff because every time we tip, we unhook, and that helps. We've got short drawbars and bulky loads and that helps."

Regular maintenance is also important.

"Because we're wholesalers, we try and get everything done by Friday, and Friday afternoon we start servicing the trucks. The loaders get serviced most weeks and one week we'll do two trucks and three trucks the next week; they get done regardless of Ks, they just get done. We try and keep them in good nick – it's not very pleasant if they break down on the side of the road somewhere." 🇺🇸

## PUSHING THE LIMITS

"What happened was nobody was really interested in building us a 3-axle dog trailer that was 26' long or a bit longer and a bit higher.

"We were out at Maitland one night, at a Christmas party – and we'd had plenty of Christmas cheer – and I spoke with someone from Hamelex and said, 'how about you stick another axle up the front'.

"He thought about it for a bit and then I said 'how much do you reckon it would cost?' and he told me what he thought it'd cost and I said 'well write it on a coaster' so he wrote it on a coaster and I grabbed another coaster and wrote him an order there and then. So away it went."

It was a fairly simple business discussion, but it took two months or so to get permission to run it around at 42.5 tonnes.

"We had to take it up to a driver-trainer facility in Armidale and they put training wheels on it and all sorts of things to look at the stability of it. They even blocked a road to check its lane-changing and that sort of thing. It was pretty intense."

It eventually opened the industry up for 4-axle dog trailers and it also led to a reconsideration of the loads 3-axle dog trailers could carry. According to Laurie, "three axles went to 48 tonne and our thing went to 50."



BPW ECO Plus axles on the first 3-axle dog trailer.





# GTB FINDS ITS GROOVE...

In an office perched high above their 10,000 square metre rolling assembly line, Les Lange, General Manager, Genuine Truck Bodies (GTB) talks about the rapid development of the company and their commitment to adding value.

Having doubled in size each year for the past three years, Les explains "it's the quality of the product that is ultimately driving growth".

*Words by Adam Cross*

**GTB** is part of Automotive Holdings Group, Australia's largest automotive retailer. Employing more than 5,000 people across a network of more than 150 car and truck dealerships throughout Australia and New Zealand, the group established GTB in 2006 to carry out all pre-delivery and customisation requirements on its Hino truck range.

"You could say, any work that needed to be carried out on a truck from the time it landed into the country up to delivery to the dealer, was performed by GTB," says Les, "this included chassis extensions, wheel alignments, lazy axles, prime mover fit outs, diesel fuelling and delivery Australia-wide."

With a 36,000 square metre vehicle storage yard and a 10,000 square metre purpose-built manufacturing facility in Dandenong South, Victoria, the operation has the capacity to store and service more than 900 vehicles.

Initially set up to service just the AHG dealer base, the facility has evolved significantly over the past five years into a modern trailer manufacturing operation, with the capacity to build and supply a complete range of trailers to both group and non-group customers.

The GTB manufacturing facility is perfectly suited for panel style builds, catering for six, eight, ten, 12 and 14 pallet rigid body trucks and semi-trailers. Currently producing about ten trailers a month, GTB expect to see production increase to 25 trailers per month within the next year.

In addition there is a stand-alone custom build section that works on special projects. Recent examples include an outside broadcast trailer for Sky Racing and 16 multi-temperature delivery vans for Mrs Macs.

Today, the company has a focus on refrigerated transport, which accounts for about 50 percent of the business.

Considering where GTB sits today, it's surprising to learn the company built its first refrigerated trailer just two years ago for sister company Rand Refrigerated Logistics.

When Rand went on to acquire Harris Transport later that year, the demand for refrigerated trailers increased significantly. As a result production has boomed, and the company has gone on to build more than 130 refrigerated trailers in the last two years.

"It's an exciting stage of the business," says Les. "Servicing the Rand and Harris fleets provided an excellent foundation for us. Fortunately we were in a position to follow our trailers around the country to ensure they were performing at the highest standards."

"The benefit of being part of such a large group meant feedback from our national fleet managers allowed us to continually refine and improve our product along the way."



**“EVERY COMPONENT IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE CUSTOMERS WITH ‘COST-OF-LIFE’ SAVINGS.”**



“For example, our rigid body range (typically constructed with a steel sub-frame), now uses an all-aluminium design borrowed from our refrigerated trailer bodies. This type of innovation sets us apart. We not only saw manufacturing efficiencies internally, but by adding strength and reducing weight we made a better trailer and now, a better truck body.

“As a result, fleet operators have seen immediate benefits in fuel consumption and lower maintenance costs,” he says.

“When it comes to build quality, the GTB trailers are flawless. Every component is designed to provide customers with ‘cost-of-life’ savings. The BPW axles and suspension definitely complement what we are trying to achieve. The trailers look great, have good running gear and drive beautifully. Right now, we are 100 percent confident the product is where it needs to be in terms of quality and refinement”

Part of GTB’s success has been its ability to attract quality people from all areas of the industry. With the recent appointment of Tony Kerr as Executive General Manager, GTB is

fortunate to have a strong executive team.

Tony is in charge of both the GTB and Vehicle Storage & Engineering (VSE) businesses, and describes the company culture as ‘inclusive’. Every one of their 100 plus staff contributes to improving processes within the company.

“If you know what your goals are the decision making is easy. As a group we ask ourselves, ‘will this add value to our product or our process?’, if the answer is yes then the decision is easy - we do it,” says Les.

According to Les, “there is certainly space ‘and a want’ in the market for another option when it comes to quality refrigerated trailers.

“Our trailers are designed, engineered and built in Australia for Australian conditions and fleet operators recognise the importance of that.”

(Les laughs), “We’re finally at the stage in our business where we have an engaged and experienced team, the infrastructure is in place, but most importantly we have developed a product we are proud of.”

(Smiling, Les adds) “I think it’s safe to say we’ve well and truly found our groove.” 🇦🇺



From L to R: GTB’s Tony Kerr, Tom Livingstone, Les Lange, Aaron Commons and Bruce Thomson.





# FROM VINE TO WINE

It is a long and elaborate road from the grape on the vine to the end consumer. A basic prerequisite for high quality wine is painstakingly careful handling during growth, harvest and transport.

*Words by Thomas Wöhrle and photographs by Roman Gemmrich, Chateau Pau*

**T**he wine grower's year is strictly organised, particularly if he wants the best possible wine for the bottle. It begins between December and February, when the correct pruning of the vines decides what energy goes into the vine and what quality the wine will be one year later. Following this, the ground needs to be worked, to create the adequate nutritional basis for the vines, followed by the correct tying of the vines to the cross-wiring.

In April, the crop-spraying period begins, during which the wine grower protects the vineyards against diseases and bacteria. After the end of work on the foliage and the ground, the vines receive a rest period of 20 to 30 days, so that no bacteria are released from the soil. If the sun shines nicely during this period of time, the quality of the wine also improves considerably.

## **Zickler grape transporter with BPW axle and BPW drawbar installation**

The start of September is the right time for the grape harvest, but the exact point of time depends on the weather. In the Pfalz in 2013, there is a delay of about two to three weeks due to the cold and wet weather in early summer. "We use a grape harvester for the grape harvest, which is mechanised to remove the grapes gently from the vine", says Achim Pfirrmann, owner of the vineyard Pau in Hochstadt/Pfalz. "Harvesting the grapes by hand would also yield a top quality wine, but is rarely manageable in the larger vineyards, simply due to the amounts that have to be handled."

The transport of the harvested grapes is carried out at Pau using the stainless steel

grape transporter "Zickler System Rauch" by Zickler A-M-Produkt GmbH, which is based in neighbouring Böchingen. The axle and drawbar installation originate from BPW, already a reliable partner of the vehicle producer for many years. "In close cooperation with the agricultural machine producer Fendt, we offer numerous special vehicles and machines specifically for wine production", explains Martin Zickler, General Manager of the Zickler A-M-Produkt GmbH.

"We mainly use the various BPW overrun hitches and braked axles for our grape transporters." Furthermore, Zickler imports transport trailers and 3-way tippers from Italy - in Böchingen these are then also equipped with overrun hitches and braked axles by BPW.

In the grape transporter type TE with excentric screw pump, the so-called



feed screw and the pump and its rotor are ideally adjusted to each other. For customers such as Pau, this guarantees particularly gentle handling of the harvested material. The grape transporter is characterised by special equipment, easy handling and high operating safety.

Gentle feeding of the grapes, due to optimal adjustment of the individual components, is of fundamental importance for the quality of the wine later", says winegrower Pfirrmann. "This high standard of quality is absolutely guaranteed by the Zickler grape transporter, through the use of high quality materials and components. The high quality and stability of the BPW axle and drawbar installation are part of this."

### Protection against viruses and bacteria

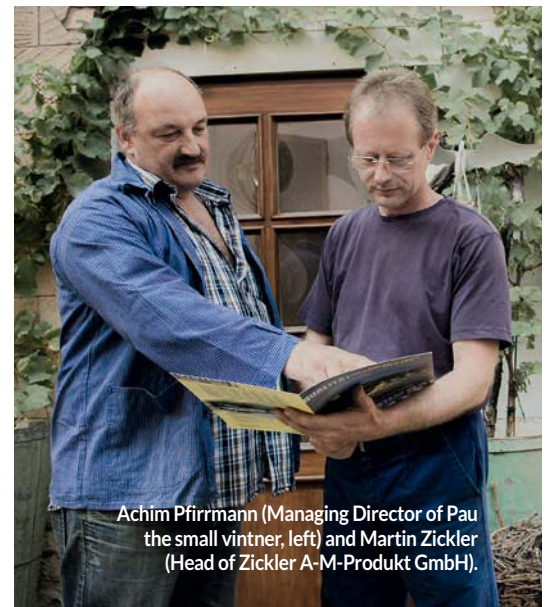
The harvested grapes are very delicate in terms of oxidation and bacterial contamination. Therefore, they should be transported for further processing in the vineyard as gently and as quickly as possible. Greatest care must also be taken when unloading the grapes from the Zickler grape transporter.

transport the grapes directly and over large distances or height differences for further processing (press, destemmer, tank, etc.).

"During gentle transport, one of the aims is to keep the mechanical stress on the grapes as low as possible", says Dämmer. "For this, the speed of the screw plays a major role". This can be influenced by the vintner through the capacity selection of the excentric screw pump, its revolutions per minute and the hose diameter. The transport distance should also be kept as short as possible.

### Customer delivery multiple times per year

After unloading from the grape transporter, the gentle handling of the grapes continues. "We do this by pressing the entire grape in a pneumatic press, whereby the grapes are pneumatically pressed against a cloth", explains the vintner Achim Pfirrmann. "Using this procedure, we avoid bitter constituents entering the juice and make it possible to separate from the grapes any foreign bodies from the vineyard." When settling has finished, and with it all suspended and solid particles are removed, only the clear juice is left for fermentation.



Achim Pfirrmann (Managing Director of Pau the small vintner, left) and Martin Zickler (Head of Zickler A-M-Produkt GmbH).

recommendation for further treatment. After a further eight days, the wine is clear and clean and requires a certain time to mature, before it is filtered for the last time and the bottled. Depending on the type of ageing, the wine will then mature for some months in barrique barrels for a fuller taste or it is available for sale straight away.

Three to four times a year, the vintner Pfirrmann still makes deliveries to his customers himself. His tours lead him



"When using the direct screw discharge of the grape transporter type TM, the grapes 'simply' drop out of the grape transporter at the end of the feed screw", Axel Dämmer, Project Manager at the Zickler A-M-Produkt GmbH explains. "For the wine grower, this means the further processing of the grapes must either take place below the unloading area, or that the grapes must be transported upwards with a further machine, such as a conveyor belt, to fill, for example, the press". With grape transporters of the type TE, such as those used at Pau, the wine grower can connect a pressure hose and in this way

During the eight to fourteen days of the fermentation, Pfirrmann holds the temperature constantly between 17 and 18 degrees Celsius, to keep the aroma substances in the wine as far as possible intact. This very gentle fermentation process is quite decisive for the fruit and the character of the wine. After sulphurising the wines and eliminating the yeast, the wine is ready for the fining, where the wine is treated in such a way that it fulfils the legal requirements regarding the contents. An independent laboratory Emmel in Roschbach near Landau checks the wine and gives

through Germany and Europe, and he even has some customers in Thailand. "Otherwise, our online shop is available round the clock for orders and has become very popular", says Pfirrmann. We also offer completely personalised labels for weddings or corporate events, and are always willing to orient ourselves closely towards customer requirements". However, the be-all and end-all is the quality of the wine. 

For more information: [www.chateau-pau.de](http://www.chateau-pau.de) and [www.zickler-gmbh.de](http://www.zickler-gmbh.de)  
Zickler A-M-Produkt GmbH



# Ken Baldock

Ken Baldock, who passed away in December 2013 aged 90 after several months of declining health, will be sadly missed by his family and the many friends he had in the industry – fellow consultants, suppliers, transport operators, engineering enthusiasts and professionals he collaborated with from the factory floor through to the boardroom.



Above: Ken visiting Freighter at Brisbane Truck Show 2009

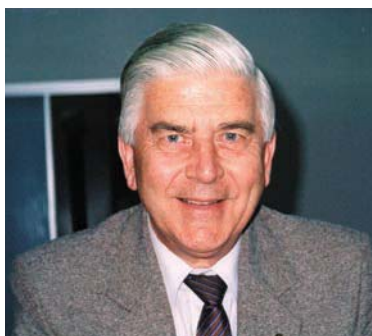
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Held in high esteem by many and described as respectful and fair even when it came to difficult commercial decisions, Ken had an association with John McGrath of McGrath Trailer Equipment and Freighter Industries, which spanned more than four decades and a further 21 years operating independently as Ken Baldock & Associates Pty Ltd, trading as Transport Systems Technology.

Ken's career began in 1938 when he joined McGrath Trailer Equipment. At the time McGrath was the leading manufacturer of transport equipment in Australia, and offered a diverse range of equipment. He remained with McGrath Trailers through World War II. In 1946 a group of businessmen formed a public company called Freighters Limited, which purchased the trailer business from McGrath.

Ken had an outstanding ability to conceptualise new ideas or innovations along with an artistic skill to match. He could turn a concept into a three-dimensional pencil sketch with unbelievable accuracy and detail right down to the nuts, bolts and location of welds. These sketches would provide more than enough detail to transform the schematics into refined engineering drawings. Ken completed Engineering studies at Swinburne Institute of Technology and was appointed Production Manager in 1957, then shortly after, Engineering Manager.

From the early 1950s Ken was associated with the national development in many areas of surface transportation, particularly pertaining to the inter-modal aspects between sea, rail and road. He travelled extensively overseas researching transport



and logistics seeking new concepts and ideas to introduce to Australia. From those early years he was associated with many new road vehicle developments.

In the late 50s Ken dealt with the introduction of containerisation into the railway systems in Australia, and the later introduction of the Transfla and Transivans systems. In the 60s the Steadman Side Transfer and Freighterlift off-ground systems became popular in primary industries, particularly the transport of sugar cane from the field to mill in Queensland and elsewhere. These highly effective systems were prominent in aiding the introduction of full-scale mechanical harvesting of sugar cane in Australia. The concept of removable and sliding suspensions used on the whole range of standard trailers, vans and tankers, was conceived under Ken's stewardship.

Ken was active in promoting the use of multiple combination trailers including B-doubles to operate as legal units on Australian roads. As a member of Technical Committees of the Australian and Victorian Road Transport Federation he was instrumental in the development of the

ADR35 braking standards.

Ken's proudest and most satisfying achievements during his career was training the individuals who went on to become outstanding engineers, self-employed, successful managers or equipment manufacturers and suppliers in their own right. Ken said the key to success in the manufacturing industry is to 'click' with people—"You have to respect people for who they are." In 1982 Ken established his own company where he worked as Principal Consultant for a further 21 years. Well-known and respected in professional circles and throughout the local and international transport industries, Ken only retired when he reached 80 years of age.

In his 65 year career, Ken maintained a keen interest in many organisations to ensure continuous improvement. He was actively involved and contributed to transport engineering, production and technology forums along with various industry advisory groups. His contribution to, and development of 'new systems', innovation and products will be recognised by many as a cornerstone of Australian road, rail and sea transport.

Those who knew him would attest to Ken being a true gentleman, mentor to many and a dedicated family man. An admired figure, he was a true legend

**Vale Ken Baldock,  
July 7 1923 – December 24 2013**



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