

# BPW DIGEST

SPRING 2015



BPW'S MAGAZINE FOR THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY IN AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

## Snapshot of an icon

Ray Scott's life has been a journey from blue collar to badge of honour. **12**

## Human-centred design

Weed seeds are no match for De Bruin Engineering's Harrington® Seed Destructor. **20**

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A commitment to service, innovation and customer satisfaction are the backbone of Moreland Holdings. **24**

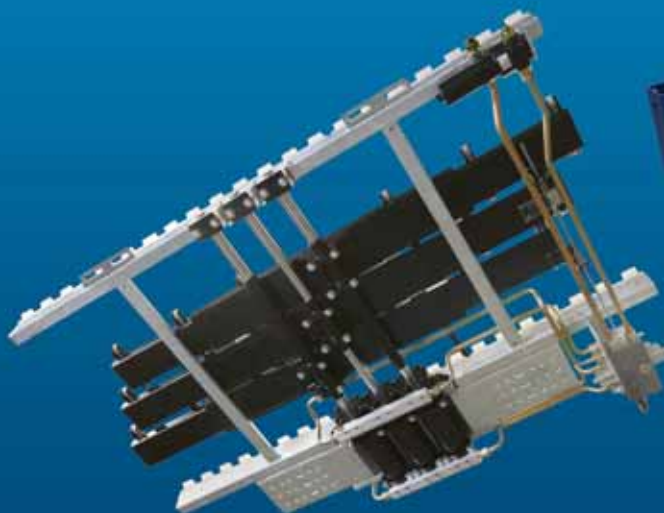
## A brutal business

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## From the Joint MDs

Welcome to the Spring 2015 issue of the BPW Digest.

While we are winding up another year, there is no doubt the general market environment in the Australian transport industry is not easy going at the moment, but we are optimistic the tide will turn and sentiment will change in the New Year.

With pressure in the mining sector and unfavourable weather conditions, which affect agriculture and consequently investment in agriculture equipment, general conditions are less than favourable. However, we see this as an opportunity to explore different ways of doing things and streamlining processes, to improve the company's performance. It is clear to us that our customers need speed, flexibility and exemplary service, and we work hard to achieve these. In recent times we have managed to significantly reduce lead times, which has great benefits for our customers and with production in Australia, we have the flexibility to accommodate customers' specific requirements.

In addition to greater flexibility for product specificity and reduced lead times, customers can be confident their fleets will run efficiently due to our comprehensive training and backup service team, workshop network and the Free First Service policy.

With these services and our comprehensive product portfolio, which includes the core brands of BPW, Ringfeder, Edbro, Cargo Floor and Transpec EBS, we can provide a complete product and service solution for our customers, rather than just individual products. This range supports the BPW Group's philosophy of being a system partner to the transport industry.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of the BPW Digest, and on behalf of the employees at BPW Transpec we wish you all a happy, prosperous and safe Christmas, New Year and summer break.

**Stefan Oelhafen**



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Time on the job can be the best educator when it comes to working out equipment solutions; all the more so when the people doing the job have some engineering ingenuity. Getting heavy equipment into some tight places is stock in trade for Burgundy, be it in the bush or at a highway bypass.

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We talk to the young engineer and trailer builder who took up the reins of the Trailux Horse Float agency in New Zealand.



## Welcome Grant Kemp!

On 1 April this year, Grant Kemp took over from David Sinclair as Manager – Queensland and Northern Territory. Out and about and meeting people from day one, Grant cites getting to know the team in the Brisbane office, the other offices and the customers as the best part so far.

Having worked previously at MaxiTRANS as National Sales Manager, Grant is familiar with the industry, and it was a keenness to remain in the transport industry, coupled with the quality and reputation of the BPW product and the opportunity for growth that drew him to the role. "Like all companies there are opportunities for growth and change. The product is already so good, but there are always things that can be done," he said.

He concedes the slowing market is a challenge at the moment, but is optimistic things will change. When asked about his hopes for the industry, Grant proffered, "people to start buying again. The industry is very strong and there are a lot of good people in good companies. I just hope we don't see any iconic builders or operators forced out of the industry because of economic conditions."

Over the next few years Grant is looking forward to working closely with customers to understand their needs and best ensure the product and service offering meets those needs.

Hailing from South Africa originally, Grant moved to Australia nine years ago seeking to build a new life for his young family.

"I love it here in Australia, I love Queensland," he says earnestly and



with pride. "I came over for a holiday before moving here and spent some time in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. I picked Brisbane because of the weather, and I'm so glad I did."

Describing BPW Transpec as innovative and service-focused, Grant is clearly happy with his new role. A self-proclaimed "open book," he gets to the point with brevity. A love of travel has taken him all around the world, with Canada being a standout favourite and when he's not at work you can find him boating, with his two daughters or supporting the Broncos or the Queensland Reds.



## Farewell David Sinclair

We offer our sincerest thanks and best wishes to David Sinclair who retired from full-time employment with BPW Transpec on 30 April this year after 30 years with the company. David started his career with BPW Transpec as an Assistant Product Manager in the Melbourne head office back in 1985. In 1986 he was appointed as Western Australian State Manager and after six years in that role David moved back east to Brisbane as the Queensland State Manager. Under David's guidance the Brisbane branch grew from a small office of three staff in 1992, to the current staff of 13; complete with a warehouse and workshop. Sales support for the Northern Territory was added to David's role in 2009.

We are fortunate David is continuing to work on ad hoc projects with BPW, ensuring his extensive market and product knowledge is still accessible. Currently David is working at the Auckland branch.

David, we wish you all the very best for a happy and healthy retirement, and hope you enjoy this next phase of your life.

**Above:** David Sinclair (3rd from left) with the staff at BPW Transpec's Brisbane office. (L-R) Evan McDonald, Chris Mannell, David Sinclair, Kerry Wood, Geoff Huddy, Russell Dagger, Todd Robertson, Daniel Stephenson, Peter Ellul, Matthew Burns and Greg Dainer.

**Not pictured:** Grant Kemp, Helene Ryder and Michael Dickinson



## Significant business milestones

*We offer our congratulations to the following companies for achieving so many years respectively in their businesses, and wish them all the best for many more years of success.*

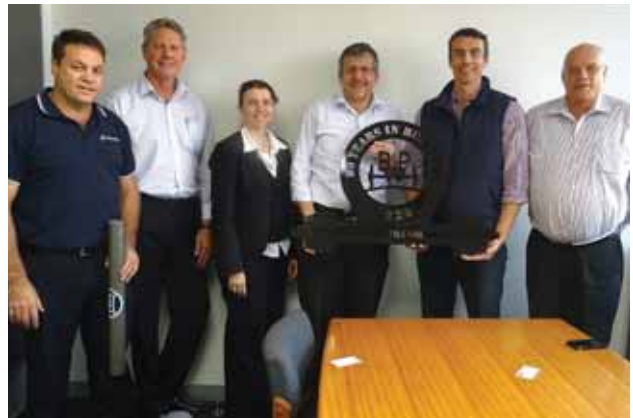
### SRT Logistics - 25 years

Right: (L-R) Jim Miller and Brent Miller (SRT Logistics) and Stefan Oelhafen (Joint Managing Director, BPW Transpec)



### Fibreglass Transport Equipment - 40 years

Above: (L-R) Marcus Reid (FTE) Stefan Oelhafen (Joint Managing Director, BPW Transpec), Grant Smyth (FTE) and Olivia Corrado-Micich (Joint Managing Director, BPW Transpec)



### Russell Transport - 90 years

Above: (L-R) Grant Kemp (Manager – QLD and NT, BPW Transpec) and Geoff Huddy (Product Consultant, BPW Transpec), Julie Russell (Russell Transport), Stefan Oelhafen (Joint Managing Director, BPW Transpec), Ken Russell and Phil Russell (Russell Transport)



## ANZAC Day trek to Kokoda

On ANZAC Day 2014, Matt Burns, Product Consultant in Brisbane, and three of his fellow former-RAEME/ADF (Royal Australian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers/Australian Defence Force) mates decided they'd trek Kokoda for ANZAC Day 2015 (100th anniversary of Gallipoli). After training for some months with a regime that comprised walking 30 kilometres Monday to Friday with his dogs, and climbing Mt Cootha and Mt Coolum most weekends, from April 17-26 Matt and his mates trekked the 96 kilometres from Owers' Corner to Kokoda.

Describing the ANZAC Day service at Isurava and meeting Kurt Fearnley OAM as the best parts, and the very wet and slippery mud as the most challenging part, Matt said he'd absolutely do it again, however he'd trek in the opposite direction. Well done Matt, what a great achievement!

Left: Matt Burns above Isurava



## Our youngest reader

Earlier in 2015, just after we'd gone to print with the previous issue of the Digest, we received an email from Neville. He had picked up the BPW Digest at a roadhouse in the Northern Territory and gave it to his grandson Flynn, who we believe to be our youngest reader. A trucking enthusiast, Flynn has started his own fleet and while it's not quite on BPW running gear, we're hoping he'll consider us in the future!



Our youngest reader, delighted with the pictures of trucks and trailers



## Kevin Adolphus – 25 years

Congratulations to Kevin Adolphus, Product Consultant in our Sydney office, for achieving 25 years working at BPW Transpec. Thank you Kevin, and we wish you all the best for your future years with the company.

Left: (L-R, back row) Dean Matthews, Peter Hogg, Brendan Attard, Nicholas Martin, Kevin Johnston, Scott Merriman and Wayne Koppman, and Kevin Adolphus and Sue Dumbrell in the front row.

## Congratulations Will!

This year, Production Planner, Will Dolley, travelled overseas to Asia and Europe to compete in senior level fencing championships. Competing in the Open Men's epee event, Will finished 44th out of 130 in the 2015 Asian Championships in Singapore in June, and 136th out of 265 in the 2015 World Championships in Moscow in July.

In epee the whole body is target, and whoever hits first gets the point. The other two events are foil and sabre. In foil the torso

and back are the target area, while in sabre it's the whole top half of the body.

This year alone, fencing has taken Will to Hungary, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Singapore and Russia. In Hungary he was fortunate to train with the current World Champion, Geza Imre and apart from the sheer hard work, said it was a great experience to train with a professional for three weeks. While he was in Germany, he also had the chance to visit BPW's head office, and described

that as a highlight of the trip.

Will has been fencing for more than 20 years, and has been travelling overseas to compete since 2001, including representing Australia in five world championships, he is on the Olympic Shadow Team, and has been ranked No. 1 in the country. To date, no Australian has won an Olympic medal in fencing but we're optimistic for 2016! Congratulations Will, we're all very proud of your achievements!



2015 World Championships in Moscow



2015 Asian Championships in Singapore



## Staff completing Cert IV

Nine BPW Transpec employees from our Assembly and Warehouse departments recently completed Certificate IV in 1) Competitive Systems and Practices and 2) Frontline Management. Certificate IV is a nationally recognised accreditation and will assist the participants in implementing business and team process improvements. Congratulations to everyone!

**Right:** The successful candidates were: (L-R) Sam Valentini, Matthew McCarthy, Misili Faamausili, Stephen Paddon, Chelsey Wiperi, Grant Dominiewski, Michael Iose. **Front:** Greg Knorr (Trainer from Rochdale) and Michelle Rickard (then National Supply Chain Manager) **Not pictured:** Shaun Smith and David Mortellaro



## A commitment to training

The importance of correct installation and maintenance of BPW products cannot be underestimated, and for this reason, Stephen du Toit, National Customer Service and Training Manager, travels around Australia for a significant proportion of each year to conduct training sessions on these, and other important issues. With topics ranging from installation, spare parts, EBS, troubleshooting, maintenance and even sales, he can construct and deliver training to suit your company's needs. As you'll see from the images, training doesn't always have to take place in a training room! Our mobile training trailer can be brought to your premises and customised training can be arranged.



1. Training at Toll



2. Staff from Krueger during training at our head office in Melbourne



3. EBS training at AJL in Tasmania



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4. Onsite at Harder Transport in Port Lincoln, SA



5. Onsite at Quinn in Port Lincoln, SA



6. EBS training at Butler's Mechanical Services in Port Augusta, SA



7. Training at CMV Truck & Bus with people from CMV, Gilbert's Transport, Craig Arthur Transport and an independent repairer.

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## Brisbane Truck Show and German Night



Once again, the Brisbane Truck Show was a standout event and attracted more than 33,000 visitors and 300 exhibitors over the four days. BPW Transpec used the opportunity to replace our old stand with a modern, fresh look that is more closely aligned with our, and BPW's strategy of being a System Partner to the industry.

The stand was designed to showcase the new axle display, which had all Transpec products including BPW (with axles, landing legs, air tank), Ringfeder, with the new 303AUS, shown for the first time in Brisbane,

Edbro, Cargo Floor, Vigia and EBS on the one display. Inspired by displays from BPW in Germany and BPW Transport Efficiency in New Zealand, the streamlined design allowed those who were interested to see all product variations easily and the layout encouraged customers to walk into the stand to look at the display.

For yet another year, BPW Transpec's German night was a great success. We thank everyone who joined us on the evening, and who visited the stand during the show.







Stefan Oelhafen and Olivia Corrado-Micich (Joint Managing Directors) with Ken Easter, winner of tickets to Germany to visit Hannover during the IAA 2016.





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## Agricultural Field Days

The key focus of BPW Transpec's presence at the agricultural field days we attended this year was to introduce BPW's new-to-Australia Hydro-Pneumatic Suspension. This suspension, available in Europe for 15 years, is ideal for agricultural vehicles with special roll stability requirements. Its high degree of equalisation between the axles ensures even load distribution. This system uses the oil supply from the tractor's hydraulics to activate the suspension. The oil moves from one cylinder to the other, ensuring the trailer remains level, even in hilly conditions. Available in braked and unbraked, the system comes pre-adjusted and can be pre-assembled for easy installation.

1. BPW Transpec's stand at Farmfest in Toowoomba, Queensland, in June.
2. John Sheehan (OZTEC) and Geoff Huddy (Product Consultant)
3. The BPW Transpec stand at AgQuip Field Days in Gunnedah, NSW, in August.
4. (L-R) Murray Gayski (Manager - WA), Aaron Moore (Product Consultant), Carmen Ohler (National Product Manager - Agricultural Equipment and BPW Spare Parts), Gabor Toth (Engineer, BPW Hungaria, Hungary) at Dowerin Field Days, WA.
5. BPW's Parabolic Spring Suspension with steering axle on display at Dowerin Field Days, WA in August.
6. Thanks to Elphinstone for showing our BPW walking beam suspension, equipped with a 3-point weighing system.



Above: The new-to-Australia BPW Agricultural Hydro-Pneumatic Suspension with single cylinder steering axle - on display at Farmfest.



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## AWRE

Kerry Wood (National Product Manager – Edbro and Cargo Floor) at the annual Australasian Waste and Recycling Expo in August, demonstrating the Cargo Floor product.



## LRTASA Conference

(L-R) Phil Ramfos (SCTEG), John Beer (LRTAV President), Peter Hart (Product Consultant), and Brian McArdle (McArdle Freight and ex-President LRTASA) at the Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of South Australia Annual Conference in June.



## Zagame Bike Ride

The 2015 Team Zagame – Ride around the Bay marked the third consecutive year a group of BPW Transpec employees, customers and suppliers has ridden the 130 kilometres from St Kilda to McCrae and back. On Sunday 11 October, the riders met for a 6:30am departure. Following Beach Road, then Nepean Highway the group was fortunate to have beautiful weather and a tail wind! Everyone on the team made it back safely and enjoyed a celebratory lunch with all the other riders. The ride raised \$10,000 for the Smith Family. Congratulations to all the participants and if you are interested in joining in next year please email [digest@bpwtranspec.com.au](mailto:digest@bpwtranspec.com.au) to register.



Team BPW Transpec. Back: (L-R) John Melling, Ed Lewis, Peter O'Malley. Front: Carmen Ohler, Will Dolley, Kerrie Willmot, Darrell Lamb, Ian Thomson, John Guzzardi.

## BulkTanker Day

Stephen du Toit presenting at the annual Bulk Tanker Day, organised by the NBTA on Wednesday 30 September.



# SNAPSHOT OF AN ICON

*Words by Mark Pearce*





It's said that life is a series of snapshots; personal moments that begin to make known the measure of a man. Whether Ray Scott inherited a family business empire or an exclusive estate is of no consequence. His working life has been a journey of two tales – from blue collar to badge of honour.

**B**orn in Strathalbyn, South Australia, Ray Scott arrived in Mount Gambier with his parents when he was just two years old. During his early childhood, Ray would play in the driveway of his Moole Street home where all the trucks were being repaired.

"I was small enough to fit under a trailer deck, so from the time I could walk the old man had me standing on a crate underneath holding bolts in place while he and his mates assembled the decks. It was part of life," recalls Ray, Managing Director of the Ray Scott Group.

Ray was ten years old at the time when his father, the late Allan Scott, best known as 'the grandfather of Mount Gambier', bought his first trailer fitted with a BPW single point suspension. That trailer became the beginning of a family empire, known back then as Scott's Livestock Transport.

"Everyone only had 38-foot single axle bogies in those days. We had one that had a single point BPW suspension and we just kept running it; you couldn't wear it out," he laughs.

Ray concedes the biggest transformation in the road transport game he's seen has been equipment innovation. From single drives to bogie trailers, vacuum brakes and the introduction of beam trailers and air suspensions.

"Every trailer these days is carting at least three times more and three times the distance. We can now run out of here with 63 bullocks on a B-double, and I've got to admit, the air suspensions make a huge difference to the cattle after they're unloaded and get their feet back on the ground," claims Ray.

When he left school at the age of seventeen, Ray began his transport career driving a



tray truck around Mount Gambier, but shortly after he turned 21, life and the family business changed dramatically. Ray headed north to drive tankers in Darwin while Scott's Transport Industries emerged as a sleeping giant; in 1965 the company started operating out of Adelaide, carting black oil from Port Stanvac to Port Adelaide and the Torrens Island smelter. The Scott's tanker fleet quickly grew from that point on, and so too did Ray's immediate family.

Ray and his wife, Jill brought up their son Ash, and two daughters Pru and Libby, who have all since helped extend the family, making Ray a grandfather of seven.

Ash, a qualified diesel mechanic by trade, has spent much of his working life at the Scott's business, amassing knowledge as he moved from operations to managing the depot. Now as Fleet Manager, he looks after the logistics of 300 prime movers and 1,200

trailing pieces of equipment.

"My grandfather wanted me to get involved so I'm the third generation to get to know every corner of the business. Our kids aren't quite old enough yet, but they will have the same opportunity if they want it," says Ash.

The Ray Scott Group, which Ray owns and manages independently, is a sideline livestock business and separate to the main Scott's division, which carts freight and fuel. Ray has kept all the Queensland farming businesses in the family, which he has expanded considerably because ultimately, you can't stop a man getting away from what's in his blood. He has carried on the livestock cartage and family pastoral properties and his impact on the framework of business has been direct and immediate. He began with one B-double that he used to drive to Queensland, and in addition he purchased another B-double, then another two.

# SNAPSHOT OF AN ICON

"I don't know how it's happened but four B-doubles has gone to ten B-doubles and three road trains and I don't know where it all went wrong..." he jokes, making light of the choices he's made and goals achieved.

Overall the Ray Scott Group is made up of twelve Kenworths, eight Western Stars and one Iveco. Every livestock trailer they own is fitted with BPW axles and suspensions as well as a number of dollies they've built out of their workshop in their new Mount Gambier premises.

"Anything for bush work and there's only one set of axles and suspensions as far as I'm concerned, and that's BPW. We can't afford to run anything else," declares Ray.

Apart from having easy access to parts, Ray is adamant that it's all about brand and back-up support.

"I know where the steel comes from and I've

got faith in the engineering. And I've had a 100 percent support forever from BPW Transpec."

Ray's sideline business was never really meant to expand but the company now employs a dozen staff on the ground, plus twenty drivers, and by the time you add up all the farmers managing 18,000 cattle at any one stage, they've got around sixty organised employees closely handling all the elements.

Although he loves his livestock, Ray also has passions outside of the business, namely motor sport and motor homes. He's got permanent tickets to the Indy 500 in the USA as well as Sprint car fixtures and a home away from home located in Clayton, about thirty miles south of the track, where he travels the Indiana freeways without restriction in his 45-foot motor home fitted

**"...BELIEVE IN YOUR CONSISTENCY OF THOUGHT ALL THE WAY THROUGH LIFE, BECAUSE CONSISTENCY IS STABILITY."** RAY SCOTT







Ray Scott with son Ash Scott

with a 600 Signature series. "It goes pretty well," he says. There's no over-taking Ray.

Wherever Ray travels, he's fortunate enough to be well looked after. In September 2015 he was invited to visit the Thailand Mitsubishi factory and was surprised to discover that a developing nation could build transport equipment almost second to none. But the issue that dawned on him the most – and one which he's found hard to accept from that point forward – is the difference in working cultures.

"The way people work over there and what they put into their work is unbelievable. Our industry in Australia is unique and you've got to have a special breed of person to drive an interstate truck, but as a nation we really have to lift our pride and [our] 'wanting to exist'." He clears his throat and continues...

"There are a lot of interesting things happening here and a lot of possibilities opening up, but at the same time we have a new generation addicted to iPads and iPods that have never done a hard working day in

their life and the moment they turn 18, they get given a Commodore and all this!"

Ray is a playful, funny and talkative man, and doesn't miss an opportunity to land a jibe. However, pride and dignity is something he revels in. This is no more apparent that when he was inducted into the National Road Transport Hall of Fame in 2013. It was a tumultuous year for Ray. Everything had turned for the worse, until he received the badge of honour.

"That year I was waiting to have treatment for cancer. I got rolled by a bullock and couldn't walk properly; everything had gone wrong. I was inducted to the Hall of Fame and had my radiation treatment, and that was the turning point. Everything started to become good again."

As a result of Ray's life-time involvement and contribution to the Australian transport industry, Liz Martin, Director of the Hall of Fame, phoned Ray to ask if he was prepared to give financial advice to the organisation.


"Liz rang me one evening and said: 'by the way, you're on the board too!' So I've helped

them out where I can and it's been a tonne of fun."

As to the aim of how to be truly representative of the industry, Ray provided this piece of advice...

"You gotta keep up with the times. You have to live it and be there so people can always find you. I still haven't grown up so I'd say this... believe in your consistency of thought all the way through life, because consistency is stability."

Over the next decade, the transport industry will face a significant transition in leadership; there is a risk that the talent of this leadership will be lost unless it can harvest the wisdom and knowledge of legendary leaders like Ray Scott. Now more than ever, young executives need access to icons to enable their confidence to grow and to take leadership and responsibility for the economic wellbeing of the industry.

Passing on that knowledge and the 'how to' of their achievements to emerging leaders will no doubt be one of Ray's greatest legacies. 

# IT CAN BE A BRUTAL BUSINESS

**The one in which our intrepid correspondent goes almost waist deep in waste for the story.**

*Words and photographs by Mike Isle*





**W**ell, all we can say is, “this is bleak.” We are standing on an exposed ridge, the wind and rain cutting through us, looking at countless tonnes of rubbish excreted and extracted from New Zealand’s largest city. The wind and rain are a blessing, apparently. Without them the dust and the smell would be much worse. Almost unbearable unless you are used to working here.

The writer is not. The man standing next to him, making the statement, is.

Howard Wood has been in the rubbish business for a quarter of a century, though he would be the last to call his business, or what we are standing in, rubbish. It is waste, recyclables: and where we are standing is not a rubbish tip, it is a landfill.

We have to get it right.

Howard and his business partner Malcolm McLachlan pioneered Materials Recovery

Facilities (MRF) operations in New Zealand, known in the industry as Murphs in the early 1990s prior to setting up M & H Contractors.

M & H stands for Malcolm and Howard—the use of first names is a personable touch.

They started the company in 1992 after Howard’s bin collection company was purchased by American giant Wastecare, later to be enfolded into Waste Management.

Unbroken in all those years, their Wastecare/Waste Management contract remains the longest and most resilient in the industry.

The two men have complementary skills: Howard, a self-confessed “corporate”, handles the commercial side; Malcolm, an erstwhile digger driver, handles the operational side.

Their fleet comprises 15 truck and trailer units, with a mix of moving floors and bulk tippers, together with ten excavators and loaders set up specifically for waste operations.

Factor in back up trailers, workshop service vehicles and company utes, and the fleet list is substantial, just like the waste volumes to be moved every day.

In Transfleet Trailers, Howard has found what he describes as the perfect trailer and body builder. Transfleet has built two of their moving floor trailers, refurbished another and fitted out three tractor units.

Specifying is a shared process. The two companies confer closely in key areas such as hydraulics (heavy duty) and dual controls (complex).

The preferred running gear is BPW.





## IT CAN BE A BRUTAL BUSINESS

Both companies agree there are special and unique challenges in building and specifying truck and trailer units for M & H Contractors.

Waste collection, processing and disposal is often a tricky and complex business—hard on trucks, men and processes.

M & H processes waste collected from companies, demolition and construction sites. They don't "do" residential or roadside collections. Truckloads of waste are tipped on to the floors of the company's transfer stations.

Recyclables are then extracted and sold. Whilst that is beneficial to the environment

and is applauded by environmentalists, the commercially minded Howard sees it in economic terms.

There is money in rubbish.

The waste that is left is further divided to ensure it ends up in the most appropriate landfill, both environmentally and economically.

At this point, the uninformed observer would think waste—divided or not—it still just waste, and it matters little which of the company's truck and trailer units carts it to the appropriate landfill.

However, that is where the complexity comes in. One truck does not fit all.

M & H Contractors' trucks and trailers operate in a harsh environment, as do the men who drive them.

We saw that on our exposed ridge-line.

So the trailers are built tough. They are big and solid. Often suspension suffers and not only because of the terrain and weight—diggers don't just load the loads, they pound them down to gain optimal weight per load and the suspension has to stand up to brutal treatment.

That is why it is BPW.

Tare weight is often sacrificed for resilience.

But not always. Some loads are not as corrosive or heavy as others and a lighter





trailer will suffice. That's Malcolm's call.

It is usually just a short haul to the landfill, but there a second set of challenges arise. Landfills by their nature, and because of nature, are either dustbowls or a trailer will be axle-deep in mud. There seems to be no common or firm ground. Either way, the drivers know they have to get in and get unloaded as quickly as possible, because there is about to be a long and unproductive delay—the wash bay.

There is nothing unreasonable about the wash bay, says Howard. He understands no central health authority or council can countenance a truck and trailer leaving a landfill traipsing half the landfill down a state highway. But cleaning those trucks takes a substantial amount of downtime and has to be factored into the operational economies of business.

So, does the economy. Howard makes the interesting comment: waste is an accurate business barometer. In 2008, when New Zealand's economy was going through one of its down periods, the

amount of waste reduced by 30%.

Today, the economy and the attendant waste have been more than restored and the waste industry's infrastructure is struggling to cope.

But coping they are.

Up here on our bleak ridge, M & H Contractors has no fewer than three trucks and a fourth arrives as we prepare to leave. That's almost a third of the fleet and it doesn't go unnoticed a third of the fleet also equates to a third of the company's cartage operation—disposal, after collection and processing.

That points to M & H Contractors being a well-organised, well-run company.

No wastage. 🗑️

*Editorial note: It is pertinent to point out the interview for this story—a relatively long interview—was conducted over coffee at a café, not at the landfill. BPW Digest acknowledges and appreciates Howard Wood's thoughtfulness.*



Howard Wood

M & H Contractors' rigs onsite at Redvale Energy Park and Landfill in Auckland



# HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN

In response to global herbicide resistance, the latest version of the Harrington® Seed Destructor – built by De Bruin Engineering – is designed to destroy 95 percent of weed seeds captured in the harvest operation, intercepting the annual weed seeds returning to the seed bank in broad-acre cropping.

*Words by Mark Pearce*



Jamie McDonald – Engineering Manager, De Bruin Engineering Ltd

When news first broke in 2012 of the Harrington® Seed Destructor, the response from grain growers was attention grabbing to say the least.

Fostering the new innovation, West Australian farmer Ray Harrington developed the 5-tonne machine to control weed seeds returning to the seed bank during harvest.

The idea came out of necessity when his crops started becoming herbicide resistant. Ray looked at alternatives for a mechanical method to combat the weed seed warfare, and eventually came up with a cage mill design system that crushes the weed seeds as they are collected and removes them from the machine header.

The Grains Research and Development





Corporation supported Ray's prototype design and developed it further to commercialisation stage. The government body tendered out the licence and De Bruin Engineering was eventually awarded the exclusive worldwide licence to build the machine.

To date, De Bruin Engineering Ltd has built three original Harrington® Seed Destructor prototypes as well as a total of nine purchased units.

"The first two units rolled out in 2012 and then in 2014 we manufactured five more. Two units sold to America, another was purchased by a Canadian government body, and the others have been sold to farmers in Western Australia," explains Jamie McDonald, De Bruin Engineering Manager.

The De Bruin Engineering history dates back some 45 years when the company (originally named Timber Tech Engineering) was orientated towards saw milling and wood chipping. In 2008 Adrian de Bruin purchased the company and De Bruin Engineering was formed, which is now part of a group of companies owned by the de Bruin family. Since then, the company has diversified into mobile plant equipment and agriculture.

"We're pushing towards producing more and more products in the agricultural industry and the Harrington® Seed Destructor is one of those products that's hopefully going to lead us to a semi production line to help increase our product range," says Jamie.

McDonald, who has been an integral part

of De Bruin's success for a dozen years, trouble-shoots and commissions all projects inside the company, located at Mount Gambier. He also plays a major role in the company to design and deliver world-class technology for its customers.

"Engineering solutions is our history and reputation. Customers come to us and want the whole package, so we provide entire turnkey project design, right through to construction, commissioning and supply of products. We don't build equipment unless it's reliable and robust, and the seed destructor is a great example of that," says McDonald.

The farmer understands that the paddock is one of dirtiest places in the agriculture environment. Throughout the harvest



period, many farmers operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and during this time the De Bruin-built seed destructors are busy working under the high duress of the dust, the stubble and the grain which tests the precision and reliability of everything underneath the unit.

BPW supplied the nine-stud, non-brake stub axles for the original series machine, which is fitted to all nine units currently working in the field.

De Bruin modified the axles to obtain adjustable tracking and also fitted a locally sourced spring suspension to those units. However, when the updated seed destructor series is released, De Bruin will have the full suspension, axle and adjustable track kit fitted from BPW.

McDonald explains...

"Now that the BPW agricultural range has increased, there are more products available here in Australia. So instead of us building it all and costing us more money, we want to purchase the full BPW system (instead of just components) and put it all underneath our machine."

While the seed destructor kills seeds, the relationship between BPW and De Bruin Engineering keeps growing.

"When we buy in for our own design we always look for a well-known brand with a reputation like BPW. And when our product range grows, which is looking more and more likely, we will stick with the same brand because it's about the strong relationship we've already got."

Market uptake of the seed destructor was slow in its initial stages, but this was mainly due to the fact that it takes around three years before the farmer can see a true result of weed seed elimination in the cropping system. Remarkable results have seen ramped-up enquiries and new orders for the next series design as De Bruin slates their production for the 2016 harvest season.

New features for the latest series include a Cummins 149kW industrial engine with full hydraulic drive, two rear rotating spreaders, a simplified, dust-proof engine enclosure, and a heavier duty cage mill. As a consequence, all these improvements will help to destroy at least 95 percent of annual weed seeds, offering more financial savings for the farmer.


## HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN





“What this means is that this is now the foundation stone for a regional business to build an internationally sold product,” says McDonald.

This year De Bruin Engineering was recognised with an Edison Award™, for innovative agricultural design, which is one of the highest accolades a company can receive in the name of human-centered design, innovation and business success.

As a result of all of this, there is a new shift towards the mechanised, agricultural weed seed solution and a future prosperity to deliver enormous benefits for the farmer, the working town of Mount Gambier, as well as De Bruin Engineering and its long-term suppliers. 

The Harrington® Seed Destructor in the field at harvest crushing, collecting and destroying the weed seeds.



**WHILE THE SEED DESTROYER IS VITAL TO THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY SO TO IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BPW AND DE BRUIN ENGINEERING.**



The next HSDs will be built with a Cummins 149kW industrial engine with full hydraulic drive, as well as two rear rotating spreaders.



# FIELD OF VISION

Moreland Holdings has established its market position in the forestry sector, built on five decades of harvesting and haulage in which three sons have carried on their parents' vision: a commitment to service, innovation and customer satisfaction.

*Words and photographs by Mark Pearce*







Colin and Raylee Moreland began their working life in the transport industry, acquiring an earth-moving business in Nelson on the South Island of New Zealand.

They soon founded a small trucking business, transporting logs in the 1970s, and quickly expanded with three log trucks and an excavator.

After almost fifteen years of trucking, Colin foresaw opportunities for his family 'across the ditch'. So in 1980, Colin and Raylee informed their three sons, Kelvin, David and Craig, of the momentous plan to move. The Moreland family said their goodbyes to their friends and sold up everything; they were on their way to the Tea Gardens

region of New South Wales to salvage timber.

"I did one year of schooling when we came to Australia and then went straight into the family business," says Craig, youngest brother and now General Manager of Moreland Holdings Pty Ltd.

The Moreland brothers all started working together in 1981, driving log trucks and logging hardwood. They purchased their own skidder and for a while their business was booming within the New South Wales pine plantation sector. But the local plantation eventually exhausted, and then plans took a turn when the Ash Wednesday bushfires raged throughout



: Kelvin, Craig and David Moreland



Kennedy B-double fitted with BPW Airlight II suspension, axles, and disc brakes.



## FIELD OF VISION



Mark Telford,  
Workshop Manager

western Victoria and South Australia, destroying many cultivated areas. Like many contractors in the forestry industry, the Morelands ventured to Mount Gambier during that sweltering summer of 1983 for the major fire salvage operation.

"Everyone from everywhere came here to log. When we arrived, we were running our skidders and loaders we brought down with us. Once the clean-up was complete – about nine months later – we started a first thinning operation and we haven't left," says eldest brother Kelvin, Transport Manager of Moreland Holdings.

At that time the industry was fast moving to mechanised harvesting, so Colin decided to invest in a couple of tree harvesters to keep up with industry developments.

"We were all operators back then. The harvesters in those days had complicated hydraulics. In truth, they were unreliable and weren't very efficient at all. But we got through that patch and as the company grew, we all had to get off the operating gear and start being managers," laughs David, Forest Operations Manager.

Despite the trials and tribulations with early 1980s technology, Moreland Holdings has been a leader in the Mount Gambier region. Some innovations include the introduction of single grip harvester with a cut to length system, folding skeletal trailer with on-board scale system, and in 1989, Morelands introduced the first B-double log units, which were Elphinstone folding B-double trailers.

Forest owners have been benefactors of Moreland's 'innovative firsts', which has helped squeeze efficiencies out of their equipment and cultivate new levels of reliability.

"Reliability of equipment is a big part of our company vision and we pride ourselves on it. We've always had a big focus on modern, premium equipment, which means we now run most of our rigs on twin shifts 24/7. That creates more production, it fuels our fire, and makes a big difference to our customers," says Kelvin.

The rigs include three brand new sets of Kennedy B-doubles. All three sets are fitted with BPW Airlight II suspensions and disc





## **“EVERYONE FROM EVERYWHERE CAME HERE TO LOG... (DURING THE 1983 ASH WEDNESDAY BUSHFIRES)... AND WE HAVEN'T LEFT.”**

**KELVIN MORELAND.**

brakes, which have recently been purchased to help Morelands haul 800,000 tonne per year of pine and blue gum for companies like OneFortyOne, Hancock Victorian plantations, South West Fibre, Timberlands and Midway.

With a 60-plus heavy haulage trailer fleet, Morelands works out of a well-equipped onsite workshop where they complete their own in-house wheel alignments and tyre fitting to keep the operation on target. They run a tight ship with fourteen in their maintenance crew, including bush mechanics, led by Workshop Manager, Mark Telford.

“We’ve got 75 percent of our trailers here on BPW including all our Elphinstone trailers. It’s our suspension of choice because of the harsh on-and-off road conditions we’re up against. But we have a lot less maintenance on those [BPW] trailers, compared to some other suspensions in our fleet. We’ve gone to newer discs so there’s no greasing to worry about and we can do rebuilds on the BPWs in one day rather than pulling trailers off the road for four days at a time,” explains Mark.

One of the new Kennedy B-double timber trailers is operated by 61-year-old driver Graham ‘Meggsy’ O’Day, who feels the trailers are standing up well and that “it’s one of the flashier units” he’s driven for a long time.

“We do a lot of off-road these days with the blue gums. Every day you’re in the bush and some of it’s pretty steep. With our sort of weather, it can turn into a sloppy and boggy environment pretty quickly. Even the main roads out here are very harsh compared to how they used to be, but the trailers pull up a lot squarer with disc; they’re just magic!” says Meggsy.

Meggsy regularly carts some 68.5 tonne gross loads from the Noolook plantation in Robe (150 kilometres north of Mount Gambier), and drops it off to Portland for the export market. He also does trips to Colac in Victoria which is a 880 kilometre round trip and in and around the Mount Gambier district to the local saw mills.

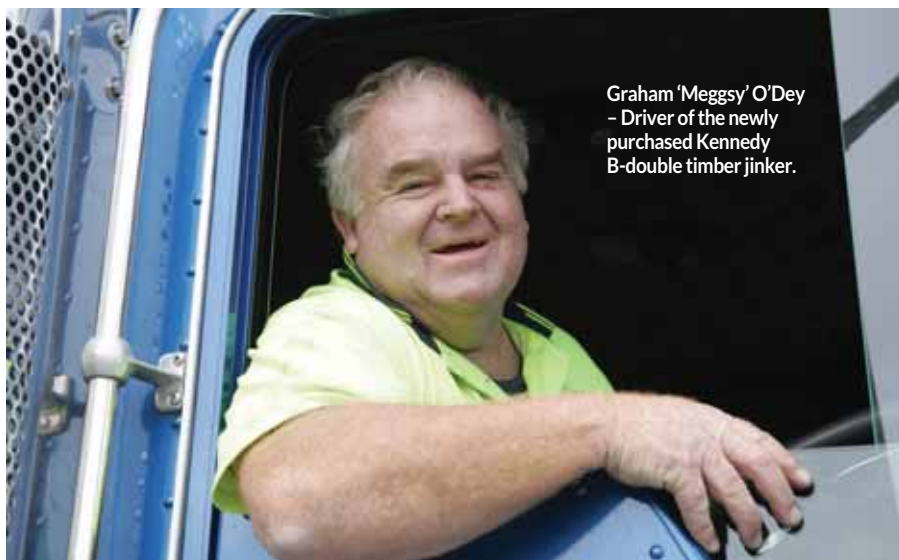
The local pine plantation industry has a promising future; in the 2013 calendar year, 3.4 million pine tree seedlings were planted across 2,000 hectares in the Green Triangle plantations and with the rise in log sales, David expects the logging will only expand in the area.

“Pine sales have increased in volume of logs being harvested and that has a flow-on effect to businesses like ours, but the blue gum chipping and export overtook pine logging about three years ago and it’s now the biggest industry. The industry exports nearly a million tonne a month in the district, and that’s really got things kicking along.

The original vision of Colin and Raylee – that the Moreland family would have the opportunity for a bright and ambitious future – has been accomplished for their sons.

“Honesty and good service is what stemmed back from Colin basically. He was always big on quality of service to customers and had a focus to cater for their extra needs. He thrived on it, and that’s what we continually strive to do,” concludes Craig.

With quality at the forefront of their business and genuine good nature ingrained in the family blood, the Moreland brothers have set themselves up to have a profound influence on the pine and blue gum harvesting and haulage for the new world ahead. 



**Graham 'Meggsy' O'Dey**  
– Driver of the newly  
purchased Kennedy  
B-double timber jinker.



# SLIDING SIDES: A GROWING SUCCESS STORY

*Words and photographs by Mike Isle*





## Sliding side configuration has crossed the Tasman and been put to work in a chilling way.

**A**t present they represent just fewer than 30 percent of T&G's (formerly Turners & Growers) 55-strong truck and trailer fleet, but that percentage proportion is growing rapidly.

The T&G-commissioned, MaxiTRANS-built Slide-A-Side configured truck and trailer units are the future, says Allan Nagy, Regional Manager for T&G's transport operation.

So far T&G has put 11 on the road, another three are about to arrive.

Allan says the idea to invest in sliding sides came when visiting MaxiTRANS intending to commission new trailers.

T&G, which specialises in moving chilled produce from the grower to the retailer, initially settled on curtain siders.

Allan says carrying chilled fruit and vegetables is a delicate balancing operation between finite temperature requirements and operator procedures. A curtain sider's ease of access and egress, and its relatively low tare weight were all qualities in its favour.

However, side loading, whilst clearly superior to rear loading, still had substantial operator involvement. And, as Allan points out, at times T&G's trailers are loaded at the farm gate and loaded by the driver alone.

Even so, curtain siders remained the best configuration on offer in New Zealand at the time.

But that was not the case in Australia.

MaxiTRANS in Australia had developed a different solution—one that offered better insulation qualities, quicker loading and unloading and 'fail-proof' operator control for chilled produce transportation.

It came in the form of the Maxi-CUBE Slide-A-Side side loading rigid wall van.

It seemed a classic combination: the insulation qualities of rigid walls combined with the access advantage of curtain siders.







# SLIDING SIDES: A GROWING SUCCESS STORY

**“WE ARE NOT SCARED TO HAVE A GO AT SOMETHING WHICH IS NEW AND CUTTING EDGE TO MAINTAIN OUR POINT OF DIFFERENCE.”**



The only trade off? A slight increase in tare weight.

Allan Nagy liked the principle but wasn't completely sold. T&G decided to test the configuration on a couple of quads he had on the road at the time.

It worked.

In late 2014, T&G commissioned 14 fully-fitted Slide-A-Side truck and trailer units.

By July 2015 MaxiTRANS had 11 of them on the road, all truck and five axle full trailer configurations fitted with BPW 19.5 dual wheeled axle sets with disc brakes and air suspension. Walls, ceiling and floors are fully insulated to maintain a constant temperature of minus 5 degrees Celcius; two sliding doors per side for the truck body and three for the trailer. Each door is moved up and down pneumatically by air actuators, and the lateral movement on extruded aluminium rails is so smooth it is literally finger-tip control.

It is the easiest single person operation imaginable, Allan says.

The transition has been a success on all measurable levels, not the least being resilience.

Allan notes the first of the units to receive the Slide-A-Side configuration—the quads—are now three years old, have travelled 500,000 kilometres, and have delivered countless loads.

None has had (or been) a problem, he says.


Despite the success, Allan Nagy says he and T&G are not finished.

The evolution of the initial quads and then the truck and trailer units was a close collaboration between MaxiTRANS, T&G and heavy vehicle managers TR Group.

That continues as the companies collectively hone the technology.

But the driving force is T&G and its cornerstone operational philosophy. From its fruition as an Auckland fruit and flower shop in 1897 to the global giant and New Zealand corporate icon it is today, the company has always investigated and utilised the latest technology and options to improve its service to customers and industry needs.

Allan Nagy sums it up, “We are in the growing business and we need to grow and change with the business. Our focus is on today and tomorrow. And that is the way we have approached the transition to sliding sides.

“We are not scared to have a go at something which is new and cutting edge to maintain our point of difference.” 

**Left: Allan Nagy, T&G's Regional Manager (Transport).**

**The lateral movement on extruded aluminium rails is so smooth it is literally finger-tip control.**



# STEADY AS A



**A steering widener trailer offers Digwright the best of both worlds in high-frequency heavy haulage.**

*Words and photographs by Emily Weekes*

**A**ndrew Wright is all too familiar with the perils of piloting heavy loads through residential streets, around tight corners and in and out of cul de sacs.

His business, Digwright specialises in bulk earthworks, civil contracting and heavy haulage in South East Queensland and, sometimes, New South Wales.

In 2004, Andrew and his father started Digwright as a plant hire company for heavy equipment. Since then, the business has grown from one excavator to thirty-two.

With 34 staff and an equal number of heavy pieces of equipment, Digwright has grown steadily over the past decade, and with it, new demands.

The recent addition of a Drake steering widener trailer has meant that Digwright is now able to service customers faster and more often than ever before.

For Andrew, it's been a no brainer that has "more than paid for itself."

"We needed to get our own trailer because we weren't able to get machines moved on



# ROCK



time," explains Andrew. "And it was costing us a lot to move equipment."

"We're much more versatile now, having our own float to move machines when we need to, and we're doing other contractors' work when we're not moving our own."

The decision to purchase a trailer came out of frustration at not being able to get

machines moved on time, as well as the added cost of moving equipment.

"It's given us a lot more up time with our fleet," says Andrew. "Being able to move machines between sites in shorter periods, is better for our bottom line, rather than waiting for other people to come and get us."

"It's given us more control. If a client calls up and needs our equipment we can have it on the road and on site working that day."

The trailer has been on the road for 12 months, moving high frequency heavy loads, almost every day. Typically, it travels 1,000 kilometres either side of Brisbane, traversing tricky territory along the way.



# STEADY AS A ROCK



"The area we're working in, it's not always highways," says Andrew. "We're in and out of subdivisions, estates and pokey roads, around the Gold Coast and Brisbane."

It's terrain that required a strategic set of specifications. Andrew decided on a Drake trailer with steerable BPW axles and BPW/Drake hydraulic suspension.

"If we didn't have steerable axles we'd have real trouble getting that trailer in," explains Andrew. "We'd spend a lot of time replacing road signs too."

Manoeuvrability, especially with a 13-metre deck, is essential.

L-R: Ian Peterson, driver, with Andrew Wright, Managing Director.



## IF WE DIDN'T HAVE STEERABLE AXLES WE'D HAVE REAL TROUBLE GETTING THAT TRAILER IN. WE'D SPEND A LOT OF TIME REPLACING ROAD SIGNS TOO.



"If we're moving scrapers through residential streets we need the back to follow us around, otherwise the tyres will get damaged and there's a lot of carnage."

The trailer has a composite, hybrid steering widener: the front two axles widen and the back two stay on the same gauge. "This gives us more stability, because those two front axles are at full width, so we're not rocking and rolling all over the road."

"It's the best of both worlds in many ways," says Andrew.

Choosing a Drake trailer with BPW axles was easy. "It's a quality product from front to back," says Andrew. "It's a standard that others try to meet."


"We expect longer intervals between

maintenance, due to higher quality parts and specifications, which saves us money and is easier from an operational perspective. If we don't have to check our gear as often, there's less down time."

There's only one driver, Ian Petersen.

"That's why it's still in good condition," says Andrew, smiling. "I employed Ian because he's pulled a lot of trailers and knows the benefits of a good set up."

As a medium-sized business, Digwright often works with competitors in the area, helping out when needed, knowing they can call on others if they run into a bind.

"Some of us have equipment that others don't," says Andrew. "Even though we're competing with each other, wherever you can help out, you do." 

"I feel pretty privileged to be asked to come and work for Digwright," says Ian. "I've been driving all my working life and driving low loaders on and off since 1998."

Ian takes out a photo of him driving the trailer for the first time. "I brought it home. We got it back here and then had to wait for permits!" he says.

Driving a low load is a challenge most of the time, especially when getting machines onsite. Usually the truck is wide, so there's a lot more to think about.

"You can't just drive down the road, although those trips are very nice," Ian says, laughing. After all, the trailer is just less than 25 metres long when including the dolly.

"This particular trailer has rear steer axles, which makes it a lot easier to get into suburban streets," says Ian, "whereas if you have a trailer without the rear steer axles they tend to drag and you don't get the turning circle that you need."

The trailer deck widens to 3.5 metres wide, and the front two axles widen with the decks.

"This stops the trailer rocking when we have wide loads," he explains. "This trailer gives us much more stability."

As for manoeuvring the residential streets of Queensland, Ian says it's an art – but it's a learnt art.

"It's a big learning curve driving trucks," says Ian. "If you're not learning you're doing something wrong."





# MAINTENANCE MATTERS

*Words and photographs  
by Mark Pearce*

**A savvy transport maintenance manager can implement improvements to vehicle and equipment performance, measuring what matters most – safety and financial benefits. Tony Hardman highlights this through data-driven decisions and critical insight.**



**Tony Hardman, Workshop Manager  
– South West Freight**

**I**n 2013, South West Freight Workshop Manager, Tony Hardman, was a finalist for the Craig Roseneder Award, which recognises technical and maintenance excellence in the workshop.

The award, named in honour of the late Craig Roseneder who was devoted to the development of a safer road transport industry, is a prestigious nation-wide prize. To be chosen in the top three finalists across Australia is a significant accomplishment, though Hardman is quick to highlight the work the whole South West team has done in providing him the platform to deliver.

“It was an honour to be recognised for what you’re doing, but it’s a team effort. I get to run around here implementing procedures but that’s based on close communication with the drivers, the operations team and management

as well the workshop crew. It’s about having fun together, improving systems to make things safer and better, it’s what we all work towards,” declares Hardman.

Hardman and his maintenance team run the South West Freight commercial workshop from their Graham Road premises in Mt Gambier. There’s vast diversity in the fleet, comprising of 40 prime movers and 90 trailers made up of drop decks, extendables, flat tops, and both single and B-double tautliners. Hardman’s whole focus is about working in line with the South West motto: “safety works first”.

“It becomes a bit of a passion when you’ve built regimes from scratch. For me it’s about setting up that regime around safety and cost benefits and then it’s about fine-tuning it. We carry dangerous goods (packaged and bulk) so



we need to maintain high standards,” says Hardman.

Measuring the key facts and figures of incidents, performance and equipment repairs so as to achieve continuous improvements has been a prime justification for Hardman to purchase appropriate trailing equipment. Sifting through recent data sheets at his desk and cross-checking statistics on his computer, Hardman confirms the minimal maintenance required of their BPW gear.

“We get four times better braking life on our ECO Plus drum brakes in terms of service. They’re sitting at a million plus kilometres before change over. It’s a massive difference compared to our older fleet that isn’t fitted with BPW,” claims Hardman.

South West Freight recently invested

and they’ve been acquiring more and more product over the last few years, with longevity being a priority in the purchase decision. As a result, more than half the South West trailer fleet is now equipped with BPW axles and suspensions.

“BPW definitely makes a difference to the bottom line because we don’t have to turn our trailers over; they’re in for the long haul. It’s about being open to some of these insights which means setting aside any preconceptions about initial cost outlay.”

Equally vital to this view is having freight arrive on time safely. Transport today is a risk-exposed industry and preventative maintenance is crucial to avoid any unnecessary breakdowns so as to keep the fleet flowing. This responsibility falls to the workshop manager, and Hardman – despite

medium rigids.

“I was born and bred in the small town of Deniliquin (New South Wales). I’ve been a mechanic all my life. I did my apprenticeship and worked with Dad in the general-purpose workshop for a few years and that’s where I learnt early on in life (since everyone knows everyone in a small town) to fix it properly the first time.”

Hardman later moved into heavy vehicle mechanics, where he was employed with local repairer [Hussey repairs] for a couple of years before moving on to Booth Transport as workshop supervisor where he stayed for seven years gaining a lot of fleet experience. When he became a father it was a natural progression to move to a bigger town like Mount Gambier and take on greater responsibility. It’s ten years since he



One of two new B-double units equipped with BPW ECO Plus drum brakes, axles and suspensions.

in B-double and single trailers all fitted with BPW axles and suspensions for their Linehaul fleet, which travel between Mt Gambier, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. Accordingly, Hardman decided to move over to genuine BPW synthetic bearing grease (Eco Li Plus), which is now part and parcel of the ECO Plus hub units.

“Since we’ve gone over to synthetic grease we’ve monitored things closely. We don’t need to renew the grease until a brake reline which is usually around the million kilometre mark. Bearings only need to be checked every second service and it makes adjustments easy. The servicing times are a lot faster. So the turnover is a lot faster,” explains Hardman.

South West has stuck firmly with BPW

his surname – is a caring man by nature. You can hear it in his voice...

“It’s all about communication to get safety issues resolved. I’m there always trying to keep the drivers happy with niggly repairs. We’ve got a good bunch of blokes and that makes everything a whole lot easier. The other side of things is by getting hold of new quality gear. Having BPW axles and suspension, the data speaks for itself; we’re going to be three to four times better off with that equipment when it comes to any issues.”

Hardman has always had an intuitive understanding of mechanics. He began his working life by following in the footsteps of his father, where he shaped his career by toiling away on light automotive and

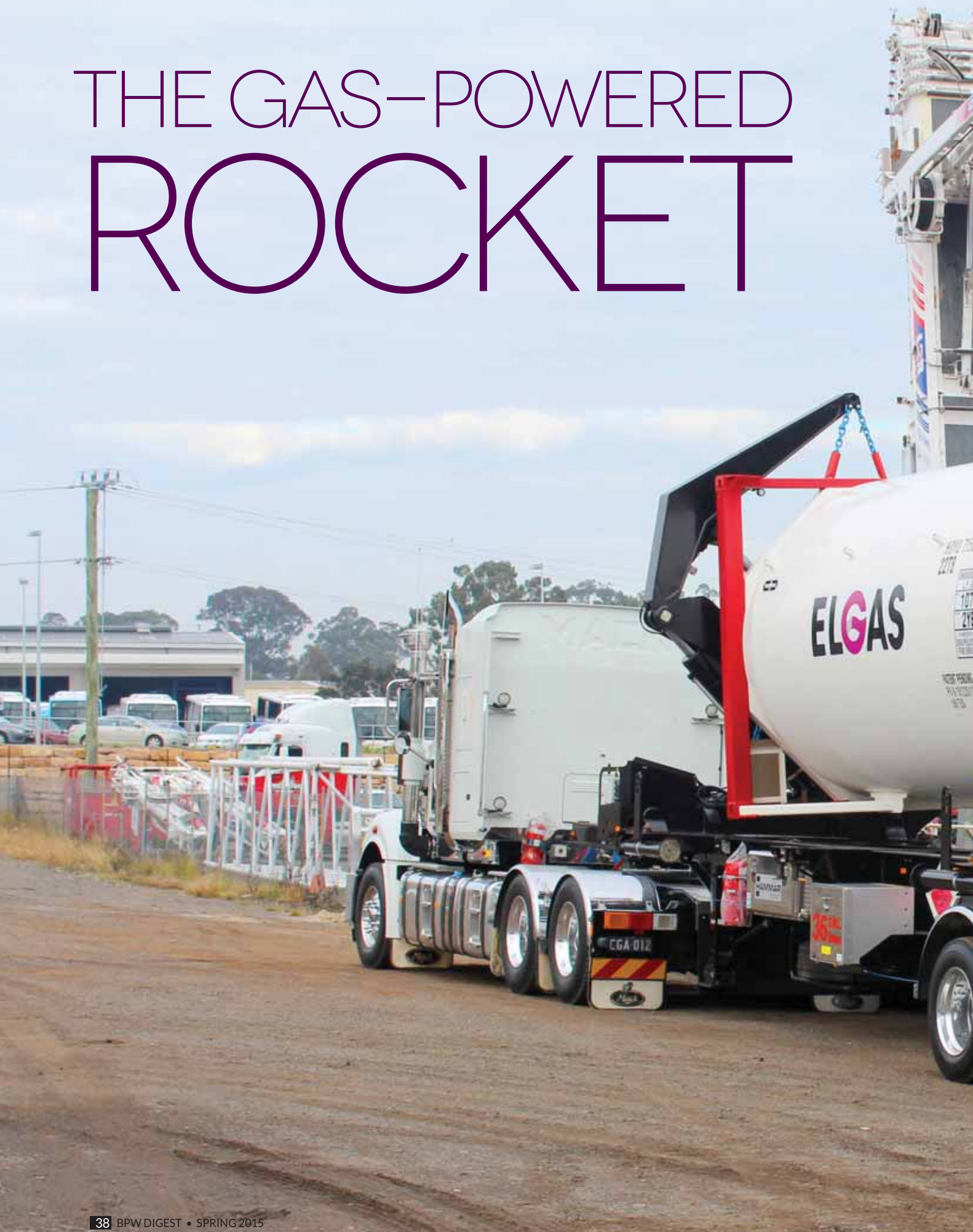
started with South West Freight, a company established by Kym Holmes in 1980. His son Ben has been running the operation since Kym passed away in 2010 and has always been a fan of BPW.

“It’s a great company to work for. We just need to make sure we keep our market leader status of providing best service so we can maintain that advantage. To make that happen, we want to improve on getting more people trained up to help with our overall technical knowledge.”

One of the most striking aspects about Hardman is his critical insight about how to provide continuous improvements for better service, and that’s something we can all learn a great deal from, no matter what part of the industry you’re in. 



# THE GAS-POWERED ROCKET





## When it comes to moving gas, Customised Gas Australia Group is a leader and an innovator.

*Words by Jim Darby*

Rodney Flynn is unstoppable. "I live the gypsy lifestyle, you don't sit still for too long in this game; I'm not a nine to five."

His business card carries his nickname, 'Rocket'. "I got that nickname because someone'd ring and one day I'd be in Brisbane, the next day in Sydney and the next day in Melbourne."

Printing the nickname on the card was nothing more than practical: "People might talk about me and say 'I've never met that bloke, but there's a fella called Rocket in Sydney'... some people know me as Rodney, and some people know me as Rocket."





# CUSTOMISED GAS AUSTRALIA GROUP • AUS

Rodney started as a gasfitter more than 20 years ago, specialising in repairing LPG and bitumen road tankers. Over the years, his business, Customised Gas Australia Group (CGA) has grown to include specialised transport, including a gas business he bought that supplies the aerosol industry with specialty gases.

"We move about 400 tonnes a week out of Melbourne and up to Sydney and Brisbane," Rodney said, "we also move various other ISO tanks around Australia and around the world."

The business remains family-owned, in the hands of Rodney and his wife Kelly.

"What do they say? 'Behind every good man there's a worn-out woman!' She puts up with a lot and she handles the purse strings in the business; she's the financial advisor. Kelly knows what I'm like and she's backed me from day one, I couldn't ask for any more."

Continuity of people is also a strength: "We have a lot of great, long-term staff – I still haven't had to sack anyone in my life – we've got a very high retention rate and we also use sub-contractors. We operate eight road tankers and use sub-contractors except one, so yeah, we've got a great crew; they're a bit like a family and they look after us very well."

Given the area he's working in, safety is paramount and compliance rigorous. Rodney has preferred to keep CGA a step ahead, adopting safety innovations as soon as practicable, rather than waiting for them to be mandated.

"Our safety record is second to none – everyone comes to work and everyone goes home again. I'm very proud of our business, we have a lot of long-term customers, we



run an open workshop and there's nothing to hide," Rodney said.

He has always aimed to be a step ahead with safety, being an early-mover with features like ABS, EBS and roll stability fitted to new trailers, or upgrading existing trailers to have them comply.

"That's where BPW has come in as our preferred axle supplier, everything in our fleet bar one trailer has BPW and that final trailer will be converted at the end of this year.

"To be honest, with all the products we see through our workshop, BPW is probably the lowest cost per kilometre, and as a total package, the service I get from Sydney, and the back-up is great. On top of that, the

technical advice and expertise I get from BPW is worth its weight in gold to me.

"I can ring Scott Merriman and the phone call is always answered and the problem resolved straight away. I don't need to keep spare parts because, by the time the guys have got axles pulled apart, we will have gone and picked everything up and off we go again. I'm a very happy customer and that's why we stick with them, because of the product and because of the people."

When he isn't on the move, Rodney's priority is family. "We've got three kids and I'm on the road a lot, so when you do get home, you've got to give them the time you've got, because they just grow up too quickly." 🏠





## THE CGA SIDELOADER

In the gas-transport side of its business, Customised Gas Australia handles a large quantity of ISO tanks. Trailers for ISO tanks come with their own set of design requirements because they need to be low to the ground.

The traditional solution for ISO tanks is to load them on a drop deck, but that will limit the cargo to 20-foot tanks.

Rodney Flynn worked with side-loader specialists Hammar Australia and its trailer-builders, West-Trans Equipment, to come up with the best solution for his transport needs.

"Originally he was looking for a drop-deck, and we told him about that tapered chassis that complies with the regulations," Hammar Sales Manager Brendan Biasi said.

"The key thing is that the (tapered) low-chassis complies with the dangerous goods code," he said. And it also gives far greater flexibility: "The drop decks are a 20 foot configuration, whereas doing it this way, you can handle one 20-foot, two 20s or one 40-foot container," he said.

Rodney also specified overlegs for this trailer. "They're the stabilisers that go over companion trailers, kind of like the front legs of a praying mantis," Hammar General Manager Grahame Heap said.

"They go over the companion vehicle you are transferring from, so you don't have the normal telescope type stabiliser underneath the companion trailer. It's a lot safer and a lot more stable and can save time; with the overleg, you don't need to detach the companion trailer from the prime mover."

Hammar has had a long and successful relationship with BPW. "Our standard is BPW and that's always been the way," Grahame said.

"That probably started because BPW was the standard in Sweden and we just followed that, but the reality is, of all our suppliers, BPW ranks among the best, if not the best we have, for accuracy of supply and for delivery time."

This trailer for CGA features BPW Transpec components including landing legs, 19.5 inch drum brakes, eight stud 275 PCD axles, the AL II air suspension, automatic slack adjusters and Transpec Multivolt EBS and Info Centre.





# COOL CARTAGE IN QUEENSLAND

**In Queensland's apple country, Granite Belt Fruit Freighters is known for moving much more than fruit.**

*Words and photographs by Emily Weekes*

**W**e're in Queensland but it's nine degrees outside. Welcome to the Granite Belt region; the high country of the Great Dividing Range and home to Queensland's lowest temperatures.

When it snowed in the central town of Stanthorpe, just a few months ago, carloads of tourists and camera crews flocked to the region, keen to capture the occasion and

beam the image of snowfall in Queensland across the world.

While chilly, at times, the Granite Belt has the perfect climate for growing grapes, apples, stone fruit and other fruits and vegetables. The region produces the majority of Queensland's apple crop, with more than 55 orchards in production.

Here we meet Dudley Abraham, a fourth-

generation Stanthorpe orchard owner and founder of Granite Belt Fruit Freighters.

In the early 70s, Dudley decided to dabble in fruit cartage.

"I had an orchard at the time and bought a little four-tonne truck," says Dudley. "I started running a bit of fruit to Brisbane markets."

By 1974, Dudley had bought a prime



(L-R) Rodney, Glen and Dudley Abraham









## COOL CARTAGE IN QUEENSLAND

mover and was carting fruit to the markets for fellow growers.

What started as dabbling, over time developed into a now 41-year old business, Granite Belt Fruit Freighters, which Dudley manages with his sons, Glen and Rodney.

"The boys have always been around the business and wanted to go into trucks," says Dudley, "but I said they had to do an apprenticeship first."

As specialists in refrigeration and diesel mechanics respectively, Rodney and Glen each bring different expertise to the business, which has meant Granite Belt Fruit Freighters is able to run a successful and efficient end-to-end service.

"We pride ourselves on the fact that we nearly do everything internally," explains

Dudley. He adds, "other than rebuilding motors."

Glen runs the workshop while Rodney takes care of customers and refrigeration requirements, with 25 staff on hand to ensure the six docks onsite run smoothly.

"We do all our own van repairs and fridge repairs," says Dudley. "It would be difficult to survive if we had to source that out to commercial operators."

The name, Granite Belt Fruit Freighters, has been around since the very first truck.

And the property has been in the family now for almost 100 years.

"I still live in the original house, but it's not a farm anymore. I had to make the decision: it was either trucks or farming," says Dudley.

"I chose trucks," he says, chuckling. "Not sure which is better!"

Granite Belt Fruit Freighters also carts a majority of the wine bottles and packing cartons required by the local wine industry. It's a smart move. They can avoid bringing up empty trucks from the cities, and support local industry at the same time.

"It's only a small amount of our business, but it means a lot to the warehouses here," says Dudley. "We're supporting all the businesses that are supporting the growers, whether that's with fertilisers, cartons or bottles."

With 16 prime movers and 23 trailers carting fruit and vegetables to Brisbane and Sydney each day, the Abrahams can't afford to waste any time.

"We have BPW axles on all of our trailers.





## A TALL ORDER

The Abrahams' most unusual customer is one many might remember from their school days. For the past six years, Granite Belt Fruit Freighters has carted Happy Harold the Giraffe (yes, he's still alive) and the Life Education van to and from schools in the region.


It's an impressive sight, a prime mover shifting a caravan of sorts. Glen laughs and says that it's probably "over kill" when something smaller might do. But for the Abrahams, they're happy to help move something so valued by schools and loved by children.

That's our choice when we build a trailer," says Dudley. "Unless we buy it second-hand and mostly, they too have BPW axles."

For Rodney, it's BPW's consistency that wins hands-down every time. "We've never had any dramas," he says, "and we don't have to keep a lot of stock for different parts and models, which is good for business."

Glen adds, "We've tried other running gear and it hasn't been great." It was hard to source parts quickly with other brands and there was a lack of support for products.

"We've had to take other axles out of trailers, we've got so fed up with them," says Dudley. "But with BPW axles, we have to replace them..."

"Never!" says Rodney. 





# ENGINEERING INGENUITY

*Words by Jim Darby*

**Time on the job can be the best educator when it comes to working out equipment solutions; all the more so when the people doing the job have some engineering ingenuity.**

**B**urgundy Heights is a logging business that has diversified into clearing work. Getting heavy equipment into some tight places is stock in trade for Burgundy, be it in the bush or at a highway bypass.

The business was founded by Dennis and Shirley Smith in Gippsland in Victoria's East, where Dennis ran a log truck; he sold that and bought this business at Bonville, on the NSW mid-north coast, about 10 minutes from Coffs Harbour.

He always had an interest in engineering, "he

took the business into different markets, built it up and built his own machines and modified trucks and did all sorts of things to make us the business we are now," said Jarrod Smith, their son, who is the company's fleet manager.

Jarrod seems to have inherited some of his father's engineering inclination. One major challenge they have is getting the manoeuvrability they need when transporting heavy equipment, especially when moving heavy equipment for logging or road clearing work.









## ENGINEERING INGENUITY

"The trouble we have with our (timber) harvesters is that we have to stretch the booms right out to get the height down, but to do that, you have to have the machine up the front of the float and it's always heavy on the truck, so you need a dolly under the float and the dolly just gets you into all sorts of trouble. You can't get in and out of the bush with them, they're just forever a problem.

"So the idea was to get the axles underneath the machine where they need to be and have them all steer. I'd been looking for a while at platforms. One we looked at was an ex-army platform that they used, I think in Desert Storm, for carting tanks around," Jarrod said.

The more he looked at platform trailers, the more he found they weren't the solution he was looking for; Jarrod was thinking of designing it himself and then... "One of the blokes that works for us came up to me and said 'I've found what you're looking for.'

"It was on the cover of the BPW Digest, (the Autumn 2014 issue – an 8x8 steerable low loader by Tuff Trailers). I gave Denis Di Pasquale up there at Tuff Trailers a ring

and they made it work for us. It worked out well," Jarrod said.

Their first thought was to go with five rows, but as he looked deeper into it, Jarrod realised if they made it with six rows, they could take on more work with it to transport equipment other than for their logging operations.

"The manoeuvrability is unreal. It's surprising, we've still got the old quad float, and it has two tracking axles underneath. This new one is quite a big bit of gear, with a big truck, and it's surprising, it's still easier to get around in the bush than the old quad float.

"It's also really good on these road works sites, a lot of time they don't give you any room and it handles really well – really well in reverse, it just goes wherever you want it to go."

As logging operations have eased off, Burgundy Heights has had to diversify and this trailer has given them some much-needed flexibility, both for their timber work and for the road, highway and dam clearing work that now makes up a growing

part of their business.

They previously had two logging crews working in state forests, but that has been cut back to one following the closure of a wood chip mill at Tea Gardens. "Now we have this unique bit of gear that is just perfect for what we need, but we can still use it elsewhere."

Burgundy Heights has a total staff of around 20 people, but it's very much a family operation, with Dennis Smith running operations overall, his wife Shirley handling the bookwork (and, in Jarrod's words, "all the paperwork no-one else likes to do and making sure we're not spending too much money").

While Jarrod handles the fleet and the logging and trucking operations, his brother Brad looks after their clearing operations – highways, roads, dams and more.

"Most of our work is close to home. The boys are down at Berry at the moment on the south coast, but it's not very often we venture that far away, most of our work is in a pretty close radius of Coff's. It's a





great place to live, I wouldn't want to live anywhere else, so it's good to be able to do what we do nearby."

For Burgundy Heights, reliability is paramount and this puts BPW front and centre; they use axles, EBS and TRIDEC suspensions from the BPW Transpec inventory: "The first trailer we put BPW axles in would have been around about 2002, that would have been a B-double and I'm pretty sure that was the first time we went to disc brakes. We had a good run out of them and we started putting BPW gear in everything," Jarrod said.

"The platform (trailer) is obviously all BPW, it's probably something we do for peace of mind. We've had such a good run out of them, why bother changing them? You get the reliability you're looking for – knowing you can put them in there and you're not going to have to touch them for a million ks, that's very nice to know."

It counts even more with timber operations: "When you look at the kind of country we are working in, it's right up there with the hardest work these axles would ever do, I'd reckon. The roads are pretty terrible and you're hauling four or five loads out of there every day – it's some of the hardest going you'll ever see and we really don't see any trouble with them." 🇺🇸

**THE PLATFORM (TRAILER) IS OBVIOUSLY ALL BPW, IT'S PROBABLY SOMETHING WE DO FOR PEACE OF MIND. WE'VE HAD SUCH A GOOD RUN OUT OF THEM, WHY BOTHER CHANGING THEM? YOU GET THE RELIABILITY YOU'RE LOOKING FOR – KNOWING YOU CAN PUT THEM IN THERE AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE TO TOUCH THEM FOR A MILLION KMS, THAT'S VERY NICE TO KNOW.**





# ON BALANCE, IT DOESN'T GET MUCH BETTER

**We meet a couple who have worked hard to combine a company and a lifestyle.**

*Words and photographs by Mike Isle*

**‘W**ork-life balance’ is something of a buzz-phrase these days.

In earlier days it was more often referred to, particularly in the transport industry, as ‘work hard—play hard’ and was often employed with a great deal of bravado and worn like a badge of honour—even by those who played perhaps a little harder than they worked.

Fortunately we can be a little more ‘balanced’ about it these days and there are a couple of transport operators living on the banks of Lake Taupo who have managed to get the equilibrium between work and lifestyle just right.

We meet Mark and Siobhain Rainbow, joint-owners of Rainbow Haulage, in a busy café set in the middle of South

Auckland’s industrial area.

They are up from their Taupo base to pick up a load and to have their latest acquisition photographed for this article and the TAA website.

It is an imposing sight sitting out there in an adjacent car park. A head-turner in jet-black: a Kenworth truck and Fruehauf trailer unit.







Mark and Siobhain Rainbow



Nobody, least of all the interviewer, can blame Mark and Siobhain if they appear impatient to get behind the Kenworth wheel and get the rig back to its Taupo home base: driving is in their blood; Taupo is where they have made their home. Sitting tight in Penrose does not quite hack it.

Mark has been a driver since the day he left school. His father and great-grandfather

were also drivers. In fact, his father, notably, had New Zealand's first 3-axle swing lift when driving for Bridge Freight.

Mark started his career at Temperature Control Distribution (TCD) for metro distribution in Auckland. When TCD started to divest its fleet in the mid-90s, Mark bought an Isuzu and driver became owner-driver. A second-hand Volvo tractor and semi in 1997 saw metro driver become long-haul driver.

That is when and where they found their pot of gold.

Mark and Siobhain met each other at high school. Every decision from that point—Mark to become owner-driver, to go long haul and, in 1997, to start Rainbow Haulage, was a joint decision.

So was the decision in 2002 to move the operation to Taupo. Initially, it was pragmatic. They had a major contract with Goodman Fielder servicing its Auckland, Palmerston North and Wellington bakeries: a daily run, 1,375 kilometres a day, 420,000, kilometres a year with one truck and three drivers. It made sense to centralise the operation.

Other contracts and routes followed. The company grew steadily, double-shifting and dispatching from Taupo. Pragmatism was working out.

The bonus is the lifestyle.

Siobhain puts it baldly, "If we hadn't moved to Taupo I don't think we would enjoy this business as much as we do."

The couple are self-proclaimed motor heads—anything powered by a motor. They have a motorbike and enjoy the open road. They have a family, a teenage family, that has no inclination or craving for the bright lights of Auckland; all three teenagers take an active part in the business and one—their 14 year-old daughter—has even taken 'ownership' of one of the trucks.

All of which is of course possible elsewhere

in New Zealand. "It is just easier in Taupo," says Siobhain. "The more relaxed lifestyle provides for a more relaxed environment. We don't have any problem attracting quality drivers. They are all locals and because we are such a small tightly knit community they feel—along with our family—they have a stake in 'their' company.

"It also helps that Mark never asks them to do anything he hasn't done, or still does. And every day, every load is different—there's none of the mundane day-in day-out stuff we experienced in Auckland."

Obviously it works. By the beginning of next year, Rainbow will have doubled its fleet and its staff.

They currently work as owner operators for the Auckland-based company, TAA Logistics (2009) Ltd, owned by Tracey and Andrew Faire.

Andrew and Tracey are another husband and wife team, "Therefore there is a more cohesive professional understanding of the shared business operations and aspirations," says Siobhain.

"Having the personal stake of family businesses also means we have vested interest in maintaining TAA's high level of quality standards and best practice."

The interview over, Siobhain and Mark prepared for their trip home. Mark is doing the driving as he always does; Siobhain is sitting next to him in the cab as she often does.

They are a genuine team drawn together from high school and together making some major moves and decisions that at the time seemed brave but have clearly worked out in the end.

Tonight they will be in Taupo, running a successful and growing company and enjoying a relaxed lifestyle.

Seems they have their work-life balance just about dead right. 🇳🇿





# STAR QUALITY BY DESIGN

*Words by Emily Weekes*





## Graystar Trailers celebrates its 150th trailer build in a unique on-road partnership with long-standing client, Sargeant Transport.

**D**avid Gray is a self-confessed fusspot. He knows what works best and likes things to last. As a result, Graystar Trailers has established a loyal following and a solid reputation for building heavy-duty, high quality trailers – in just six years.

Leaving school to work in his father's business, David developed his knowledge and expertise as the industry evolved around him. Moving from dry freight-fibreglass trailers to insulated trailers, he now predominantly builds refrigerated trailers.

I've always liked building trailers," says David. "For me it's not just about being in business, I really enjoy designing."

In 2009, David and his wife, Samantha opened Graystar Trailers. One of the first people they hired was an engineer and former colleague, Roger Wiltshire who shared David's passion for design.

Together, they set to work, determined to do things differently, with Roger working from his kitchen table as the business began to take shape. Today, Roger is in his mid-70s.

"We're still designing together," says David, laughing.

"When we started this business, we initiated a lot of changes. Even today, we're constantly trying to improve our product," he explains. "Roger is probably one of the most knowledgeable people in this industry!"

With 20 staff on board and 20 trailers or more in various stages of production at any one time, Graystar is a medium-sized business that prides itself on being "more able to focus on what people want."



The result is striking – a celebration of two businesses, not one.



## GRAYSTAR TRAILERS • AUS

"We don't have a production line," explains David. "Almost everything we build is a one off and that's the market we work in. We have a separate specification for each client and regular clients will order one or two B-doubles each year."

An increasing demand for road train trailers, and the conditions they have to endure, prompted David to look for the most durable componentry in the market.

"I'm very, very fussy," says David. "We're typically more expensive than other manufacturers, but that's because I want materials that meet the highest standard."

Using European-design insulation technology is a no brainer, according to David, who estimates Europe is likely to be 20 years ahead of Australia in the field.

"When we're building or designing, we take into account the repairs," says David. "I'm

always looking down the track for solutions that are smart in the long run."

They even fabricate their own componentry onsite.

"Our clients understand by paying a bit more, they won't have to turn over their equipment as often," says David, "which is really important for road train trailers."

It's why Graystar chooses BPW suspension for at least 90 percent of its builds.

# STAR QUALITY BY DESIGN





**“I’M ALWAYS LOOKING DOWN THE TRACK FOR SOLUTIONS THAT ARE SMART IN THE LONG RUN.”**



“Most of our clients, once they’ve experienced BPW, they don’t ever change. Even BPW’s standard specification is far above anyone else’s standard specs,” says David.

“We have so few problems with the spec we use now – that’s why I love it!”

“And if there’s an issue, it doesn’t matter what the problem is. It gets sorted,” says David. “It’s how we work with our customers too, they go out of their way to help.”

When it came time to build their 150th trailer, David wanted to do something special. He approached Jamie Sargeant, one of Graystar’s earliest supporters with an idea.

“It’s very unusual for Sargeant Transport to have sign-writing on a trailer,” explains David, “but Jamie said ‘you design it and use it to your full advantage!’”

The result is striking – a celebration of two businesses, not one.

“We’ve just built an A-trailer to go in front of the 150th trailer, it’s all painted up as well,” says David, clearly chuffed at the idea of continuing this creative collaboration.

“When I started learning how to build, I was like a sponge. I wanted to learn everything!” says David, who admits that he’s still just as happy working on the floor.

As the business grows, he’s looking to foster that same enthusiasm in others.

“I’m trying to spend more time mentoring our younger staff,” says David. “I like finding ways to make things easier for everyone. That’s the sort of person I am.” 

# THE SIZE OF IT

**We talk to a man who started small, and got bigger.**

*Words and photographs by Mike Isle*

**T**he next one is going to be a bit of a challenge."

Bruce McMurdo, Hawky Haulage's despatch manager has them daily. It is the business they are in: heavy haulage, and just about every job they do, every load they take, is a challenge.

BPW Digest saw that first hand earlier in the day. A dangerous day. We are waiting at a red light, approaching Auckland's busy southern motorway. Traffic is heavy. A glance in the

rear vision mirror. Looming up behind us is a massive Freightliner, pilot vehicles front and back and a giant Hitachi digger on the back.

Is this the truck and trailer unit we are here to photograph?

A quick call to Bruce confirms it is, and if we hurry, we can photograph it when it reaches its destination, an inner-city construction site.

We hurry. Even so, we have too few minutes to spare. An obliging site manager parks the car





out of harm's way while we grab the camera. A dash across a busy road earns a stern look from a passing cop. The truck looms into sight, slowing for a left turn. We grab what photos we can.

On the road, we are exposed and vulnerable. And successful. Robbie Hawken is a big man doing a big job. He is friendly, affable and virtually inaccessible. Bruce has been trying to arrange an interview for days. Today we strike it lucky. Late in the day, we meet in the company's head office in Helensville, west of Auckland.

There are no trucks out here. Every truck is on the road somewhere. Bruce is on the phone incessantly.

This is a busy business.

But Robbie can talk to us. Robbie started the business in 2008, with an eight-wheeler Isuzu, which is still on the road. But not alone. Robbie's fleet and payloads have grown bigger exponentially.

His current fleet of trailers comprises four low-loaders, two of which were built by TRT

in Hamilton, with delivery of another coming soon, two eight-wheelers, a four-wheeler and two pilot vehicles.

Fifty-five tonne cranes are a common payload; maximum payload is 71 tonnes.

He employs eleven staff. Seven of them are drivers and Robbie is determined to keep them on the payroll and the payloads. A shortage of quality drivers, particularly heavy-haulage qualified, is an industry-wide problem, and as Robbie concisely puts it, "When you have them, you do your best to keep them."

However it is not the only challenge he faces. There is one much larger. One that dwarfs even his payloads—regulations.

Hawky Haulage's main business is in Auckland, a city that used to be made up of seven individual councils each with its own regulations covering heavy haulage. The councils have amalgamated; the regulations have not. For Hawky Haulage to haul a load across town Robbie has to deal with upwards of three permitting authorities and three sets of regulations—all different. It can

take up to two days to get a permit.

He characterises it as "something of a nightmare" and it could keep Robbie up at night. Except he is often already up, relieving his drivers when they run out of hours. It is the nature of the heavy haulage business; much of it is done at night or early morning. Two nights before, he had started his 'day' at 3:00am; this morning, it was a late start—3:30am.

The interview ends. There are still no truck and trailer units outside to photograph. Photography will have to wait for another day—or night—and hopefully in less dangerous conditions than those earlier today.

As we walk to the door, the phone rings as it has done right through the interview.

And just as he has done right through the interview, Bruce answers it.

Another job.

"It never stops," Robbie grins.

Being in the big business is good business.

That's the size of it. 🇳🇿



Robbie Hawken



**We talk to the young engineer and trailer builder who took up the reins of the Trailux Horse Float agency in New Zealand.**

## HARD WORK PAYS OFF FOR YOUNG BUILDER

*Words and photographs by Mike Isle*

**K**arl Robinson works hard. It is tempting to add the hoary old “plays hard” as well. But, we doubt he does. There is simply not the time.

Karl is building trailers and transporters. Plenty of them, as many as four trailers a week, all shapes, sizes and purposes. He works out of his Upper Hutt workshop and sends his completed trailers all over New Zealand and even as far as Singapore.

He builds and offers trailers off-the-shelf, but prefers to custom build—to extend himself.

The remarkable thing is that he does it mostly on his own. He prefers it that way. As owner/proprietor of Trailer Centre Ltd, it gives him greater control over build quality.

And that is something he stakes his business and reputation on.



Growth of the company has been steady since it started in 2011. Initially, it was just custom trailers and Karl was building most of those out of a shed in his backyard.

However, as his reputation grew so did the demand for diversification and the move to a purpose-built workshop.

Karl could have—perhaps, should have—been happy with that. Then came the opportunity to purchase the once renowned but now largely dormant Trailux Horse Float agency. Karl set about the new endeavour with his customary zeal and customising skills.

There was nothing inherently wrong with the Trailux trailers—the problem had mainly been lack of marketing support—but Karl made some modifications to improve the product, retaining the fibreglass cladding for its weight

and resilience, but adding in additional guards support and closing in the A-frame to prevent step through by horses.

The trailers are built for safety and comfort. They have always had BPW running gear (this magazine first did a story on Trailux and its previous owners ten years ago) and Karl has retained that spec.

He says the BPW product is much easier from a build point of view (“though it looks complicated, it isn’t”), adjustments are made easily, and on the road the ride and braking is far superior to anything Karl has seen or used elsewhere.

He has two Trailux models—the Ultimate 340 and The Extender 440. The latter is a metre longer and can accommodate extra facilities

such as tack area and kitchenette. Both, however, are two-horse trailers.

He is currently working on a new 2.5 metre wide float. BPW will be standard to that, too. At the Equidays Show in Hamilton, the 2.5 metre trailer was not on show, it is still being developed, but the earlier ones were, and they garnered a lot of interest from the equine fraternity.

Yes, the original Trailux floats had a big reputation, and many of them are still on the road. Moreover, at one time they could be described as top-end.

Nevertheless, times have changed. Until Karl took them over, they had ceased to be manufactured, and the so-called top-end had been hijacked by super-sped floats or trucks that an equine rock star could travel comfortably in—the limousines of horse transport.

Karl does not go there. Does not want to go there. What he wants is to continue to build good quality, hardwearing floats that are well-priced and can suit any horse owner from pony clubs to high-end eventers.

That is where his niche is.

Our interview with Karl is short. One of the shortest we have conducted. There are two reasons for that. One is that it is easy to grasp where The Trailer Centre is at, and where Karl is taking his company—a niche company in demand for quality work

The second is that we are mindful of his workload. Four trailers a week is no easy task for one man. We don’t want to hold him up.

Karl is appreciative of our consideration and is keen to get back to work. But he is not defensive about his workload. Or defeated by it.

“It’s a new company. You just got to do it.”

But he does not do it alone. Not entirely. He has a “young fella” who comes in each weekend to help.

He also has the support of his wife, mother-, and father-in-law, who look after the big picture and are continually advising him how best to move forward.

“When you are working, working, working, it is great to have that support around you.

“That’s how it works. That’s why it works” 🇳🇿





## BPW Axles & Air Suspension

Every day, thousands of trucks travel on New Zealand's roads to ensure we are supplied with what we need. However, this logistical masterpiece should not be taken for granted as everything needs to dovetail. It is, after all, the running gear that is exposed to huge loads mile after mile, travelling on rough surfaces in cold weather, high temperatures and dust. BPW has always relied on the quality of its products to operate even under the harshest of conditions.



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