

BPW DIGEST

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

WINTER 2018



BACKYARD BLITZ

Amey Bros has been a family transport business since it began in 1945. For the past 42 years, Bruce and his wife, Jennifer have sold and delivered wholesale quarry products to landscapers. But in 2013, they added another arm to the business – selling gardening supplies to householders...

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From the Joint MDs

We are delighted to present to you our winter edition of our customer magazine for Australia and New Zealand.

Starting with sound order books at the beginning of the year, 2018 has proven so far to be an excellent year for the transport industry.

In particular major infrastructure projects have led to a sound and strong demand for trailer equipment across all states and thanks to Transpec's continued commitment to stock axle components locally supported by our local production facility in Australia we comfortably managed to handle even sudden supply peaks.

On the product side, we are gradually implementing the innovations and product improvements presented at the last Brisbane Truck Show kicking off with the market introduction of the new Eco Plus hub 3 sealing in the 3rd quarter of this year followed by the light weight drum becoming our standard for all 285 drum braked axles. Last but not least we will kick off the project re-introduction of an aluminium hub solution hopefully before the year end.

All those product improvements will offer significant weight savings allowing operators to increase payload in order to lift the highly needed efficiency gains.

Likewise, we are keeping engaged with ATA as the main industry body at the forthcoming TMC conference in October with the Head of Engineering from BPW Europe delivering a key note address about BPW's solutions to support the increasing demand for PBS vehicles.

2018 is also the year of the International Truck Show IAA in Germany in September and those customers who manage to make their way to Hannover are warmly welcomed to visit BPW's exhibition stand to get a first glimpse of further innovations coming our way.

Once again, we like to thank all our customers for their loyalty towards our brands like the ones featured in this Digest.

Enjoy reading

Stefan Oelhafen

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Team Transport and Logistics is one of the largest, privately owned transport companies operating in Queensland providing specialised support to construction customers, the mining, oil and gas industries and civil engineering and infrastructure firms.

28 Shandley's Transport

Shandley's Transport recently built an extra-long 34-and-a-half-meter road train. This combination could carry a 67-tonne load, but instead this extra-long combination has been designed to achieve the greatest cubic meter capacity possible while travelling on Victoria and New South Wales roads.

32 Gates Haulage

Gates Haulage began in 1971 with 1 truck and 2 brothers and has grown to a fleet of 40-50 trucks servicing a broad range of customers from hauling quarry products to construction sites to transporting hazardous waste products to waste facilities.

36 Allied Liquor

The simple process of opening and closing a roller door can be a lot riskier than it first appears particularly with modern health and safety standards imposed on operators and business owner. So, when Allied Liquor were looking for a solution to improve the roller doors on their fleet, they found a faster, safer and better solution with Razor's Power Door.

38 Simpson Fuels

Simpson Fuels began in 1953 carting goods from the railway to the shops before moving into delivering general freight and fuel in the 1970's. In 1970 when Gordon Simpson took over the family business he chose to focus on fuel and today, that's the business's strength.

40 Ron Finemore Transport

Ron Finemore is a well-known name in the Transport industry, with over 50 years of experience working for some of Australia's leading brands in the Food and Energy sectors. Showing that being customer focused is the key to success.

44 VE Group

Headquartered in the suburb of Riverview, 30km southwest of Brisbane the VE Group runs a fleet of 33 trailers and offers heavy haulage services for councils, earthworks contractors and other infrastructure firms.



BPW Transpec would like to welcome the following new staff members

BPW Transport Efficiency **Chris Sansome – NZ Country Manager**

Chris has spent all of his working life in the transport industry.

Originally from the UK Chris has been in New Zealand for 15 years having been imported by his Kiwi wife.

In New Zealand Chris has held positions with TR Group (NZ biggest rental and leasing business), TCL Isuzu, AB Equipment and most recently Sales and Marketing GM for New Zealand Trucks the Hiab, Zepro and Bucher Municipal distributor in New Zealand.

In the UK he spent 14 years with The Dawson Group involved in rental and leasing and five years with Volvo Truck and Bus.

Outside of work Chris is an avid sports fan, especially rugby, racing and cricket. Attending the Boxing Day test matches with his son and the Barney Army at the MCG have been particularly memorable experiences and he hopes England will get a win next time!



BPW Transpec **Cameron Leach – Manager QLD & NT**

Cameron has over 35 years of experience in the Road Transport and Mining industries covering technical, operational, and senior management roles. Cameron previously worked with the Volvo Group and Powertrans (BIS Industries).

Cameron was born in Darwin and raised on a cattle station south of Darwin. He has lived in Brisbane since 2003 and enjoys traveling, fishing, target shooting and spending time with his family.

Cameron is really looking forward to working with the BPW Transpec team and meeting more of the greater BPW Transpec network in the future.

Significant Business Milestones

Barker Trailers 10,000 trailers

Congratulations to Barker Trailers on celebrating the manufacture of its 10,000th trailer. Premier Daniel Andrews attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at Barker Trailers facility in Woodend Victoria. BPW Transpec is proud to have a strong association spanning decades with Barker Trailers and in particular the Barker family. BPW Transpec was honoured to be part of the celebration of this auspicious milestone.



B & J Catalano – 55 Years

Congratulations to B & J Catalano on achieving 55 years in business. B & J Catalano was established in 1962 by brothers Bill and Joe Catalano. The company was originally founded to service the transport needs of the local rural community in the South-West region of Western Australia. Today the company has evolved into a vibrant and successful company working daily with large corporations, local and state government departments and mining companies.

We wish them all the best for many more years of success.



L-R: Mark Kingston
Fleet Manager and Clem
Catalano Director



LBRCA

BPW Transpec has been a proud supporter and sponsor of LBRCA for many years.

This year's conference held in Coffs Harbour illustrated our strong association with the organisation and many of the trailer builders on display with equipment supplied by BPW Transpec.



Ringfeder Promo winner

Congratulations to John Pearce from Pearce's Bandon Grove Transport in Dunong NSW on winning the BPW Transpec Ringfeder promotion. NSW Manager Scott Merriman was pleased to present the Sidechrome toolkit valued at \$5000 to John and his entire family, who were all very excited to receive the prize. John has been a loyal BPW,

Ringfeder and Edbro customer for many years. His two sons want to follow in dad's footsteps with Callum wanting to be a mechanic for Kenworth and Liam wanting to drive trucks just like his dad.

Below: John Pearce, Karen Pearce, Liam (13), Callum (10) & Alannah (6).





New Products - All Happening in 2018

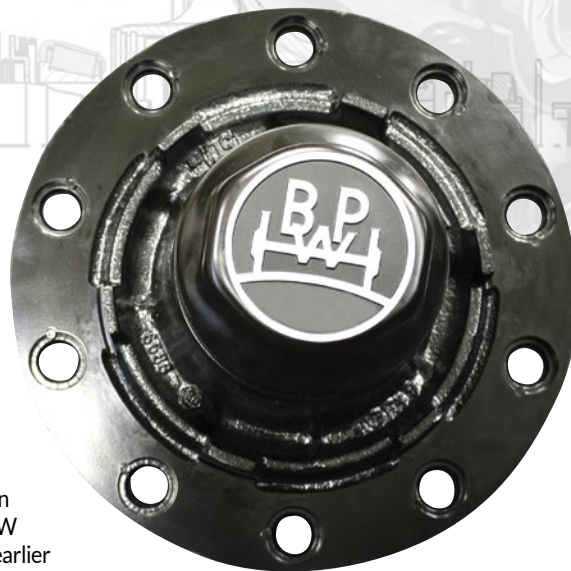
BPW have four new products that are part of ongoing product development and improvement. These are currently in different phases of being rolled out.

BPW Light Weight Drum; for the 10 stud 285PCD braked axles we have commenced use of a lighter weight drum, use of this drum offers a weight saving of 14kgs per axle. There is no reduction in the friction area or service life with this drum.

In keeping with a tare weight reduction theme BPW Transpec will be reintroducing **Alloy Hubs** as an option for axles assembled from November 2018. The option for alloy hubs will be available for both disc and drum brake axles with 10 stud 285PCD wheel pattern. The weight saving will be 35kgs per axle. This option will be externally visible by the hub cap which has "light" embossed in it. The alloy hub has a thicker flange than the steel version which this adds 20mm to the overall axle track and uses longer wheel studs than the steel hubs.

BPW have developed a new rotating hub seal "**ECO Plus 3**" (black). The seal is wider and even more robust than the current ECO plus seal (blue). The seal has a different internal section and is 5mm wider than the current ECO plus seal. New axles will come with the ECO plus 3 seal and hub from the second half of 2018. Part of the change to this seal is a change to the hub/

cap thread which enables a lower torque hub cap and O ring seal. Hub caps will only need to be tightened to 350Nm with this new design. It is possible to upgrade older ECO plus axles to ECO plus 3 by changing the seal carrier seal and hub. BPW are in the final stages of the development and testing of the second generation **BPW TS2 Disc Brake Axle**. BPW have already completed some earlier successful "black box" road testing of the BPW TS2 axles in Australia and overseas. The next phase of testing is to roll out a selection of trailers with the BPW TS2 disc brake and assess their performance over the coming months. To do this we have five BPW TS2 equipped trailers that will be operating in a variety of trailer types and environments across the country. Similar trials are also being conducted in other countries to provide valuable operational feedback. With successful conclusion of the field trials we expect to be able to introduce the new BPW TS2 in the first half of 2019.



Do you have Technical Questions regarding our products?

Stay up to date with the latest technical information, product innovations and news from BPW Transpec with our electronic Tech Topics bulletin.

If you would like to subscribe to receive the 'Tech Topics' please email digest@bpwtranspec.com.au or contact one of our sales consultants.



Commitment to Training

The importance of correct installation and maintenance of BPW products is essential to obtaining the benefits of the product quality and reliability which is why our National Customer Service and Training Manager Stephen DuToit travels all over Australia to conduct training sessions on

topics ranging from; installation, spare parts, EBS and troubleshooting. Our mobile training trailer can be brought to your premises and training can be customised to suit your company's needs. For further information please contact your BPW Transpec sales representative.



RACING AHEAD

Words and photographs by Emily Weekes

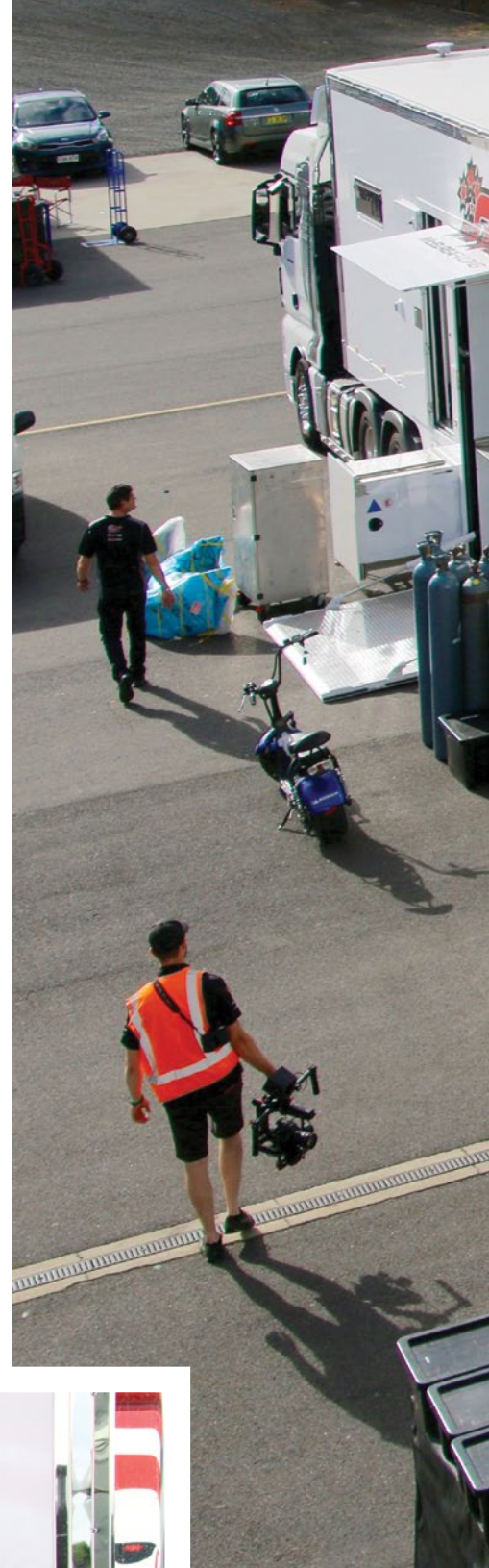
DDS Transport Solutions along with Operations Manager Damien Van Twest are experts at tight turnarounds.

Today, they will unload and reload a B-double transporter carrying latest model Porsche Carrera Cup and GT racing cars at Philip Island's Grand Prix circuit in Victoria. Before driving back to Rocklea, Queensland, where DDS Transport is based.

It's pre-dawn at Philip Island in Victoria. A line-up of loaded up transporters waits for the GP circuit gates to open. Today is a test day for the Carrera Cup racing teams, not the main event. But it's business as usual for the people charged with transporting these multi million dollar loads.

In 2006, Steve & Desiree McFadden along with Damien Van Twest started DDS Transport Solutions in what began as a Brisbane Market based Fresh Produce Refrigerated business and has since branched into several lines of work – one of them, a transporting service of a variety of racing cars and exotic road cars Australia wide.

This year, DDS Transport will transport almost exclusively for McElrea Racing – a team that specialises in coaching drivers and preparing and engineering cars for the Australian GT, Carrera Cup and the GT3 Cup Challenge.



Above: The B-Double Transporter built by Lusty Trailers is fitted with BPW axles and running gear.

L-R: Peter O'Malley (BPW Transpec) with Damien Van Twest (DDS Transport)



DDS Transport has a new B-double transporter designed just for this purpose. Built by Graham Lusty Trailers in Brisbane and fitted with BPW axles and running gear, Damien will drive the new B-double transporter all over Australia to the major events.

The McElrea Racing team will meet him at each event and together they'll unload the cars and the mountain of gear required to race at an elite level.

The new transporter can carry a 62 tonne load. Today's load comes close at 56.8 tonne. "The cars are the lightest part, at around 1.2 tonne each," explains Damien. "It's all the spare

gear we need to carry that adds the weight."

From front to back, the transporter is worth around \$1.2 million, including the MAN prime mover. "When the cargo's in, when the truck is locked and loaded, we calculate it's worth close to \$3 million," he says.

Damien's family originally started out working in the produce markets, but had an interest in car racing, his brother raced HQs and his brother-in-law (Country singing superstar Adam Brand) raced V8 utes. Steve McFadden, the family's next-door neighbour sponsored Damien's brother in the HQ's, but then switched to running V8 utes, which started a striking trend. A business friend, rather than

sponsor the V8 Ute, took a shining to the V8 Ute Racing Series and decided to race one himself instead. He ended up buying one for himself. Then another family of his brought one! Suddenly the team had three V8 utes running in a national category and they needed a way to transport them.

"We bought a really old transporter that could fit 3 utes in from Ian McAllister in Young and put a bit of money into fixing it up," says Damien. "It did the job for a long, long time. We bought another old transporter and kept doing what we were doing. But when we weren't racing I was using the truck for work in the market."

RACING AHEAD

"Then the market side of the business started growing and I couldn't take the truck away anymore because that was paying the bills... Racing doesn't pay the bills. It's a good way to spend the money but it's not a good way to make it," he says laughing.

Today, DDS Transport operates a fleet of six MAN trucks, six fridge trailers and the B-Double transporter all exclusively running on BPW axles and Suspensions.

Steve and Desiree take care of business leasing, payroll, equipment financing and the purchasing of vehicles. They have their own business to run – yet another arm of DDS being a Project Management Business. I run the day to day operations of the transport company 363 days a year, the only days we close are Good Friday and Christmas Day.

"We haven't advertised the racing side of the business in thirteen years," says Damien. "I still run the day to day operations in Queensland from wherever I am on the road which at times can be challenging." "What's got us to where we are at today is our service, reputation and building quality relationships with quality people." "But the most important aspect is reputation, ultimately you're nothing without a good reputation, and I'm sure that applies in most businesses."

DDS Transport has a long relationship with McElrea Racing, transporting for them back a few years. This year, McElrea Racing employed DDS Transport Solutions to handle all of their transport. The B-double transporter bares the McElrea Racing logo to reflect this almost exclusive arrangement. "McElrea prepare the cars and along with myself help load and unload the truck," explains Damien. "once the truck is loaded it's then our job to get it to the track and help them unload it safely. It's the same at every event."

"Obviously, the car transport is a little bit

different to carrying fresh produce" he says. "I wouldn't be comfortable just sending anyone to do this job. People think it's easy – you get in and drive to a track – but it's so much more, the loading, unloading, the responsibility of it all."

"We don't have time to be broken down at the side of the road, that's why we use BPW," says



Damien. We rate the BPW product highly, which is why we refuse to run anything else." "It's really all we've run from day one." The transporter and fridge trailers are all fitted with BPW disc brakes and Transpec's EBS. "We think it's the best we can get," he explains. "It's got every safety feature that's available

and when you're running around with \$3 million dollars worth of gear on board, you want that. Thankfully, we haven't had to use them yet!" "Reliability is everything"

We deal exclusively with Evan McDonald in Brisbane for all our servicing and support. "Evan is the guru when it comes to everything BPW and his service and support is nothing short of exceptional!" said Damien "for us service is important and we get that from Evan, he's never let us down." "What more do you need besides quality equipment and exceptional service?" said Damien. "It certainly makes life easy and eliminates one stressful part out when running a business."

This was the first transporter built by Graham Lusty Trailers and one of only two fitted with a wireless system. There's ethernet connecting the two trailers so data can be sent from managers to engineers to drivers. Once Damien arrives at the depot in Queensland, the B-double will be fitted with wi-fi as well.

"It's an impressive set up," says Damien. "We can carry six cars and once everything's unloaded the front trailer becomes an office – with pull down benches, a television, air-conditioner and a fridge." Every nook and cranny has been purpose-built to accommodate as much as it can, as neatly as possible.

There are even BPW nut covers on the wheel studs Damien laughs, "I specifically asked for those."

"This is just a test today. We'll be back here in two weeks for the race," he says. The current championship leader is part of the McElrea Racing team. His name is Jaxon Evans and according to Damien, he's one to watch. "He's 19 now and an impressive young guy in and out of the car." – a definite star in the making."





"WE RATE THE BPW PRODUCT HIGHLY, WHICH IS WHY WE REFUSE TO RUN ANYTHING ELSE."

– DAMIEN VAN TWEST, DDS TRANSPORT

BACKYARD BLITZ

Words and photographs by Emily Weekes

Amey Bros has been a family transport business since it began in 1945. For the past 42 years, Bruce and his wife, Jennifer have sold and delivered wholesale quarry products to landscapers. But in 2013, they added another arm to the business – selling gardening supplies to householders.

Bruce and Jennifer didn't intend to take on a whole new business in their later years. But when the opportunity arose to purchase land in Pialligo they knew they had to act. Today, Amey Bros encompasses a retail landscaping and garden supply centre called Stonehenge Beltana, a garden and giftware centre located in Pialligo, a stone's throw from Canberra airport.

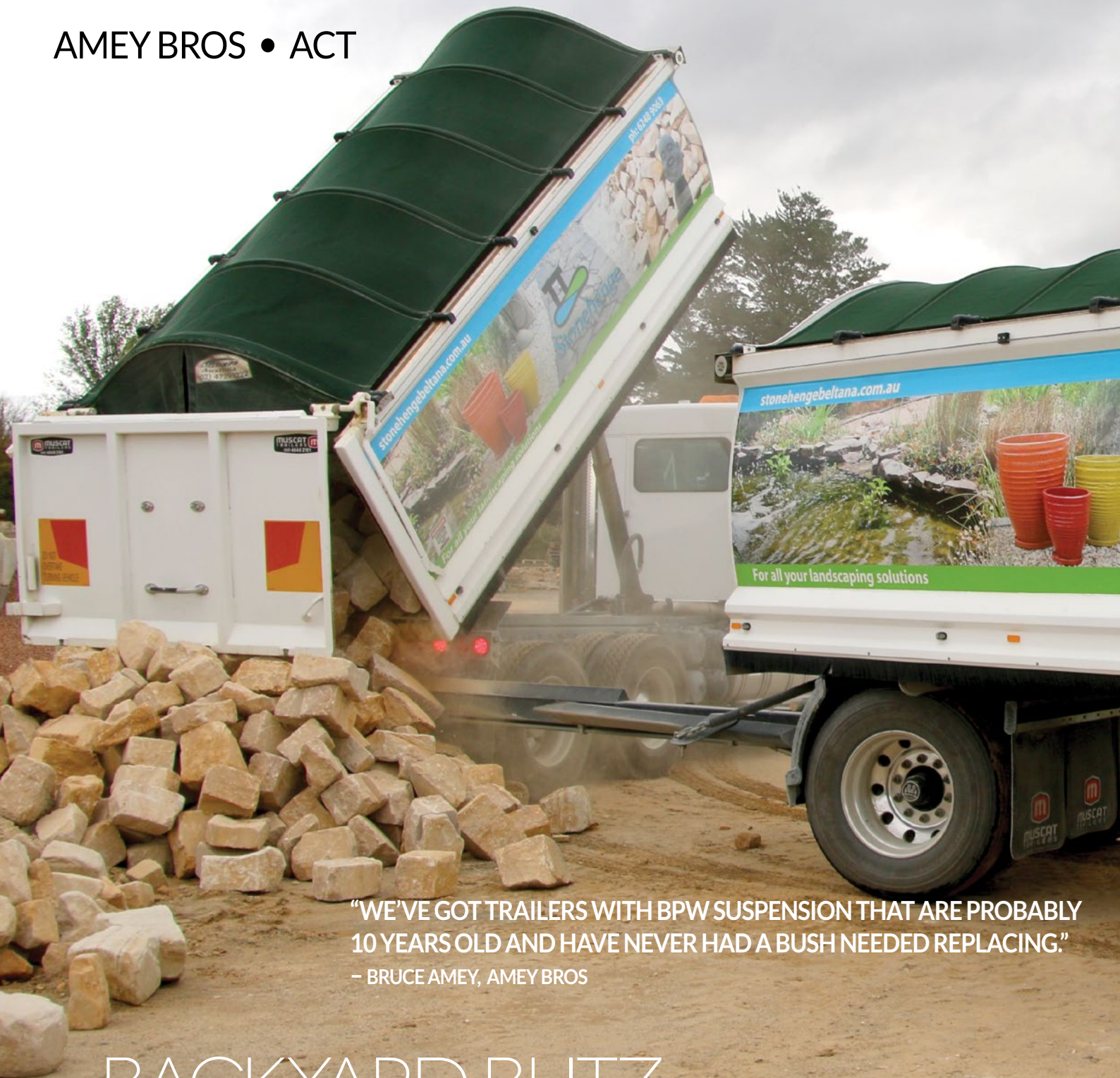
Up until this year, the couple had worked alongside Bruce's brother, Alan and his wife, Nanette. The four of them have been managing the family business since 1976 when the brothers' father invited them to take up a third each in Amey Bros. "Alan retired in January. He's gone fishing! He's the smart one," laughs Bruce.





L-R: Jennifer and Bruce Amey from Amey Bros with Kevin Adolphus (BPW Transpec)





"WE'VE GOT TRAILERS WITH BPW SUSPENSION THAT ARE PROBABLY 10 YEARS OLD AND HAVE NEVER HAD A BUSH NEEDED REPLACING."
– BRUCE AMEY, AMEY BROS

BACKYARD BLITZ

While Amey Bros have always supplied wholesalers, Stonehenge Beltana caters to an entirely different audience, a retail nursery that supplies consumers with landscaping and gardening features like pavers, ponds, pumps and pots – as well as selling giftware in the large onsite shop.

"Retail is very big here in Canberra," says Bruce. "People have small gardens so they want to make them more attractive by putting things on the walls and adding water features." It's a sign of the times. Twenty years ago, residents in Canberra would

have come to this nursery to buy 40 or 50 metres of soil for their lawns. As one market quietens, another perks up.

Stonehenge Beltana is located in Pialligo, a street zoned for nurseries. It's where the locals come when they need landscaping and gardening supplies. There are orchids and nurseries dotted all along the street and one or two cafes for when shoppers start to fade and need reinforcements. Amey Bros has become a unique business – by offering both retail and wholesale supplies to its customers.

On the weekend, this site is booming. "Last Friday, you could hardly get a park in here, there were so many people around," says Jennifer. While this business is thriving, Amey Bros simultaneously operates a fleet of trucks carting supplies to and from the quarries, for their own customers as well as other larger companies like Holcim and Boral. As directors, Bruce and Jennifer are busier than ever. They send their fleet to Canberra Truck Repairs for servicing – a 40-year-long relationship – and every new trailer comes fitted with BPW axles and suspension. For



Bruce, choosing BPW is about minimising maintenance costs and keeping the fleet on the road.

"We've got trailers with BPW suspension that are probably 10 years old and have never had a bush needed replacing. But there are other companies, every time you re-line the brakes, you have to do the whole lot," he explains. "Our maintenance over five years is probably an eighth of the cost of other brands on the market."

Bruce and Jennifer were married two days

after the brothers joined the family business. "I would never push my child to be a truck driver after being married to one," says Jennifer, laughing. This year they'll celebrate their 42nd wedding anniversary and their first as the only directors of Amey Bros.

"When I met Bruce, we saw each other two nights a week because he finished work at 2am," explains Jennifer. "Later, when we married and had children, for a few years there, I reared our three kids on my own, but he always put the kids to bed with a story, before heading out again at 4am." "It's a way of

life," says Bruce. "You get used to it."

Today, their son, Jack manages Stonehenge Beltana. Their eldest son, Ben (and his business partner) runs his own landscaping business and their daughter has a successful career in the public service. "No headaches for her," jokes Bruce. The couple are looking ahead, weighing up options and recruiting new staff to help them prepare for the future.

"If we get the right help, we'll be right," says Bruce. "You have to have someone you can trust."



GOING THE DISTANCE

Colin Beer started Detour Logistics in 2004 and has built a fleet that delivers to Melbourne, Sydney and the Brisbane markets, carting for a variety of customers. The business is based in Silvan, a lush mountain town in Victoria's Dandenong Ranges that's home to tulip fields and strawberry farms.



Words and photographs by Emily Weekes

If we'd come to visit Detour Logistics a few months ago, the neighbouring paddocks would have been awash with colour. Silvan is the epicentre of Victoria's tulip and strawberry growing industries. Yet it's also here that a transport company can quietly grow its business tucked away off the main highway.

Colin Beer grew up in Strathmerton, Victoria – a small town located on the Murray River near the New South Wales border – but has lived and worked all over Australia. He came to Silvan when this site became available. It was an opportunity too good to pass up.

"I was building houses in Western Australia before this business, in a boom that turned into a flop," says Colin. "I was there for 8 years. I came back to Victoria and realised the building industry was very different here, so I went driving and drove trucks for other people before buying one of my own."



Colin Beer, Detour Logistics

GOING THE DISTANCE

In 2008, the Silvan site came on the market. At the time, he had 16 trucks but they were all towing for Linfox, which was about to be hit in the global financial crisis. "I had to find an alternative which was this site," says Colin. "I bought a heap of trailers and concentrated on building the business."

"I was just in the right place at the right time," he says. Linfox eventually recovered and Detour Logistics resumed carting for them but it makes up only half of the business, with the other half being produce that's carted northbound to the markets.





Today, Detour Logistics runs 20 or so B-doubles running interstate with three depots located in Brisbane, Silvan and Shepparton. Brisbane is the largest – near Rocklea and close to the markets. With 50 staff across Australia, Colin has had his hands full these past few years.

All maintenance is done onsite by staff mechanics and, when needed, Colin will still drive interstate. “It’s been me managing 20+ trucks for the last two years and it’s now too big to do all by myself,” he says. “I’m training someone to take over operations and always on the look out for committed staff.”

“We have everything in the workshop nearly every week,” says Colin. “We like to find stuff before it becomes a problem. If the truck is sitting here even for an hour, the guys can just put it in the workshop and take a look.”

During a recent purchase of new prototype trailers from MaxiTrans, Colin chose to install BPW axles fitted with BPW Transpec’s Vigia tyre inflation system. “We’ve had tyre wear issues we haven’t been able to solve so we’ve switched to BPW to help us to get more life out of our tyres.”

“The shock absorbers are positioned differently on BPW running gear,” he explains, which has been proven in many other applications. “They’re more vertical so I think they’ll do what they have to do better than the other trailers which are on more of an angle. We’ve tried every kind of tyre and still end up with scalloping so we’re hoping this will fix it.”

Most of Detour Logistics’ fleet has been painted up. There’s a Central Park trailer that carries pears, stone fruit and apples. Others are painted in tulips or strawberries. “We themed them for our customers,” says Colin. “I just grabbed their logos. Most of them haven’t seen them yet.”

The new trailers have side skirts and custom-designed cabins that have been fitted out with all of the conveniences of home while on the road – new mattress, pull out table, microwave, fridge and television. The padded burgundy upholstery and gold trimmed dashboard adds a lush finish.

Like most transport companies in Australia, Colin is looking for reliable drivers who care as much about tyre wear as he does. With new trailers like these, the conditions are certainly optimal.

STOCKPILING SUCCESS

Paragalli Haulage has been trading since 1985 from Queanbeyan, outside Canberra. Guy Paragalli bought his first truck when interest rates were 24%. Today, he manages a transport fleet and two quarries, supplying a range of products, including the best brick sand in Canberra.

Words and photographs by Emily Weekes





STOCKPILING SUCCESS

Guy Paragalli was 23 when he started working in quarry excavation. He was newly married, saving to buy a house, and he and his wife were expecting their first child. After six years' training as a cabinet-maker, Guy had returned to his first love – trucks – and finally bought one of his own.

"I've had a passion for trucks ever since I was a kid," says Guy. "I used to drive with my dad and was always looking out the window at trucks as they drove past."

His new job meant working 120-hour weeks

internally at the quarry. While the job helped him save and fend off those interest rates, the hours were brutal on a young family; eventually, Guy started to think about starting his own business.

"They're the sacrifices you make," says Guy with a shrug. "There were no overheads or OHS working at the quarry. You just worked as hard and as much as you could."

When he started on his own, Guy worked in hire and deliveries. He had a little yard, "about the size of a house". On the quiet days,

they stockpiled materials there, delivering mostly sand and other quarry products out of Canberra.

As the business grew, Guy faced a crossroads – hire or deliveries. "It was a pretty big call," says Guy. "You had to have the work to do deliveries." Some days he'd only do two loads, but slowly, the business grew. Then along came mobile phones.

"I think I was the second driver in Canberra with a mobile phone," says Guy. "I could run an office out of a truck, which was very important.





L-R: Guy Paragalli with Kevin Adolphus (BPW Transpec)



This was the biggest thing that changed for me – mobile phones!”

Today, Paragalli Haulage has screening plants, excavators, loaders, dump trucks and processing plants. They cart all sorts of sand, soil, rock and dirt. They have two quarries – one in Braidwood and one in Bungendore – where they collect the product, bringing it to the yard to be dispersed into smaller trucks.

“We’re constantly looking for quarries and better sources of sand,” explains Guy. “It’s exciting when you find one. You get a huge sense of achievement! We pay royalties to the property owner but we own the DA (development authority) and have to look after everything else – roads, water, and drainage.”

The quarries are about 30 minutes from Queanbeyan.

“I invested a lot to set that up properly,” says Guy. “It has beautiful access, a two-lane road going in, all DGB, compacted and drained, so if it rains you can drive in and out without a problem. There’s about 60 years’ worth of sand out there. It will do my lifetime, my kids and their kids.”

Paragalli also has truck and dogs working on contract for Holcim at the quarries. All of its fleet run on BPW axles and suspension. “The first trailer I bought had second-hand axles and a brand I’d never seen before,” says Guy. “Everyone I knew had BPW axles because they were strong and didn’t have problems.”

“Some of the body builders try to push us onto different makes but whenever we give in, we have nothing but trouble,” says Guy. “Now, I don’t want to hear about any other brand but BPW.”

“The back up is always there and the service is good.”

Paragalli Haulage mainly uses Hercules trailers today, a relationship that goes back to 1994 when Hercules first started.

The fleet travels mostly in an 80km radius, but sometimes takes loads to Sydney or down the coast. They deliver sand to Orange and often return with granite, so while the distances aren’t huge, the loads can be heavy and they need reliable gear.

Today, Paragalli Haulage has the biggest landscaping yard in Canberra. There’s a workshop onsite with two full time mechanics to service the fleet and they’ve already outgrown the office they built seven years ago.

“You have to keep up with the times,” says Guy. “We invest in tracking and have cameras everywhere – it’s not about trust, it’s for safety. It’s also easier for us to see where everyone is so we can tell who’s closer for jobs and when to allocate trucks.”

One of his drivers, Ben has been working for him for 15 years and is now driving Paragalli’s new 900 limited edition B-double tipper equipped with EDBRO hoists and BPW axles and suspension.

This comeback model has an old-school style cabin that’s much revered by truck lovers.

“When I started out I had something to prove,” Guy explains. “But I also thought, just go in with a positive attitude and see what you can do.” In the early days, he’d start work at 4am and finish at 8pm, only to tackle paperwork through the night, with his wife’s help and three children at home.

“In everything you do, you have to have that drive,” he says. “You can’t give up. There’s always someone who can help you, or you can help yourself, but you need to have a good attitude.”

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Words by Mark Pearce

Heath Skinner from Team Transport and Logistics talks through the unconventional choices for creating strong leadership structure and a compelling career path for youth.

Team Transport and Logistics is one of the largest, privately owned transport companies operating in Queensland. All up, they own over 250 pieces of equipment, ranging from one-tonne Utes, flat tops and floats, to side loaders and crane trucks, capturing high performance values for their employees and contractors who are dedicated to service, safety and integrated transport solutions.

For a long time, Team Transport specialised in carrying scaffolding materials and general cartage for the construction industry.





Team Transport and Logistics drivers in front of their fleet (Queensland)



OUTSIDE THE BOX

However, when the Global Financial Crisis hit in 2008 and the building trade 'went to the wall', the family-owned company was forced to rethink and diversify.

Today, their task force provides essential support to over 1,500 clientele, transporting specialised hire equipment for construction customers, the mining, oil and gas industries, and civil engineering and infrastructure firms. The company was founded by Steve Skinner

and Gail Casey in 1981; today, Steve's son Heath Skinner heads up transport operations. Heath notes that undergoing big change in the last decade has been complex but the challenges have been overcome because of their ethos of embracing 'outside-the-box' ideas.

"My father and Gail started the business from a little office at home with just a couple of taxi trucks," Heath recalls. "Over the years it has

grown through innovation, transparency and accountability. It's called Team Transport because the whole purpose is to work together as a team and be accountable for everything we do."

To encourage collaboration and shared trust, familiar roles at the top have been discarded in favour of a self-managing team. As Heath explains, "We don't have a general manager. We have a leadership team who work



Members of the Team Transport and Logistics leadership team:
Left to right – Brett Seers, Kylie Wilkinson, and Heath Skinner.



together and meet once a month. They give account on the progress of the business and make the necessary actions to move forward in positive ways. Our executive coordinator, Kylie Wilkinson manages the process and then reports back to our company directors, Steve and Gail."

With the current sprawl of low-density development across the outer Brisbane suburbs and regional Queensland, the company is once again flourishing. Even so, Team Transport face new hurdles every day and their continued success hinges on a core set of fundamentals which the leadership group initiate. This includes attitudes towards industry knowledge, customer loyalty, community support, and a youthful outlook. A real success story over the last decade has been their commitment and dedication to employ younger drivers.

Many freight companies today avoid giving younger drivers a chance because of high insurance premiums associated with inexperience, but Team Transport once again breaks the industry mould.

"While there is a place for experienced drivers, we want to invest in a fleet of younger drivers because they keep our business sustainable, vibrant and upbeat and that's what we are all about! We have a desire to get younger people into the industry," Heath says.

"We employ people of all ages but we also have a focus for drivers in their mid-twenties. Our full-time Health and Safety Officer and driver-trainers instruct them to handle our 8-tonne training trucks over a 3-month period in preparation for using our bigger gear. Once they fully trust their skills and safety methods we implement through our own modules, we pay for their heavy-duty truck tickets and hope they become long-term employees."

In an atmosphere of trust there's generally greater productivity and better use of resources, which complements the company drumbeat to create safe and efficient methods for their drivers and customers.

As evidence of this, Heath conveyed his concerns around using equipment older than a decade. In a quest for efficiency gains, over the past 18 months he has ordered 15 new trucks and acquired two Hammar side loaders, fitted with the new lightweight BPW drum brake axles and AL2 Highway series suspensions.

The new lightweight drum brake axles, which now roll off the BPW production line 'as standard', shave-off 7kg of cast iron on each drum, offering operators and body-builders remarkable improvements to meet a variety of wheel-base length and weight restrictions. The high quality Hammar trailers have replaced Team Transport's older style loaders, and work in combination with their fleet of flat tops to run dedicated trips from the Brisbane wharf, direct to their customers' doors throughout Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast.

"These side loaders are very exciting for us as we are always looking to see what can be added to make our fleet safer and more cost efficient," Heath says.

As an alternative to using tilt-trays, the Hammar lifters are picking up 25 tonne containers, yet at times they lift 35 tonne boxes off the flat top units.

"The whole point of these side loaders is to service our flat tops. They run around 24/7, and do a lot of miles every day. In theory they do more driving time than the flat tops because they're double-shifted and constantly on the go."

Heath also notes that Team Transport is a first-time user of BPW equipment but the

lightweight and durable dynamics of the drum brake axles is a product he welcomes into his fleet.

"There's less moving parts on all the engineering so there's less chance of things going wrong. Overall, we are spending half the maintenance time on brakes compared to our old drums. The set-up of BPW gives the brakes longevity and the lightweight factor is proving to be a perfect fit for these trailers. It makes sense for us because it's all about simple economics."

Heath believes these new ideas are having a direct impact regarding reliability for their operators and customers, and their bottom line.

"Just like the new lightweight drum design, there's no harm in having a new idea when you can execute it correctly to suit your application," Heath says.

Heath also adds that implementing smart business practices, be it innovative or otherwise, always boils down to personnel expertise and how they communicate with other members of the team. According to Heath, this is an open secret on why Team Transport has become a real force in the marketplace.

"Since the early 1980s, my father has driven the business through some tough economical periods, when many others have failed. His leadership has educated me that it's all about 'working together' to make it survive."

"I'm proud of what he has achieved and my purpose, as I see it, is to make sure the company lives on for a long time because this is his legacy to our family and the Australian transport industry."

THE LIGHTEST



OF LOADS

Words and photographs by Emily Weekes

Shandley's Transport recently took delivery of an extra-long 34 and a half metre road train for the new PBS. This combination could carry a 67 tonne load, but Shandley's product is so light it will barely half that. Instead, this extra-long combination has been designed to deliver more volume – 200 cubic metres.

It's been several years since the Transpec Digest visited David Shandley in Dandenong South, just 30km outside of Melbourne. This family business has been busy delivering chicken litter - wood shavings from around Victoria and rice hulls from Deniliquin, New South Wales – to its customers.

In that time, two of David's daughters – Jasmine and Taiha, both in their early twenties – have joined the business. They've also begun to invest in bigger trucks like this road train, which is designed to achieve the greatest cubic metre capacity possible while traveling on Victorian and New South Wales roads.

With a storage depot in Deniliquin, and yards in Yarragon, Dandenong South and Geelong, Shandley's Transport has a steady flow of customers requiring chicken litter. This lightweight product is used to line the shed floors at poultry farms.

"If we carry more, it just makes our lives



SHANDLEY'S TRANSPORT • VIC

"ANYTHING WE BUILD
NEW HAS BPW AXLES
ON IT,...IT'S A NO
BRAINER FOR US".

- DAVID SHANDLEY,
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
SHANDLEY TRANSPORT



THE LIGHTEST OF LOADS

easier,” says David. “We don’t go by tonnage because our product is so light. We charge by cubic metre instead.” This new road train will primarily run to and from Deniliquin each day, to feed the depot with product and make the business more efficient overall.

The new road train will be tracked for its hours, weight and where it travels, being permitted to travel only on specific routes. It’s an A-double road train combination equipped with BPW axles, suspension and EBS braking system plus the Cargo Floor unit built by Pumpa Manufacturing in Swan Hill, Victoria.

rear self-tracking steer axles on the trailers for the road train to make it track better, which is something we haven’t done before so I’m looking forward to seeing how that goes.”

“We wanted to keep our turn radius as good as we could, so the whole combination tracks,” he explains. “If we’re going around roundabouts and tight corners we need to know we can get to where we have to go for our customers.”

Getting PBS approval was relatively easy in Victoria but more difficult in New South Wales. While the road train only needs to travel 35 kilometres across the border, it’s the

says. “The hardest part is knowing the proper channels to go through. We thought we had everything on the right track but there were a couple of things we’d done slight wrong that set us back a little.”

“There aren’t a lot of companies running these kinds of combinations in Victoria so we couldn’t ask around,” says David before clarifying, “there are companies running A-doubles in Victoria but they cart different goods, so they’re looking for weight whereas we wanted volume.”



After twelve months of development and PBS paperwork, the road train is almost ready to get on the road. David’s daughter Jasmine has been tasked with managing the compliance required to operate on road networks in Victoria and New South Wales – Deniliquin is only 75km from Echuca, Victoria.

“We applied for extra length because a normal A-double is 30 metres,” explains David. “We pushed it out to get the volume we needed. Our product is so light we can travel on the normal road network easily enough but we needed to get everything in place to get approved for PBS.”

“Anything we build new has BPW axles on it,” says David. “It’s a no brainer for us.” We put

bridges that provide the biggest challenge for combinations of this size.

“It was easier to get the paperwork through in Victoria because they’re already introducing this kind of vehicle, but in New South Wales, they were a little more stringent with their laws,” says David. “Once they realised we’re not heavy then it wasn’t as big of an issue.”

“If we were looking for the weight this road train could legally carry – around 79.5 tonnes – we wouldn’t have been able to get in through,” says David. “It’s because we’re not that heavy that we’re allowed to travel over the Echuca-Moama Bridge at the state border.”

“It was a bit of a learning curve, but if we had to do it again, we’d no doubt find it easier,” he

The trailers are designed with a canvas top that folds back so that silos can drop wood shavings or rice hulls in from above. The load will sit about a foot above the trailer frame when initially loaded before being given a bit of a shake – think jerking the trailer backwards and forwards – to compact it down.

David had been mulling over the idea of this combination for a long time. One of his drivers suggested it and now, he’ll be the one to get behind the wheel and drive it between Dandenong and Deniliquin. “I hadn’t contemplated going for length because I didn’t think we could. It’s been great to see we can.”

MIXED BUSINESS



Gates Haulage has serviced many industries over the past four decades, shifting focus to suit the changing needs of customers in the Illawarra region of New South Wales. Based in Gerringong, just south of Kiama, this family business started like many others – with one truck and two brothers.

Words and photographs by Emily Weekes

Gates Haulage began in 1971, but brothers, Bryan and Stan Gates began working together years earlier. "We started with a Leyland Comet carting pit props for the coal mines," says Bryan. "We were in Kiama then and just a couple of young blokes."

In 1980, Bryan and Stan bought a yard in Gerringong and established Gates Haulage. Bryan's home was on the property and the office barely one hundred yards from the back door. It stayed this way until a year ago, when the business moved across the street.

Bryan jokes about his commute to work and the perils of navigating traffic now that he has to leave the home property to go to work. But, with 7 or so staff onsite, moving the office into a refurbished home in a neighbouring street made sense.



MIXED BUSINESS

"We've been here 12 months," explains Paul. "It was an old house and an opportunity came up so we turned it into our office. It's been a lot better over here. I think Dad would like us closer. Now he has to walk across the road rather than out into the backyard!"

In the 1970s, Bryan and Stan also carted fish out of Eden to Sydney and from Rose Bay

back down the coast. "We threw the fish in the tippers, with ice and tarps," says Bryan, laughing at the memory. "At the time, you wouldn't get stopped because of having perishable goods on board."

Today, Gates Haulage runs a fleet of around 40-50 trucks. Bryan's son, Paul came into the business 18 years ago and oversees logistics;



L-R: Stephen, Bryan and Paul Gates.



ON CHOOSING BPW,
PAUL SAYS: IT'S JUST A
VERY GOOD PRODUCT."

and while Stan has retired, his son, Stephen came into the business five years ago and now manages compliance.

"We started off carting timber mine props – they were cut to a certain size and used to prop up walls – but eventually, the mines moved to steel props and because BHP owned most of the coal mines in the region, well they decided to use their own steel as props," says Bryan.

The Gates brothers learned to adapt.

"There were no refrigerated trucks to do those jobs those days," he says. "We carted ice for many years to the campers. There were iceboxes in Kiama and Gerringong and it cost 40 cents for a block of ice. We used to sell 4 or 5 tonnes a day."

These days, the business services a broad range of customers. For the last 20 years they've been hauling quarry products to construction sites, most of which are in Sydney, as well as hazardous waste products to waste facilities, and other specialised freight to as far away as Alice Springs and Kalgoorlie – although these are the exception rather than the norm.



"The main business is the construction arm," says Stephen. "There's so much construction and infrastructure building going on in Sydney, and that's where most of our work tends to be." The fleet is made up mostly of tippers and a cement tanker, with quad dogs, cube bins and semi trailers among it.

"Over time, we might have worked for all the majors," says Paul. "But we just decided to look after our customers who've always been there, year in year out. We're pretty loyal to our clientele and because of that, we've grown as they've grown."

Stephen agrees. "We don't have any major customer or contract that's more than 20% of what we do. That's why we have such a broad fleet, we've tried to cover all areas, so if someone calls up we can take care of them then."

While 98% of their work is in feeding the construction industry in Sydney, Gates Haulage still does a lot of work out of the State Rail Quarry in nearby Bombo. "All of our work is ad hoc," says Paul. "We move 200 to 250 loads a day and try to make it work for everyone."

The main office is an impressive set up of display monitors with tracking software that shows the location of every truck on screen here and also in the workshop via a tablet. "We like to think we're bigger than we are," laughs Paul. "The screens and tracking help us to do right by our drivers and our customers."

The business recently purchased new trailers from Sloanebuilt and we chose to run them on BPW equipment.

"We have new tri-axle trailers, quad dog tippers running on BPW equipment," says Paul. "They're all Sloanebuilt. We don't go anywhere else and we don't haggle with them. We're very much about service and loyalty and they're very good to us."

On choosing BPW, Paul says: "It's just a very good product."

"We have some rough jobs," says Bryan. "We do a lot of excavation sites, so we're not just delivering to concrete plants. It's tough of the gear and tyres, so we need to be able to get in and out of tight and congested sites, especially in Sydney."

Gates Haulage trucks must negotiate Mount Ousley, a treacherously steep road crossing

the Illawarra escarpment, which at its peak reaches 803 metres high. "It's a very hard hill on the trucks," says Paul. "We go up there three times a day and you get found out pretty quick if you're not running the right gear."

Across the road, in the workshop, there are two full-time mechanics, a boilermaker and an apprentice, as well as casual staff who come in to help out with overflow work. There's also a third generation testing out the waters, Paul's 14-year-old daughter has been helping in the office some weekends.

"We've been lucky in the last few years and we have good staff," says Paul. "We really never planned to grow, it just came out of necessity more than anything else. I think by having extra hands to help, things have become easier in the business."

"When I started here we didn't really have any drivers up for Long Service Leave but now we have nearly a dozen guys who are due," he says. "It's pretty rare in our industry and we're quite proud of that for what was a backyard company, to have guys who have been with us for so long."

"Dad doesn't have many holidays, so we're trying to work on that," adds Paul, wryly.

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With the roller door operated by a switch, or a remote, getting the door up and down is substantially easier on the driver as well as the truck, eliminating any up or down slamming.



ROLLER UP

Speed and convenience are great, but Razor's Power Door also improves efficiency and the all- important health and safety.

Words and photographs by Dean Evans

Opening and closing a panel roller door on a truck isn't exactly a difficult operation, nor is it one that really demands a better solution. With the weighting and springing done right, a new roller door on the back of a typical delivery truck will lift lightly and easily, and in just a few seconds. But the parameters for the ease of that happening aren't always user-friendly or long-term.

It's assuming the operator has their hands totally free, it assumes the equipment is new and lubricated, not worn and free-gliding, and it doesn't always consider any wear aspects that could contribute to difficult operation. Of course it also assumes the operator is in full perfect health, without any physical injuries or limitations. And significantly, there's also the other key aspect of closing the door: from the need to climb or step up to reach the pull handle, the physical nature of reaching high, and potential injuries as a result, either though back, arm, shoulder, or even lower body injuries from slipping, scraping, falling or worse.

So it quickly becomes apparent, that the simple process of opening and closing a roller door can be a lot riskier than it first appears, particularly with modern health and safety standards imposed not just on the operator, but the business owner.

That's how this solution came about for Auckland's Allied Liquor, and it was an unintended but very welcome addition to the fleet, says Distribution Manager Warwick Thomson. "We were having an Isuzu truck built in early 2017," recalls Warwick, "and

there was some discussion about looking at improving how the roller doors went up and down. We were approached by Boss Motorbodies, who does work for us, and they suggested this new idea, using the Razor gear.

"One of the guys got in contact with me and explained the concept and how it worked, that they'd fit it, and see how it worked in the field. So they did that to this Isuzu, and much to the delight of our drivers, it worked a treat."

The ease and speed of operation is even better than the manual system, with a switch fitted to the back of the truck that allows the operator to raise or lower the door in less than 10 seconds, without any physical stress.

Plus there's also a remote that the driver can wear around his neck, so when exiting the cabin, they press the button and the door is open by the time they reach the back.

"It also means our guys don't have to climb up to grab the door to close it, or put a piece of string on to pull it down," adds Warwick. "It saves shoulders, knees... the guys banging their legs... the whole operation is just seamless and they've been a delight to use. We fitted them to two trucks, and all the guys who use it say how much they like it."

Using the Razor Power Door components, similar to the system used on Razor's Power Tarp and Power Legs, the multi-use motor, battery and charger system is wired in and offers a number of uses and configurations. The Power Door system is a simple, retro-fit that's also suitable for refrigerated freight, dry freight, semi-trailer or rigid van doors. The

system also features multi-operational points, manual override back-up and a safety stop sensor.

Fitting the system is reasonably simple, too, according to Marin from Auckland's Boss Motorbodies who fitted these kits to the Allied Liquor trucks. The kits consist of an electric motor, controller, battery and charger, wiring harness and hardware kit, with the key components either mounted out of harm's way, or underneath on the chassis.

"The motor is mounted up high, just above the roller door. The controller mounts underneath, and the button goes under the floor," explains Marin.

"It takes about 4-5 hours to fit," he adds.

"We've done around 10 so far this year, and we normally do around 20-30 a year. Plus there's no limit to the size of the door... we've just done a 3m high garage door, no problem."

"Everything is tucked away, and nothing gets damaged," adds Warwick. "Sometimes we do kegs and if they're not tied down properly they move around; but even if they do become dislodged and move around, there's no concerns about the internal parts of the Power Door being damaged as it's all mounted away from potential damage and protected."

Warwick sums up his thoughts on the Razor Power Door quite simply: "We haven't had any problems at all, and they've been great. We'll certainly carry on using it, and for any future trucks we'll definitely be putting them on."

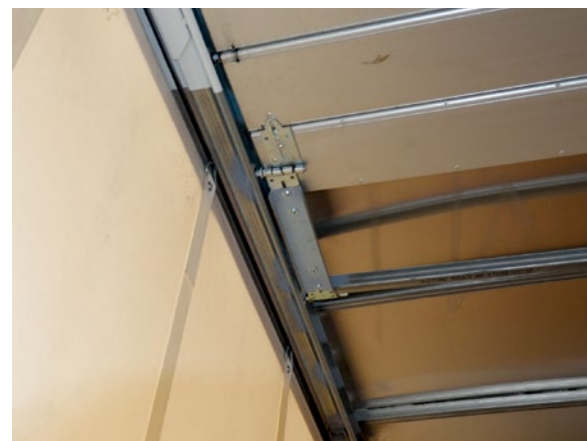
A simple solution for a simple operation, just faster, safer and better.



The switch is mounted under the rear, for easy access.



The main battery and charger is mounted out of harm's way under the chassis.



The motor is mounted up top and protected as the door slides up its rails.



L-R: Cameron, Hayden and Gordon Simpson

FUELED FOR LIFE

Words and photographs by Emily Weekes

Just two hours north of Melbourne, en route to Victoria's ski fields sits the town of Alexandra, a close-knit community of around 2600 residents. Here, the Simpson family began a transport business in 1953, flanked by forests, farmland, waterways and mountains. It's still going strong.

In the early days, the Simpson's family business carted goods from the railway to the shops before moving into delivering general freight and fuel in the late 1970s. When Gordon Simpson took over the family business from his father, he chose to focus on fuel and today, that's the business' strength.

Simpsons Fuel Distributor is today, run by Gordon and his wife, Janene along with their children, Cameron, Hayden and Sarah. They deliver fuel across a 100km radius out of Alexandra carting into forests and mines, farms and towns, traversing mountainous highways in belting sun and snow.

Each of the Simpson children ventured away from the family business for a time – establishing careers of their own before returning to the fold. Cameron and Hayden

worked in Western Australian in the mines; Sarah was Head of Catering at a leading outdoor education company in the region. This third generation business is a family one through and through.

"We don't work our trucks seven days a week and we don't do night shift," says Gordon. "We prefer all our drivers to be home with their families and kids. Our drivers are local and have been here a long time. We don't want them driving trucks on the highway day and night. That's just what we're about."

Each day, Simpsons sends two 20-metre truck and dog and semi tankers to Caltex's Newport terminal. Here they collect five kinds of diesel, as well as unleaded and 98-octane fuel. Each tanker has four compartments in each barrel so different

products can be transported at the same time. There's a catch though. Each product has a different weight meaning there's considerable work in making sure each load is calibrated correctly.

Three years ago, Simpsons collaborated with tanker manufacturer Tieman to build a 57 and a half tonne A-double tanker with BPW axles underneath. It was the first of its kind to run on the new PBS and today these tankers are an industry standard.

"Tippers had been carting 57 and a half tonnes for ages, but no one had done it with fuel. It took us a while to get that through but now it's the norm," says Gordon. "The first one is always the hardest. We specified that we wanted BPW axles on the truck and dogs because our previous trailer did."

"When you see the logging contractors and mining trucks using BPW products, well, if it's good enough for them, it's good enough for us," he says. His son, Cameron agrees: "We haven't touched anything on that trailer in the three years we've had it. It's been inspected and that's that."

For Gordon, choosing BPW is also about customer service. "Whenever we drive into Laverton for a service we're treated like lifelong friends," he laughs. "If we have time they'll show us their work. They're passionate. It makes it easy for us because we know that they care about their customers."

When the tanker was built and first put on the road three years ago, it took some time to get the different specifications to 'talk' to each other. "We had to make sure it was as good as it could be, especially with the new PBS," says Cameron. "That was the hardest bit."

This modest fleet of tankers traverses diverse and difficult terrain in Victoria's High Country while driving daily on freeways into Melbourne. Simpsons navigate tight mountain roads in icy conditions and snow, as well as through extreme heat that can bring on bushfires during summer months.

As a trained mechanic, Cameron tinkered until he found the optimal way to handle the

new tanker. "Our truck gear ratios have been modified to rev way out of the fuel economy range on the highway," says Cameron, chuckling. "Everyone freaks out when I explain what we're doing."

"But when they come for a drive, they tell us we've spec'ed it perfectly. By revving higher, the tanker pulls harder on the road and there are far less gear changes in the hills, so it really does even out," he says. Last year, Cameron was named the most fuel-efficient Volvo driver in Victoria. It's perhaps not surprising.

He'd been using Volvo's Dynafleet Telematics app to calculate his average braking speed, fuel consumption and driving efficiency and enjoying the challenge that comes with tweaking your performance on the road and seeing real-time data results online.

What Cameron didn't realise is that Volvo was watching too.

"We got the app mostly for its tracking ability so we could see where our trucks were at all times," says Cameron. "But last year Volvo decided to go through the app and watch everyone's driving for a month to choose the best drivers to compete in the annual Volvo Driver Fuel Challenge."

After being chosen as the most fuel-efficient Volvo driver in Victoria, Cameron was flown to Queensland to compete with another 30 or so drivers for the Australian off-road Volvo Driver Fuel Challenge title. He won the nationals and came second in the world championships in Sweden.

"In Queensland, they had an ambulance on standby because they thought someone might get hurt," says Cameron. "But Haydn and I had raced 4WDs when we lived in Western Australia, so we've always been pretty relaxed about racing off road."

"I was driving a tipper for the competition," he says. "We don't do a lot of off road driving in Victoria, but I guess we drive in snow up at Mt Buller and supply several logging companies in the region – so I probably had more practice than most!"

"No one knew we were being watched on that app so it made the competition more even," says Cameron. If an app can encourage better fuel usage, safer driving and more even wear on our roads, then businesses like the Simpsons' will surely be around for many more generations to come.

"What I like about BPW is that they're always trying to be better," he says. "They're leaders." The same could be said of the Simpson family.

"WHEN YOU SEE THE LOGGING CONTRACTORS AND MINING TRUCKS USING BPW PRODUCTS, WELL, IF IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR THEM, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR US."

GORDON SIMPSON



EXPERIENCE SHOWS

CUSTOMERS
ARE THE KEY

Words and photographs by Edwin Higginson

Ron Finemore is a well-known name in the Transport Industry, with over 50 years of experience working for some of Australia's leading brands in the Food and Energy sectors. Showing that being customer focused is the key to success.

L-R: Leigh Brothers and Laurie Brothers



EXPERIENCE SHOWS CUSTOMERS ARE THE KEY

Finemore Holdings originated back to the 1960s, when Ron grew the business from scratch before it was acquired by Toll in 2001. After a short break, Ron established the current business, Ron Finemore Transport, in 2004 after the acquisition of Wodonga based company, Lewington's

Transport, followed shortly afterwards by the purchase of Smiths Transport of Orange in 2005.

Based on the simple principles of providing Customers with safe, reliable and cost-effective road transport with first class customer service, Ron Finemore Transport

has grown to become a recognised brand with the distinctive red and green fleet.

Today, the business employs around 460 staff across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, with a modern fleet of over 200 Trucks and 450 plus pieces of trailing equipment.

"PEOPLE OFTEN LOOK AT WHAT WE ARE DOING AND WONDER WHY, BUT WE ALWAYS WORK WITH THE OEMS TO TRIAL BETTER PRODUCTS TO ENSURE THEY ARE SAFE, RELIABLE AND COST-EFFECTIVE."

**LAURIE BROTHERS,
CHIEF FLEET AND MAINTENANCE MANAGER,
RON FINEMORE TRANSPORT.**



Since the re-emergence of Ron Finemore Transport, Laurie Brothers has been at the forefront of the business driving its growth as the Managing Director from 2004 to 2015. Then as part of the business' long-term succession planning, he stepped into the Chief Fleet and maintenance position, handing over the MD role to Mark Parry.

Working alongside Laurie is his son, Leigh Brothers, whose first job was washing trailers for Ron whilst he was still at High school. Then over the past 11 years, Leigh has held different Operational roles and now Maintenance operations Manager for both the Wodonga and Orange NSW workshops. "It's important to understand transport even at the basic level," Leigh comments, "The Brothers family

has a close connection with the Finemore family, so transport is in our blood."

With 37 years of experience working with Ron, Laurie knows that to be customer focused, they constantly need to look for the most reliable, cost-effective products they can.

Across the fleet of 450 trailers, where over 40% operate under PBS, Laurie explains that they have found certain brands suit them well. "Holmwood Highgate and Marshall Lethlean make up the majority of the Fuel tanker fleet, with some recent additions from Tieman tankers working under PBS." For the bulk tippers, Tefco and Byrne are the main supplier, with Freighter and Vawdrey focusing on the tautliners.

For their Refrigerated work, "Maxicube and

FTE dominated, then in 2014 we needed some trailers quickly so bought directly out of Wabash in the US, but more recently we've gone with Cartwright 26 pallet refrigerated trailers out of the UK."

In terms of running gear, he goes on to explain that "The fleet was originally on a different brand when we acquired the businesses back in 2004 and 2005. Then we started to look at reliability and cost-effectiveness so started to buy BPW products. Our fleet works regionally up and down the East Coast of Australia, so we wanted to set and forget as long as we did the scheduled maintenance."

As one of the first users of the new BPW Eco 3 axles, fitted to their Cartwright trailers, Leigh has been pleased with their performance,



"They have been trouble free so far. We've done their initial warranty service, and everything has been within tolerance as we would expect, covering over 150,000kms in just 5 months. Drivers have also been impressed with how the trailers ride."

The trailers are fitted with disc brakes, EBS and 385/55R22.5 wide singles on alcoa rims, to lower weight and improve fuel efficiency. "We've started to move towards BPW with Disc brakes and EBS as we find they are more compatible with the modern European trucks, especially effective running over the hills from Orange to Sydney daily."

The axle setup has also been noticed by the drivers too, with driver Mark commenting during the photoshoot that; "They ride super well. I had to hit the brakes hard to avoid a kangaroo the other day and even though the trailer was empty, it didn't get out of shape. When running at full weight you hardly notice its behind you."

Even with the best equipment and practices, Laurie ends by noting "We couldn't operate the business without the people. Its why we invest so much in training with 8-10 inhouse trainers. We then get help from the OEMs, with BPW being the first to put their hands up to assist with technical training when new products come along."



"WE MADE THE CHANGE TO BPW IN 2011 AND WE HAVE NEVER SWAYED SINCE."

NATHAN HOWELL

FAMILY HEIRLOOMS

Words and photographs by Mark Pearce

Like many parents, Nathan and Bronwen Howell are passing down all things valuable to their children; as well, they have rediscovered a family heirloom that remains in their transport business today.

It's three o'clock in the Howell family household on a relaxed Sunday afternoon where husband and wife team, Nathan and Bronwen, cook up a roast dinner for their three young children: Charlie, Darcy and Elise.

The ritual Sunday feast around the table is honoured with more than good food and drink; as well, each family member chronicles the best parts of their week in a memory book, where moments in time are captured and wisdom, life experiences and achievements are shared.

"We make them think about what they have done and who they are," Nathan says nobly.

"It's about turning them into little respectable human beings."

As the memory book gets passed around, Bronwen fesses up, "For us, it's usually something about having three trucks come off in one hit," she laughs.

Nathan had the special experience of being raised in rural Central Queensland and Bronwen being from the city. The teenage sweethearts eventually settled down and bought their first home in the small township of Moura. But the unassuming livelihood of working the mines was not an ideal fit for Nathan. He had a greater plan.

"Nathan came home one night and said, 'I'm



L-R: Bronwen and Nathan Howell of VE Group AU

looking for more of a challenge and passed the idea of starting our own Company,” Bronwen recalls. “And I said, ‘Okay!’”

“The mining industry just wasn’t for me,” Nathan agrees. “Construction is what I’ve always grown up with.

“Mum and Dad were owner operators with a truck and pig trailer, a CAT Loader and 3-tonne tip truck servicing local council and farming requirements in and around Central Queensland. As kids, on weekends we would all draw straws and fight over who was going to go with Dad in the truck!”

It was Nathan’s father, Neil Howell, whose ideals continue today at Nathan and Bronwen’s transport company, VE Group AU. “He inspired a lot of the things we have implemented,” Nathan remarks. “Dad’s tipper bins were Shephard bins, his trailer suspension was BPW, and he loved to own good-looking gear.”

In the early 1980s, Neil purchased a low loader tag trailer, which was similar to a Super-dog design, built with BPW spring suspension. He eventually sold the trailer in the early 1990s but as luck would have it, Nathan and Bronwen rediscovered the float still working in the township of Banana, Central Queensland.

“We bought Dad’s tag trailer in 2012. It was his original float. It’s a family heirloom,” Nathan says, grinning from ear to ear.

“We paid cash for it at the time, and it’s still

running around today on the BPWs behind our Metro Liner, mobilising our equipment on civil sites. It’s become part of our drive for diversity and full service package so we don’t have to rely on subcontractors.”

Nathan and Bronwen registered the company as Valley Excavations QLD in 2006 with a bobcat and one tip truck to their name. Business snowballed during their first decade, but when the marketplace took a sharp nosedive in 2015, they restructured the business, dropped the label ‘excavations’, and moved to the ‘big smoke’ with intentions of developing relationships for a limitless pit of work.

“We came down to Brisbane in 2016 and bought another business to transport sandstone blocks. That side of the business has grown from two trucks to in excess of ten additional trucks, trailers and many other pieces of earthmoving equipment,” Bronwen explains.

Headquartered in the suburb of Riverview, 30km southwest of the Brisbane CBD, today VE Group AU offers heavy haulage services for councils, earthworks contractors and other infrastructure firms. They also tow everything from rock and gravel, to grain and fertilizer carting for quarries, farming and agriculture, road works and landscaping assignments.

The company currently employs 50 staff, runs 33 trucks, 33 trailers, 20 pieces of their

own machinery, and still run their second office in Moura. Bronwen points out that self-sufficiency is something they have strived for since the beginning.

“Where we have come from, you have to offer diversity within your fleet. Most construction companies south east of Brisbane seem to be specialized but we have built up a diverse equipment portfolio for a huge capacity of work and that’s our unique service ability.”

When it comes to heavy haulage, BPW is first on the list at VE Group AU because, as Nathan states, “It lasts the distance for its arduous application.” Over 50 percent of the VE fleet is equipped with BPW running gear, including a 2014 quad-axle Drake low loader, rigged with 19.5” drum brake axles.

This 4x4 full widener works in some of Central Queensland’s toughest conditions pulling up to 51 tonnes (with a 2x4 dolly) of earthmoving equipment.

“There’s no second-guessing with this gear because it’s massive equipment and you need everything to be right when you’re on the road,” Nathan says.

“I originally got talked out of BPW because the product was too heavy. But we’ve had other axle brands breaking all the time on the roads up north. We made the change to BPW in 2011 and we have never swayed since.”

Nathan made it clear, “There will always be a place in our fleet for BPW.”

FAMILY HEIRLOOMS



Last year Nathan needed a new float in a hurry to fulfil a contract obligation. A 3x4 Drake deck widener was already under construction and available for acquisition, although it was missing a key component.

"It was half-built and I soon realised it didn't have BPW underneath it, so Drake stopped building the trailer and pushed it aside until the axles turned up. I wasn't going with anything else."

The tri-axle low loader, set with BPW 19.5" drum brakes and spring suspension services Brisbane, transferring equipment around the south east corner of the state.

"If you've got a Kenworth truck pulling a Drake float with BPW axles underneath, you're driving the Rolls-Royce of equipment down the road. There's nothing better."

VE Group AU has recently introduced cutting-edge, live fleet tracking technology to deliver the quickest and safest solutions for their customers. At the same time, they

have shaped their standards and established driver data efficiency through a 95 percent paperless inventory to form a new chapter in their history.

"The live tracking is about streamlining everything we do," Bronwen says. "We know customer expectations are high, it fulfils real-time solutions and the software provides live commercial data, it allows us to switch off when we need to. Running the business is like having a fourth child," she laughs.

Observing the way Nathan and Bronwen go about their daily routines and how they relate to their customers is akin to watching two confident kids playing feverishly in a big sandpit. In other words, their enthusiasm makes hard work look like a hobby.

This impression is exemplified during the local Coal and Country Festival each year. VE Group AU not only backs the festival financially, donating prizes and alike, they also build an entire stand 'just for kids'. Why do they go to all this trouble? Because

these are Nathan and Bronwen's childhood memories of what a field day represents. Nathan describes the stand in more detail...

"We bring in a little 1½ tonne digger with a small custom-built seat on the side and fence it off in an area. We drop a load of sand around it and the kids can actually operate the little digger themselves."

Like all family heirlooms—be they memories, precious artefacts, stories of loved ones, or even an old work trailer—they provide a rare insight into the family heritage which can hold a deep meaning for each generation.

Bronwen firmly reminds us of the importance of family and business. From the personal to the professional, it's clear that their children are at the centre of everything they do.

"Our kids sacrifice a lot for us. And as much as this business is our passion, it has always been created for the children to have. It's about building something so we can all work together as we get older."



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