

NS KOMATSU NEWSLETTER

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

How to reach our target

I am very pleased to report that when our business year ended at the end of March, we had managed to just achieve our sales target, as a result of the efforts of all members of our company. My thanks to you all for this result.

Our company sales turnover was around A\$400 million. This year, we are aiming at around \$500 million. In order to achieve this, we will certainly need your further endeavours, to serve our customers and to make a solid foundation for our business.

Last issue I recommended to you to fix your target and to declare it. I expect that everyone in the company fixed an ambitious target. Our company goal of \$500 million is quite ambitious, but I am confident we can achieve this through the realisation of our 800 employees' individual targets. Therefore, please remember that everyone in the company is important and achieving your target is essential to our total objective.

Of course, the target does not need to be restricted to our professional life. I have also fixed my own personal target for this year and am now declaring it.

The other day, I played golf with a rather aged person and was astonished to see that he could drive the ball well over 250 metres. Then and there, I fixed my target - to reach a 250 metre drive within this year.

Anyone who is proud of their golf driving ability is welcome to invite me to play golf, to check my progress towards my target.

*Tom Hirano
Managing Director*

being regarded as a hero, who through quick action, saved the life of two ladies, himself receiving gunshot wounds in the process.

The trauma being experienced by all Tasmanians and our own people is difficult to understand and impossible to express. NS Komatsu extends its sympathy to all people affected by this tragedy.

*Tom Hirano
Managing Director*

NS Komatsu sympathy to Tasmania

The horror of the Port Arthur massacre at the end of April has shocked all Australians and people in many parts of the world.

Amongst our own Tasmanian staff, Richard Locke has lost relatives and Doug Fulton has a relative who is

IN THIS ISSUE

Who is NS Komatsu?	Page 2
Affirmative Action	Page 2
Celebrity Guessing Game	Page 3
Training Article	Page 3
Marketing Articles	Page 4
Parts Articles	Page 4
Mt Thorley Branch Feature	Page 6
Mystery Jigsaw Puzzle	Page 9
Safety Articles	Page 10
NS Komatsu Quality Arrow	Page 11
Fairfield Branch AS9002 Award	Page 11
Historical Feature Article	Page 12
Best Practices Manager	Page 13
Regional News	Page 13



A Haulpak 830E truck less body awaiting delivery from Mt Thorley Branch, our Special Branch in this issue.

"Down To Earth" is NS Komatsu's official in-house magazine.

NS Komatsu Pty. Ltd.
Cnr Lisbon & Mandarin Streets
Fairfield NSW 2165.
Phone (02) 795 8222 Fax (02) 795 8230

Editor: Barry Potter
Assistant Editor: Rhonda Summerhayes
Contact: Lea Bailey

Regional Contacts:

Western

Fiona Michaelson
Phone (09) 351 0555 Fax (09) 451 8140

South Queensland

Pauline Armstrong
Phone (07) 3246 6222 Fax (07) 3246 6204

Southern

Virginia Davidson
Phone (03) 9359 3255 Fax (03) 9205 9350

North Queensland

Kim Melham
Phone (079) 403 100 Fax (079) 523 070

Fairfield

Sue Mcleod
Phone (02) 795 8300 Fax (02) 795 8345

Hunter Valley

Susan Haines
Phone (065) 722 866 Fax (065) 746 679

Printer :

Colanco Printing Services Pty. Limited
Unit 3, Cnr. Woodpark Rd. & Cooper St.,
Smithfield, NSW 2164
Phone (02) 609 3055 Fax (02) 725 1870

This Magazine is printed on 50% recycled oxygen bleached paper.

Editor's Comments

We are sorry when people find it is their time to move on and it was with regret, but also with our best wishes, that we saw Michelle Jones, our Assistant Editor, leave the company. Michelle has gone to the Hilton Hotel chain, where we are sure she will be a success. "Down To Earth" thanks Michelle for her able assistance with all the previous issues.

At the same time, we are very pleased to welcome Rhonda Summerhayes, of Head Office Service Department, on the team as our new Assistant Editor. Rhonda joined Komatsu Australia back in 1988 and has seen many changes, as we moved step by step to become the NS Komatsu of today. "Down To Earth" is very



pleased to have Rhonda's experience on the team.

In another change, our Hunter Valley Contact Lesley McDonald, has moved by promotion to become the Quality Assurance Coordinator at Mt. Thorley. Congratulations Lesley and thank you for your work with "Down to Earth". Susan Haines has also been promoted and in addition to her new Service Clerk duties, will be our new Hunter Valley Contact. Welcome to "Down to Earth", Susan!

We have had a suggestion that space should be made available, for people to send in any comments concerning articles printed in "Down To Earth". Readers are strongly encouraged to write to the Editor, and we will gladly print these in a "Letters To The Editor" column.

- Editor.

Who is NS Komatsu?

In this issue, we continue listing some of our people who have long experience on our products. We decided that 10 years is appropriate, for including in the list.

Head Office

Les Ellen 23 yrs
H/pak/Komatsu

North Queensland

Col Edwards 15 yrs Mackay

Western Region

Kurt Stiller 20 yrs Perth
Lyne Shearer 16 yrs Perth
Rodney Berry 12 yrs Perth
Troy Bouckaert 12 yrs Perth

(continued on Page 11)

▲ *Affirmative Action seminar participants: back row: Melbourne, Virginia Davidson; Head Office, Elizabeth Carr, Efi Letele, Jenny Richards, Rhonda Summerhayes; Fairfield, Val Wilcox. Front row: Perth, Denise Butter; Mt Thorley, Lesley McDonald; MTIA, Adrian Price; Brisbane, Jane Brimblecombe; Fairfield, Maureen Clarke*

Affirmative Action

In April the Company held its first Affirmative Action Training Session at Head Office. Employees from Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Central Region and Head Office attended the whole day program run by the MTIA. The program's main objectives were to describe the legislative foundations for Affirmative Action, to explain the benefits to the Company of an AA Programme and outline what AA means. This training session gave the employees the opportunity to meet each other and contribute their ideas on their understanding of the Company's Affirmative Action policy.

All the ladies who attended this session would like to thank Mr. Hirano for initiating the training.

Now that this training has taken place the participants will become the point of contact for each of their Regions. Meetings have recently been held at Head Office, Melbourne and Perth to discuss Affirmative Action with employees.

General Managers have an important role in implementing the Company's Affirmative Action policy.

Elizabeth Carr

Celebrity Guessing Game - Who am I ?

- I am employed in one of our "out of the way" branches;
- I began my life with the company as Service type person on the tools, and now I'm "the leader of the pack";
- Although I'm of a "large build" I'm really a "Gentle Giant" (most of the time). I'm told that I'm likened to a soft toy that you'd put at the end of your bed;
- My age cannot be determined by my grey hair.
- Bundy Rum flows through my veins;
- I always wear blue coloured clothes (so do a lot of others);
- Lately I have become an exercise freak, exercising with my new pet dog, when I'm not on my motor bike;
- My Secretary thinks "I'm the Best", isn't she sweet. I have to keep reminding myself that I sleep with a nurse.

Who am I?

Please send your written entries to Dave Field at NS Komatsu Melbourne, for your chance to win a fun novelty prize.

Results from Issue 5 "Who am I?"

Last issue's competition produced a lot of entries, perhaps due to the popularity and to the fame of our "Celebrity". She is none other than Lea Bailey, Receptionist, Head Office.

As usual, correct entries were placed in a hat and the winning entry was drawn out. We are pleased to announce that Tony Wafer from our Head Office Warehouse is the successful winner and is the recipient of a novelty prize.

Other correct entries were received from:

Ian Watson - Darwin
Diedre Smith - Perth



▲ Lea Bailey, "Who Am I" Celebrity from Issue 5

Susan Haines - Mt Thorley
Geoff Heather - Muswellbrook
John Mortimer - Head Office
Gordon Wilson - Head Office

Dave Field

TRAINING ARTICLE

Train the Trainer

Central Region has set about improving the exposure of all staff to training. A Train-The-Trainer programme has just been

completed for five staff from Sydney and Mt. Thorley.

These people will conduct workplace training programmes in their specific skills area to assist other staff to better develop their skills or understanding of products and administration.

These people will hone their teaching skills over the next 6 months by presenting programmes in the following areas.

Lesley McDonald - Quality Assurance
Margaret Fittler - PC Computing
Wayne Williamson - Dash 6 Excavator
Craig Harper - Dash 3-5 Excavator
Peter Oberhauser - Dump Trucks

All course participants demonstrated the enthusiasm necessary to make a lesson an interesting experience.

There was one outsider to the group, John Douglas from UMW PNG. This company is the Komatsu agent for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

John comes from Rabaul, where some 18 months ago, the town was destroyed by a volcanic eruption. The eruptions are still occurring, but work goes on to restore the town and service to the large forestry industry in the Rabaul area.

Peter Dokmanovic was on hand to formally hand over certificates to each course participant. He commended each person and set them a challenge of delivering as many programmes as possible over the next 6 months, to help them reinforce the learning concepts taught during the programme and to build their confidence for the future.

Doug DeCean



▲ Train the Trainer participants, with Peter Dokmanovic on the left - Craig Harper, Lesley McDonald, Peter Oberhauser, Margaret Fittler, Wayne Williamson, John Douglas, Doug Decean (Training Officer)

MARKETING DEPARTMENT ARTICLES

NS Komatsu adds Moxy to Its products

Effective 29th April 1996 NS Komatsu became the dealer for Moxy articulated dump trucks. Moxy is a Norwegian based company that is partly owned by Komatsu Ltd.

NS Komatsu will sell three base models of MOXY articulated trucks - MT27, MT30 and MT40, ranging in payload from 27-36.3 tonnes. The six wheel drive trucks are suited to operation in rough terrain or poor traction conditions.

NS Komatsu took over the distribution from the previous distributors. With this change, we acquired a range of parts as well as parts and service literature. Additional parts and service backup is being put in place at the moment.

The first units for sale are expected into Australia by June. NS Komatsu Northern Territory have taken orders from customers for two units of MT27.

Congratulations and job well done.

The Moxy range of trucks complements the existing Komatsu range. In Australia they will be sold as Komatsu Moxy and we hope to find friendly homes for them in quarries, sand and gravel yards plus contractors working at difficult sites.

Your assistance in helping to assimilate the product into our current system would be appreciated.

Tom Hovatta

Motoring Matters

This occasional column is intended to provide small snippets of information that will be of interest and benefits to NS Komatsu personnel:

• Remote Door Lock Operation

The practice of locking/unlocking vehicle doors using the remote transmitter supplied should be

carefully examined. Recent press reports indicate a growing trend for illegal entry by undesirables into vehicles to remove valuable goods. Apparently the use of scanners allows the criminals to detect the signal transmitted when locking the car. Once the driver has departed, they re-transmit the signal, Hey Presto!! One unlocked vehicle.

Suggestion: Always lock the car doors with the key. Only use the remote to unlock.

From the company point of view, the Ford Smartlock remote system fitted to our Falcon fleet has a high level of security integrity - the computer has a "scrambling" sequence that automatically reprograms after each use.

• Air Conditioner Systems

Everyone is aware of the damage to the ozone layer through the release of CFC gases into the atmosphere. We can all participate to minimise the escape of such CFC's. One way, is to maintain the vehicle air-conditioner system in peak working condition.

Regularly operate the system during cooler months - once a week for ten minutes!! Have annual service checks carried out - mainly to detect minor leaks and check soundness of hoses and fittings.

By the way...have you identified the benefit of using air-con system during cold, wet months? The air-conditioner removes humidity and prevents fogging up of the windows.

• Fleet Accident Statistics

Interesting to read "industry" figures for significant size vehicle fleets operating in Australia. NS Komatsu operates in excess of 350 vehicles and therefore fits the study profile. In examining 21 fleets with a total of 23,084 vehicles (sedan and light commercial), the assessors identified an average claim figure of \$2,280. Further, they identified 59% of the claims held the drivers at fault, with only 30% having a third party at fault. Frequency of claims was not covered but the assessors identified an average cost of \$461 per vehicle, ie. every vehicle would experience this level of accident claim!!

David Curry

PARTS DEPARTMENT ARTICLES

Haulpak Distributor Meeting

Tony Holloway attended the annual Haulpak Distributor Meeting in Peoria, held from 29 April to 1 May, and returned with all the latest Parts information which will enable our personnel to keep pace with latest developments.

It is some time since Tony attended this meeting and the new developments that have taken place at Peoria both technically and with personnel are significant.

Tony also visited the distribution Warehouse in Ripley (near Memphis, Tennessee) and discussed shipping and ordering procedures with the KAI Central Distribution staff.

(Robert Wilson, Manager Service Administration, also attended the Haulpak Distributor Meeting. Rumour has it that one of Rob's jobs was to make sure that Tony came back. Tony is enjoying preparing the series of articles on R.G. LeTourneau so much, that we feared he may have felt too much at home in the Haulpak factory with memories everywhere of R.G., and decide to stay in the USA! - Editor)

Undercarriage repairs

For some time now, we have had the benefit of track press facilities at our Mackay, Melbourne and Launceston branches and more recently a new press has been installed in Perth. The potential to totally serve our track machine customers allows one-stop shopping for these customers at those locations.

A new press is now on order for the Fairfield Branch and this unit should be installed by the end of the year, thus allowing the branch to improve customer service in the area.

Those branches with the latest presses have the capacity to handle D575 size track, which requires higher pressures for pin and bush extraction and insertion.

Customers are encouraged to check the wear of their pins and bushes and a timely rotation of these can significantly extend the wear life of the track.

Wayne's back at Head Office Parts!

Head Office Parts Department welcomes the return of Wayne Pelgrave, after three years of "learning" in a competitor's camp. Wayne, as most Parts people will remember, was a strong force in the old days at "KAP" and with the resignation of Chris Faint after ten years service, the opportunity to get Wayne back in to the team was not to be missed.

Wayne is picking up the new Moxy product and gathering expertise in our other relatively new franchise of Ingersoll-Rand. He will of course maintain the Recommended Parts Lists for those products as well as the Komatsu machines.

Steve Sainty visits Fairfield

Steve Sainty from our Launceston Branch visited Sydney recently to study the Hyster Forklift facility and took time out to meet Head Office and Fairfield Branch personnel.

Steve took the opportunity to bring his charming wife to see the "big smoke" but we are reliably informed that she "got lost" in a large shopping centre and claimed her mobile phone didn't work inside the centre. HMMMMmmm...

Moxy product

The Moxy parts stock acquired from the previous Australian distributor is now in our central warehouse and already we are recording demand on these parts and moving consumable parts to the branches that serve Moxy users.

The trucks sold under the Moxy brand are fitted (at present) with Scania engines and ZF transmissions.

We have been informed by a reliable source that one old Moxy unit has been successfully adapted to work in

the sugar cane fields in North Queensland. This machine results in improved cane haulage times compared with more traditional methods. If this trend continues, we may see more Moxy parts sold in NQ to facilitate these conversions.

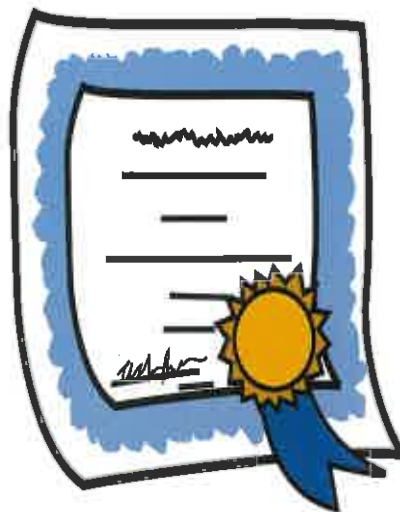
Parts helps training at TAFE

Once again we have made a donation of Komatsu components to various technical colleges to support the future generation of plant mechanics who service earthmoving equipment.

In the past (through our Training Department) the Parts Department has set aside superseded and other major components from the central warehouse stock and offered these items to Australian TAFE institutions to support their apprenticeship training programmes. Our most recent donation was to the Kurri Kurri TAFE in the Hunter Valley, where many mining industry apprentices can benefit by training on these major components.

In the past we have donated to TAFE colleges in Darwin, Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane, Hobart, Wollongong etc., and in return the colleges have responded with some of their own handiwork, in the form of plaques and trophies commemorating the donation.

If you wish to view these awards, ask Bob Taylor in our Training Department, where they are proudly on display.



The mechanic said . . .

I was having lunch with a mechanic the other day and we broached the subject of why people select certain brands of machines in preference to others and he told me that some people can not discern quality and still buy on price and support.....!

He advised that over the years he had worked on many different makes and models of machines and listened to customers' complaints about the cost of downtime. He said some customers will persevere with a single brand despite having a bad experience on that model. He said they will buy the same again because the servicing distributor provided the best possible support, despite the traumas of many breakdowns.

In the same breath he advised that of all the machines he has maintained, he has no qualms in saying that Komatsu quality is the best. If ever a problem in design is identified on any Komatsu machine, it is always corrected through a Service News issue with an update and definitely rectified in the next model.

The funny thing is, he also said that we make our spare parts "too good"!

We polish surfaces that don't need polishing, we cadmium plate bolts that could be left bright, we specify tolerances that are too tight when compared with other manufacturers, and we waste money making filters that have larger filtering surfaces than the competition. He went on detailing a number of aspects where he considered Komatsu products were "too good".

On the other hand, he told me that the Komatsu welding was excellent and he had seen many machines with high service hours still operating without recording any major downtime.

I think he has answered his own question why Komatsu parts are too good . . .

What do you think?

- Graeme Reid

**SPECIAL BRANCH
FEATURE**

Mt. Thorley Branch

NS Komatsu has two branches in the Hunter Valley. Mt. Thorley, situated 12 km south of Singleton, is dedicated to supporting Haulpak trucks, while the Muswellbrook Branch, 30-40 minutes drive west, looks after Komatsu and Ingersoll-Rand products.

Mt. Thorley Branch is our Special Branch in this issue of "Down to Earth". In the heart of the fertile Hunter Valley, an area where coal mining, wineries and rural industries coexist in harmony, this is a very interesting place to visit. All along the valley are signs for both large wineries and small family businesses, inviting visitors to call in for daily wine tasting. Also, coal mines with huge draglines pointing their booms to the sky and their fleets of trucks, dozers and equipment removing the overburden, down to the rich seams of coal below the surface, and carefully reclaiming the landscape after completion, ready for the rural industries to take over. Mining companies are very much aware of environmental issues and have very strict controls such as noise levels and Occupational Health and Safety requirements.



MD Tom Hirano with Dave Turnbull viewing one of Muswellbrook Coal's Haulpak 730E's.

Since taking over the Haulpak franchise, NS Komatsu has invested \$2.9m at Mt. Thorley, providing new workshops capable of taking 4 930E Haulpak trucks with the body fully raised and up to 15 more outside on concrete hardstand area. Mt. Thorley's Product Support Manager Dave



▲ Haulpak 830E's under assembly at Mt Thorley for R.W. Millers

Turnbull, told "Down to Earth" that none of our competitors have this capability, which is an essential requirement to be able to provide the very best product support as required by the mining customers. Dave also said that a further investment in expanded parts facilities is now being considered, and future developments will expand our component rebuild shop and establish a motorised wheel facility and a separate welding and fabrication facility.

Charles Foo, NS Komatsu's Director of Sales and Marketing, said that in deciding on the Mt. Thorley investments, surveys had shown that the coal mining output would grow 5-7% per year between now and the year 2000. "The mines will need more equipment to enable this growth," said Charles, "giving us the opportunity to increase our market share in a rising market. The largest volume of any mining tool is dump trucks and electric trucks are by far the most dominant technology. Our marketing strategy is to provide excellent product support, for which we need the best people and facilities. We currently have around 100 trucks in the Hunter Valley and expect to reach a population of 200 within three years, justifying our investment in parts and facilities."

Dave Turnbull told us that the mining community is very close knit and very relationship oriented. "It is critical that we build those relationships with our suppliers and customers. The quality of our products is important in selling equipment, but the level of support both before and after delivery will confirm future sales".

"We have a team operation at Mt. Thorley and we are introducing a Total Quality Involvement programme. Our people are of exceptional quality and with very good product knowledge and TQI will

empower our people to feel comfortable with their own decision making. They are the ones who best know the requirements of their own jobs," said Dave.

"I believe our business is like a three-legged stool, with the legs being our customers, our employees and our owners. We have to meet the expectation of all three, or the stool will fall over.

"'Credibility' is the key word in our team. When we do things, we have to do them right and when we tell our customers we will do something, we must do it without fail. Everyone is a sales person for our company, and personal credibility is essential.

"We have a family attitude and want our customers to feel part of our family. We have to know and understand our customers' business, so we can help them with their needs and be considered as a part of their operation, by helping to solve their problems."



▲ Steve Thomsen and Barry Moore inspecting a truck rebuild job for Drayton Coal

Mt. Thorley branch is extremely busy at present. The first of eleven 730E trucks to Muswellbrook Coal was delivered at the end of April and these will be completed by the end of June. They are now in final stages of arrangements to supply twenty 730E and 830E trucks to R.W. Millers, which will be completed by the end of August. Other negotiations are under way now, such as a five 830E truck supply deal. The potential for mining equipment sales in the Hunter Valley is astronomical.

The Haulpak division has established an office at Mt. Thorley Branch. Haulpak personnel Graeme Weatherley and John Phillis are able to provide valuable factory support to assist with technical advice, in the very tight schedules.

Dave continued, "we are negotiating a 10 year maintenance contract with R.W. Millers, for their new trucks and existing fleet. As our property backs onto the Millers, minesite, we are in a very good location to provide this support. There are 22 mines in the Valley, all of which are within forty minutes drive of each other. There is a village atmosphere, in which all mining people talk to one another, so our level of product support is well known. Our plan is to build on our level of service, so we provide the best support in the services we offer."

"Down to Earth" appreciates the help and enthusiasm of the Mt. Thorley people in preparing this article.

SPECIAL PEOPLE

Susan Haines

My position at the Branch was recently changed from Receptionist/Typist to Service Clerk. My key responsibilities include the processing of all timecards onto jobs, processing of purchase orders, creditor invoices and the closing and invoicing of service jobs to the customer. In conjunction with timecard processing, I complete a weekly labour summary and every fortnight I process the payroll for approximately 65 Service, Parts and Office personnel for Mt. Thorley.

Some other responsibilities I have are; keeping record of the Fleet Cards, receipt of new machinery on the computer and assisting with Receptionist duties when required.



▲ Susan Haines

Along with my new position I will be the Hunter Valley Contact for the "Down to Earth" magazine.

I have been employed with NS Komatsu for just over two years and enjoy it a great deal. Every job has its trials and tribulations but I put them all down to learning and feel that it can only make you better at your job. My new position provides me with many challenges and much variety, which takes the boredom away that can sometimes set in.

There have been many changes during my time with NS Komatsu, which I feel have improved the Mt. Thorley Branch's reputation immensely. With the new workshops and service facilities completed and the truck rebuilds currently in progress, it has given NS Komatsu a greater representation within the Mining Industry.

I was born and educated in Singleton and reside at home with my parents, my eldest brother and my Border Collie dog named "Muffie".

Outside of work I attend TAFE two nights per week and sewing one night per week. I regularly take Muffie for walks and go to the gym once or twice a week. On weekends I enjoy going to the movies, shopping and spending time with my nieces and nephew. Many of my friends have moved away for work so we try to get together as often as possible.

Steve Thomsen

I have held the position of Estimator/Coordinator in the Mt. Thorley Branch for three years. I prepare a quote on all rebuild jobs and major repairs and negotiate this with the customer, to obtain the order for the job. Truck rebuilds worth a million dollars each can take up to eight weeks to complete and for traceability purposes, we open up to twenty service jobs, covering all aspects of the rebuild.

During the job, I review progress weekly on the computer, to monitor



▲ Steve Thomsen

costing to date and can thus identify quickly that the job is proceeding under control. I also co-ordinate four or five major subcontractors and up to a dozen minor subcontractors. Any extras found to be necessary will be quoted and approved by the customer, before proceeding. We prefer regular visits by our customers during the job, so they can view the progress and we can discuss any particular points at the time, leading to a satisfactory conclusion.

At the time of job closing, I assist in checking the job costs and prepare a full report on the rebuild, which is given to the customer and we keep a copy on file.

I have found that experience in job estimating is the most important requirement, together with very good records of past jobs for reference. The current rebuild programme of Drayton Coal's 18 170D Haulpak (170 tonne capacity truck) which includes all updates to the latest specification, began in 1992. We only have a few trucks to go to complete the programme, and we are now negotiating with the customer to start again on the earlier trucks.

In addition to rebuild jobs, I also assist Marketing Department with quoting for options on new equipment. Customers ring in with technical inquiries, which I look after. While I mostly am involved with trucks, I also assist with preparing estimates for drills and dozers, for our Muswellbrook Branch.

My job allows me a lot of contact with our customers and together with previous jobs, have built up relationships with customers, over twenty years. It is essential to earn the customer's respect and I have always believed that being up front and truly honest is the only way to conduct business. My job is to help customers and I believe they feel this way too. I enjoy the contact with our customers and our suppliers and obtain a lot of satisfaction in seeing a completed rebuild job, well done.

There is enormous potential for development of NS Komatsu in the Hunter Valley. Our reputation with truck rebuilds is good and to keep the customer happy and working together is the main thing. The industry views NS Komatsu as a long term participant.

I have been married 15 years, have twin boys aged 13 and another boy aged 10. The twins kept us very busy

and I helped with their upbringing. My free time in the last twelve months has been taken up with our sons' sports. One twin, Adam, recently competed in the Australian National BMX championships held at Nerang on the Gold Coast of Queensland and our whole family made a holiday of it, for two weeks. The other two boys compete in Mini Trots, which is a small version of harness racing, for 5-16 year olds. We have three ponies for this sport and 18 months ago we moved to a new home with seven acres, to give the horses room. I am doing the landscaping work myself and recently bought a wheel tractor which after some repairs, I will use for the landscaping.

Since I was 14 years old, I have been involved in Street Rods. I have built and sold two, and now have a 1934 Ford sedan which I am rebuilding, as a long term project. It now needs to be upholstered, wired and glassed and it will be finished.

Stuart Williams

My job is Leading Hand/Electrician and I have been employed by the company for six and a half years. Currently at Mt. Thorley we have twelve electricians working on projects such as R.W. Miller truck build, Muswellbrook Coal truck build, Draytons 170 Rebuild Programme, Coal & Allied Engine Modules, Field Work, Component Repair and Workshop Maintenance.



▲ Stuart Williams

While working on these projects we work with technicians from General Electric, Detroit Diesel and Cummins who commission their respective components on Haulpak trucks. General Electric:- Electric Drive System comprising Wheel Motors, Traction Alternator Statex II and Statex III control systems, M.T.U. Detroit Diesel & Cummins:- Engine management systems and truck interface with G.E. & Haulpak systems.

In 1990 I was sent to the USA for three weeks training on Haulpak electrical & mechanical systems for 830E and 510E trucks. During 1991 I was based on site at Coal & Allied for 10 1/2 months maintaining the 830E and 510E truck fleet. This helped me to gain valuable experience maintaining troubleshooting faults when they arose.

My job provides challenges, both technical and personnel control. Being a Leading Hand means dealing with management people as well as those on the shop floor. Also, helping a customer to solve a trouble shooting problem over the phone gives a sense of achievement.

I started as a domestic electrician in Queensland and eventually ended up involved with mining trucks, which I enjoy. NS Komatsu is a good company to work for and with the expansion which has happened here, we can now handle more trucks. Our customers see our investment as a sign that NS Komatsu's intention is to provide good service. I feel good job security after winning major contracts like Muswellbrook Coal and R.W. Millers.

I am married to my wife Nicole, have one daughter Jenna (8) and two sons Tod (7) and Taylor (3). We live at North Rothbury, a small town about twenty minutes from work and we like the quiet environment. I work on most Saturdays and on Sundays I babysit, as my wife works. Occasionally I play social golf when time permits and I used to play squash, also socially. My hobby is electronics and computers, but I have to fight with the children to get on to the computer. My three year old can use the CD-ROM and load up and play games.

I enjoy reading all kinds of topics, both in books and magazines.



Understanding the size of Haulpak truck orders

By now, everybody would be aware of the orders Mt. Thorley Branch has received for trucks. Thirty trucks doesn't sound all that many. Seventy million dollars - a lot of money but outside the comprehension of most of us.

However, let's consider these trucks, using the Commodore or Ford Falcon as a yardstick.

We now have orders equalling over 2,400 Falcons or Commodores. Additionally, each tyre that goes on these trucks is equal to another Commodore or Falcon - ie another 180 cars.

To build these trucks would require one person for the next twenty years of his/her working life.

Maybe these comparisons will help you to visualise the scope of these orders and explain the size of the project to your friends. If they are like mine, they think 30 trucks are just a few. "Gee, we see that many go past on the road in a couple of minutes" - but not 18 730E and 13 830E's.

Peter Ford
Parts Interpreter
Mt Thorley

Thanks, Peter. This kind of comparison is very interesting and illuminating. - Editor.

▼ *Assembly of 830E and 730E trucks at Mt Thorley*



What is a Customer?

Noticed on an office wall in Mt Thorley Branch, the following notice is a very good reminder for us all:

A CUSTOMER IS THE
MOST IMPORTANT VISITOR
IN OUR PREMISES.

HE IS NOT DEPENDANT ON US.

WE ARE DEPENDANT ON HIM.

HE IS NOT AN INTERRUPTION
TO OUR WORK.

HE IS THE PURPOSE OF IT.

HE IS NOT AN OUTSIDER
IN OUR BUSINESS.

HE IS PART OF IT.

WE ARE NOT DOING HIM A
FAVOUR BY SERVING HIM.

HE IS DOING US A FAVOUR
BY GIVING US THE
OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

Mystery jigsaw puzzle

In Issue 5 of "Down To Earth", we included an article about the old jigsaw puzzle found by Matthew DeCean, when he was helping his mother clean out cupboards in her infants school classroom. Matthew, you will recall, is the son of Doug DeCean, Central Region's Training Officer.



▲ *Matthew DeCean and the mystery jigsaw*

Now, thanks to the efforts of Ike Murata, Head Office Manager of Service Engineering, we know a little more about this jigsaw. The back of the jigsaw is marked with the name "Apollo Toy Company" and the number "112". Using detective skills worthy of Sherlock Holmes, Ike not only found the present day company in Tokyo, he even found the manager, a Mr. Takahashi, who clearly remembered the jigsaw which depicts Komatsu bulldozers, more than 30 years after it was made!

Apollo Company (or K.K. Apollo) was formed in 1923 as a printing company. Their Toy Department was created in 1952 and toys were produced to sell overseas. At that time, the export sale of toys was a major source of income for the Japanese economy.

The jigsaws were individually numbered, starting with number 101. Ours is number 112, so it was amongst the very first produced. Mr. Takahashi estimates it is dated between 1961 and 1963.

The price of the jigsaw when it was produced was ¥150. The exchange rate then was ¥400 = A\$1.00, so the jigsaw face value was about 38 cents!

The mystery still remains - how did it come to Australia? Probably, we will never know. Congratulations are in order to Matthew DeCean for his sharp eye in finding the jigsaw and to Ike Murata for his success in obtaining the above interesting information.

SAFETY ARTICLES

Did you know?

Garden fertiliser and some oils form a high explosive when mixed? Thankfully the reaction is not spontaneous, but you should not store them together.

Pool chemicals and oil form an explosive that is spontaneous? Do not store your lawn mower or its fuel with your pool supplies.

The evergreen Oleander shrub (with either fine red or white or pink and white flowers with leathery leaves), grown in gardens and on many median strips, contains toxic oxalic acid? Don't allow your kids or pets to chew on the leaves.

Products containing ammonia, if mixed with some chemicals and the stored conditions or container allows a pressure build up, can cause cyanide gas? If you think you smell almonds from such a container, about the only thing to do is to hope your Will is up to date! Less severely, it can cause headaches.

The brown tracks on cauliflowers are snail trails? - and that's the good news. If the cauliflower in the shop is nice and white and free of the brown trails, it has probably been sprayed with a DDT based powder. It's a good idea to wash them carefully.

Surface sprays like Baygon stay effective and active for a long time, because they are formulated to stay on the area where they are sprayed? Handy and safe hints for use are:

- Don't place food or utensils on sprayed areas.
- Wash contaminated skin or clothing immediately.
- Don't smoke while using it, as this increases the rate and amount of inhalation of fumes.

Chlorine bleach (most household bleaches) and any acids (fruit juice, vinegar, battery acid and animal or human urine) create chlorine gas?

So:

- Be careful when you pour bleach onto your clothes.
- Don't clean toilets with bleach.

Hapless hand tools

Chipped, cracked, burred, blunt or split hand tools are as dangerous as using the wrong tool for the job. Three out of five injuries resulting from hand tool accidents are to the fingers, hands or wrists. As with most accidents, the person injured can at best have avoided the injury and at worst reduced the severity of it.

Next time you are using a hand tool, keep in mind these hazard reducing pointers:

- If it's chipped, broken, cracked, burred or split, don't use it. Label it as defective and return it to the store. If it is yours, get rid of it.
- If it is not designed for the job you are doing, don't use it. Take the time to get the correct tool.
- Don't over-exert tools. They have a job to do and will do it - don't force them.
- Always direct sharp-edged tools away from your body.
- Don't store or put sharp-edged tools where they can be covered by junk, other tools or paper (remember 'good housekeeping').
- Don't carry screwdrivers or other sharp-edged tools in your pocket.
- Under **no circumstances** throw tools - to anybody or at anything.
- Never carry tools in your hand when climbing (up or down), or running.

HAND TOOLS INCLUDE KITCHEN & HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT, TOO!

BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS AT ALL TIMES.

- Dave Field

Our "Safety" contributor

From time to time we will squeeze in a little article about our regular contributors. (That should encourage all to contribute - what a way to become famous!)

Dave Field has provided all our safety articles, for which we are very grateful. Safety is a most important issue and through Dave's articles, we are



▲ Dave Field, showing the country's defence is in fine hands!

hopefully becoming more safety conscious, not only at work, but also at home and leisure.

Another very popular article is the Celebrity Guessing Game, and this is also prepared by Dave. Several of the past celebrities (or is "victim" a better word?) are very pleased to have found themselves described in glowing terms, thanks to Dave's skill in finding out their darkest secrets and telling the world.

Somehow, Dave finds time for his contributions to "Down To Earth" on a spare time basis. His real job is Training Manager, Southern Region. In addition to looking after training requirements down south, he has been and is heavily involved in introduction of Southern Region Quality Assurance programmes and of course, safety issues. Plus, he is the Excavator Service Expert and is the main person involved in FKI training and technical communications.

Dave joined NS Komatsu in July 1989, directly after serving 20 years in the Australian Army. He has maintained his military interest and involvement, as a member of the Army Reserves. With the rank of Warrant Officer Class One, Dave is currently the Troop Commander of the Bendigo Transport Squadron.

Leisure activities include golf, but Dave says he hasn't had time to reach a high standard. "Slasher" was his description. "Down To Earth" reckons Dave must have found how to get 30 hours from a day!

Congratulations, Dave

- Editor

QUALITY ARTICLES

NS Komatsu Quality Arrow

Staff empowerment is the last element of the Quality Arrow that will propel us to our target. People doing a particular job or activity generally know best how to improve it and do it better, but often are not given the opportunity to effect changes. Empowerment means giving people the opportunity, responsibility and authority to make these changes and improvements.

Empowerment requires a change in attitude and behaviour from both supervisors and employees, and is a direct move towards cooperation and teamwork between all levels and functions.

For supervisors, it means a role change from the traditional controlling, authoritarian approach, to one of acting as a coach and counsellor to the work group. For employees, it means accepting responsibility and pro-actively contributing to the improvement and daily operation of the company.

This requires an attitude change from thinking of people as either bosses or employees, to one where all are considered equally important in the role they play, and help create an environment which is conducive to participation and not confrontation.

Why should we do it? In the old traditional approach success and output of the work group is generally limited by the knowledge and experience of the supervisor controlling the group.

MD Tom Hirano receiving the AS9002 certificate from Tony Craven, Chief Executive Officer Sydney Area, Bureau Veritas Quality International



But utilising the full potential and skills of all personnel, output is extended to the combined knowledge and experience of all the people involved and always far exceeds the traditional approach.

All managers and supervisors need to encourage innovation and be prepared to accept that not every new idea may succeed. Surely it is far better to try new concepts and ways of doing things, even if occasionally we fail, rather than do nothing just so that we are never wrong.

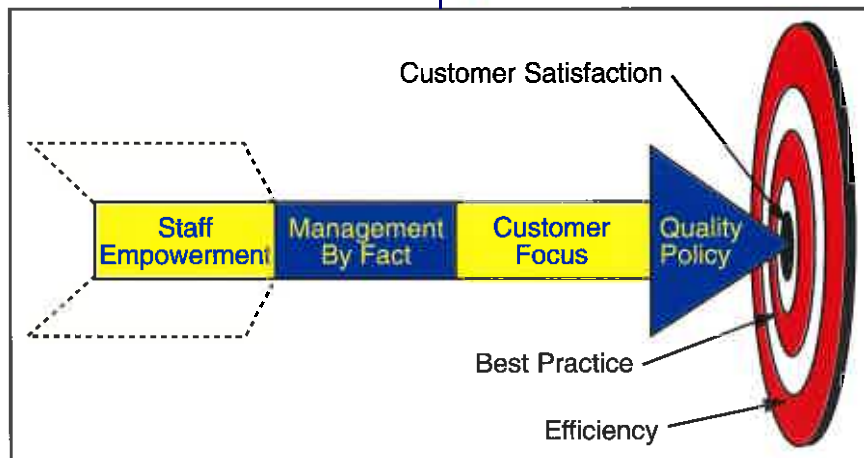
This whole concept requires teamwork from all and the attitude that each of us succeeds through the success of our colleagues and the team.

Carl Pemberton

Fairfield Branch achieves AS9002 status

On 28 March, at a formal presentation ceremony Managing Director Mr. Tom Hirano accepted on behalf of Fairfield Branch, a certificate which signifies accreditation to Quality Assurance Standard AS/NZ9002:1994.

▼ NS Komatsu Quality Arrow



The accreditation was awarded by Bureau Veritas Quality International, after a period of thoroughly reviewing and documenting all Fairfield Branch's procedures and introducing a formal Quality Assurance programme.

An accredited QA programme is necessary in today's quality and performance conscious society.

Certification is not the end of Fairfield's goal but rather, the beginning. Quality Assurance is the foundation on which to build all future improvements made in all aspects of the business. It is a key part of Fairfield's Total Quality approach to Management to achieve excellence and be the preferred supplier for all our customers.

It took hard work and a big team effort. "Down to Earth" congratulates Fairfield Branch on this achievement.

Who is NS Komatsu?

(continued from Page 2)

Andrew Berry	11 yrs	Perth
Phil Jenaway	11 yrs	Perth
Ian Olivieri	11 yrs	Perth
Ross Treadaway	11 yrs	Perth
Jock Gibb	11 yrs	Perth
Kim Francis	10 yrs	Kalgoorlie
Alan Annetts	10 yrs	Perth
Keith Finch	10 yrs	Perth
Rolly Lluisma	10 yrs	Kalgoorlie
Andrew Ang	10 yrs	Perth
Ian John	10 yrs	Perth

Don't forget, if you have worked for the company for ten years or more and we haven't mentioned your name yet, why not mention it to your Regional Contact, so that we can include you next time.

- Editor

HISTORICAL FEATURE ARTICLE

A tradition of excellence

We continue with the early life of R.G. LeTourneau. At the conclusion of our last article, we learnt how he became very interested in a new welding technique. He read all he could find on the subject and travelled to San Francisco and bought a used torch from a welding shop, with the understanding he was to practice welding all types of metal under their six months' course of instruction. With welding torch in hand, he returned to Stockton and hung out his shingle as a welder of all metals.

In 1912 he marketed his first successful invention. It was an exhaust cut-out for the hot rodders of the day. The exhaust cut-outs available today are identical to the LeTourneau invention of 1912.

In 1917, following a romance of about twelve months, Bob asked Evelyn Peterson's parents for her hand in marriage. Evelyn's mother was in favour, however her father told him to come back in five years' time. On August 28 he kidnapped seventeen year old Evelyn and they drove to Tijuana, Mexico, where they were married. Her father did not speak to them for the next seven years.

In September 1917, he offered his services to the naval workshops for the duration of the war.

When he returned to Stockton towards the end of 1918, he found

the garage was bankrupt. He worked night and day going over the books and trying to get things in order. Finally he arranged a meeting with his bankers and creditors and advised them he wanted out. An agreement was reached where he would have to repay \$5000 over the next three years. The following day he got his start in the earthmoving business. He was 30 years old, unemployed and \$5000 in debt.

By 1919, man was making great advances in the automotive and aviation fields, but the dirt movers, the men who changed the face of the earth, were still using scraper blades invented by cavemen.

Benjamin Holt built his first tractor in 1885. Soon after, Daniel Best started his factory in San Leandro. The two became rivals and produced huge machines with wide steel wheels with big cleats called grousers.

The story goes that one day Holt was testing a machine in a rain-soaked field, when his wheels started to spin and before long, he was down to his axles. Holt decided that a tractor mounted on wide treadmill type tracks would spread the weight evenly from front to rear. No longer would two drive wheels spin and dig in. Holt produced his first track type tractor in 1905 - "Crawls over mud like a caterpillar", he said. Not long after this, the Holt Tractor Company became the Caterpillar Tractor Company.

In 1920, R.G. LeTourneau purchased an old 1915 Holt tractor, hired a Schmeiser scraper, borrowed \$1000 from the bank and became a land-levelling contractor, complete with his own mortgaged machinery.

He admired the Holt tractor, the compressed air and other systems

that raised and lowered the scraper blades. But he saw a lot of room for improvements. The tractor had only one speed . . . slow! and it took two men to operate, one on the tractor and one on the scraper.

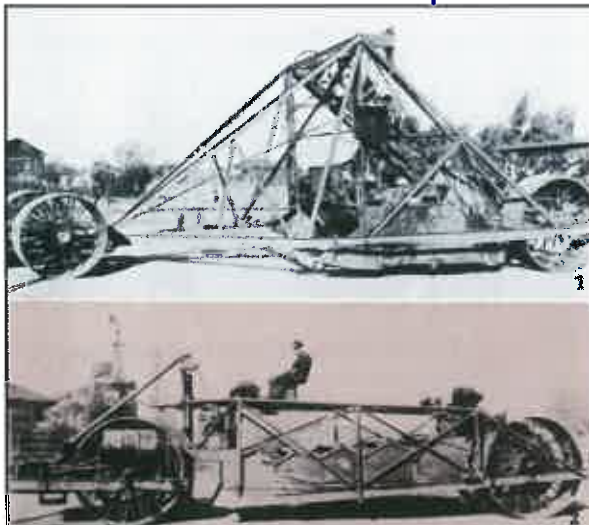
Sitting on that tractor for up to fourteen hours a day, moving at a mile and hour with dust in his face and the hot sun on his neck, gave him plenty of time to think. Remembering what he had learned from his old foreman at the naval yards, on how to convert a DC motor into an AC/DC generator with a few slip rings, and Hank Rogers with his electric starter motor had shown him how to take the power off a petrol engine to run a generator.

Sitting on that old Holt tractor, he thought of the generator, starter, reduction gears and a pinion gear. In his mind he could see it all falling into place. Put a rack on the scraper and a pinion on the reduction gears of the starter, press a button, the pinion gear goes round and the rack goes up, raising the scraper blade. Press another and the blade goes down biting into the earth. Why not put two motors on the scraper blade, one on each side - raise one side and lower the other - a tilting blade. Some switches on the tractor and one man in the driver's seat, running both machines at no extra cost.

"Work both ends of the file as well as the middle"

So his thoughts ran as he was levelling land in the San Joaquin Valley in California. Most of them drifted away with the dust, but for Bob LeTourneau, things were adding up. He knew where he could get a lot of Navy generators and motors at scrap prices.

Within two weeks of continuous night work, using his welding skills, he welded a generator to the tractor frame and motors and gears to the scraper. The tractor was rigged to generate electric power and the scraper was rigged to use it. The results were astonishing - with the compressed air system, the blade would bounce over the ground when it encountered a resistance greater than its air pressure. But with the rack and pinion gears, when the blade hit the ground it cut through, leaving behind a path of table top smoothness, eliminating the need for follow-up crews with plows, harrows and shovels. Not only was one man operating both tractor and scraper, but the job was being done better.



1. LeTourneau's "Mountain Mover" scraper loaded and carried 16 cubic yards in 1922.
2. LeTourneau developed the first self-propelled electric controlled scraper in 1923.

At the end of his first day's work with his new scraper, he said "Maybe I was just a dust-coated figure in overalls, but I felt like an inventor fitting in somewhere between Edison, Bell and Holt."

In the spring of 1921, he was offered a house on an acre of land at 122 Moss Avenue Stockton. This was the start of R.G. LeTourneau Incorporated. The barn became his workshop, the land an open air factory and the dust on the driveway his drawing board.

The first piece of machinery he manufactured for sale was a welding machine.

He had a contract to level a large site at Bellota but had hired out his only scraper, so he sat down in the dust on his driveway and drew up plans for another scraper. Two things came out of that scraper, first it enabled him to get back into the land-levelling business and second it was such an ugly machine that he couldn't help looking at it and seeing many places where it could be improved.

In 1922, he produced the first all-welded scraper. Using motors from electric motor cars, welding torch and plenty of scrap iron and no drawings, he produced a scraper which he called the Gondola. Full of confidence that, with his new machine he could move three yards of dirt for the price of one, he submitted a low quote to build a horse racing track at the Stockton County fairground. He won the bid and was asked by the board chairman to put the Gondola on display at the fair, as the machine that had built the racetrack in record time.

He was pleased with his scraper, but the aging Holt tractor had so many repairs it was more LeTourneau than Holt. He purchased a brand new Super-Holt tractor and then had to build a bigger scraper to get the best out of his new tractor.

The R.G. LeTourneau story continues next issue. Reprinted with the permission of Simon & Schuster, from "Mover of Men and Mountains" by R.G. LeTourneau. Copyright (c) by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Renewed 1968.

- Tony Holloway



Profile of a Best Practices Manager

Recently at an Affirmative Action meeting held in our Head Office by some of our senior females from the Regions and Head Office, the qualities of the ideal or "Best Practices" manager were drawn up into the following list.

For those people with the title of "Manager" and those who aspire to positions of management, consider the following list and see how many of these qualities apply to you:-

1. A "people" person
2. Is approachable
3. Talks with and not down to staff
4. Finds time to say hello
5. Allows staff to make decisions, and mistakes (enabling them to learn by their mistakes)
6. Backs up staff
7. Is accorded respect
8. Treats everyone equally
9. An achiever, and sees his people achieve.

Regional News

HEAD OFFICE AND FAIRFIELD BRANCH

PERSONNEL NEWS

Happy Birthday to:

Christine Todd	-	4	January
Andrew Hoppett	-	8	January
Tony Holloway	-	23	February
Graeme Reid	-	31	March
C.Q. Chong	-	17	April
"Doc" Tripp	-	23	May
(Big "40")			

Congratulations to:

John & Tracey Kneipp, on the birth of their son Aaron James on 31st March.

Craig & Carolyn Hughes on the birth of their baby on 25th April.

Colin and Belinda Rash, on the birth of their twin boys, Colin Henry and Michael James on 13th May.

Jason Hyham on his marriage to Mandy in April.

Nicole Malvern who married Jason Evans, 23rd March.

David Rank who will marry in May - good luck.

New Employees:

Stephen Duffy, Sales Representative
Rex Farr, Major Account Manager
Welcome to NS Komatsu.

Sports News:

The Workshop Touch Footy side is at it again and looking for sponsors.

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

The Fairfield Social Club advises that the past three months has seen a decided lack of interest in the social club.

Functions such as the night out at the Rocks Woolshed were thoroughly enjoyed by those few Social Club members and their partners who attended, especially our "Dirty Dancing" canteen lady.

Our raffles are poorly supported and the result barely covers the costs involved. The recent guessing competition was a financial loss.

We have management support, but we need employee support. Your committee is open to all suggestions and offers of assistance to further the goals of the Social Club.

Come on members, the Social Club Committee work hard for us. Please try to enjoy the functions which are arranged.

- Editor.

HUNTER VALLEY

Mt. Thorley

PERSONNEL NEWS

Happy Birthday to:

Graham Brown	-	13	April
Don Curran	-	5	April
Stuart Williams	-	8	April
Glenn Hodgins	-	9	April
Peter Oberhauser (30th)	-	18	April
Jamie Griffiths	-	19	April
Luke Payne	-	19	April
Richard Gibson	-	23	April

New Employees:

David Fry - Project Manager
Pat Clavin - Service Manager
Welcome to the "Big Team".

BUSINESS NEWS**Muswellbrook Coal 730E Truck Delivery**

The team at the Mt. Thorley Branch have delivered the first of eleven units to Muswellbrook Coal. The fleet has been delivered in the corporate colours of Natural Yellow and Cloud Grey. With the G.E. Statex III Drive System, Cummins 2000hp (with the CENSE and Century Electronics) engine, as well as the innovative TARGET body design, they combine to make a winning combination.

Operator comfort and visibility have been a high priority on this machine. Comments of "when do we get the deck chairs" have been made. This refers to the uncluttered deck area. Ease of access to control cabinets, engine and associated components has been achieved without sacrifice of room or visibility.

We are confident that these machines will be the benchmark to which our competitors will aspire.

"Was this an Omen"

At AIMEX '95, whilst working for Volvo VME, Pat Clavin was persuaded by Jeff Barnes to "come and see a real truck" (as captured on film with his father, see below).

▼ Pat Clavin (top) and his father inspecting a Haulpak 830E



Was this the way for the future? Obviously yes, as Pat is now Service Manager at our Mt. Thorley Branch. Pat brings with him many years experience in electric drive trucks and management skills.

Muswellbrook**PERSONNEL NEWS****Happy Birthday to:**

Dean Daniel - 28 April

Carol Hedges - 25 April
Jeff Barnes - 21 May
(The big 40 - good on ya, Jeff!)

Congratulations to:

Chris & Jenny on the safe arrival of your daughter.

Staff Movement:

Geoff Heather has joined the Muswellbrook Department Team as Service Manager.

Graeme Taig has taken a new position of Major Project Manager at Coal & Allied.

Best wishes to you both.

NORTH QUEENSLAND**PERSONNEL NEWS****Happy Birthday to:**

Madonna Heathcote - 28 March
Shane Whittington - 30 March
Darryl Brandon - 9 April
Ian Tulk - 9 April
Leanne Sutton - 16 April
Kris Chambers - 3 May
David Jones - 5 May
Alyscia Rawlins - 8 May
Vaughan Brown - 14 May
Jason Ward - 15 May
David Sykes - 18 May
Jason Sternagel - 22 May

John Laidsaar's wife, Sharyn is due anytime for their baby to be born.

PERSONNEL NEWS**New Employees:**

Yvonne Schaper - Mackay
Mark Ward - Rockhampton
Allan Ward - Mackay
(transferred from Townsville)
Michael Monaghan - Mackay

BUSINESS NEWS

NS Komatsu Mackay Branch Sales Department are now holding orders for the following mining equipment.:

BHP Norwich Park - 1 x D575A-2
To be delivered in June (1 has already been delivered)

Blair Athol Coal Proj. - 2xD575A-2
BHP Peak Downs - 2xDM-M3
Curragh Qld Mining - 1xDM-M3

WESTERN REGION**Kalgoorlie Branch****EMPLOYEE NEWS****Farewell:**

We believe that the men at Kalgoorlie Branch had fun for John Skeel's farewell. What gets us is, how on earth did he get into so many hotels in his Birthday Suit? Could only happen in Kalgoorlie. I guess he passed by the correct footwear.

We said farewell to:

Ray Wilson, moved to Esperance.
Brian Pearce, to position in Bunbury.
Steve Sewell, to Port Hedland.

Best of luck.

Staff Movement:

Rob Roper who has moved into the position of Service Supervisor.

Graham Fitzsimon who has filled the position of Product Support Rep.

Welcome to Kalgoorlie Branch (the greatest Team) all new employees.

Congratulations to:

Brian Millea is off to be married and we wish Brian and his new bride all the best (hope her rolling pin is big enough to handle Brian).

Kim and Cindy Francis, proud parents again to a baby girl (Pearl Dorothy Francis.)

Suzanne, for becoming runner up in Secretary of the Year in the Goldfields area.

Congratulations to:

James Gibson, Parts Interpreter, who has been accepted for a four (4) year apprenticeship in diesel fitting.

Danny Millen, Dispatch Section has taken James' place.

Special congratulations to two of our Technical Services Reps., John Richards and John Cooper, whose wives Sue and Trudy have had baby girls - Lauren Kate and Molly-anne respectively.

Heard round about:

Steve Hosking has applied for a pay rise because of the fact that most of his wages go to cartons during the week and for repairs to his car. Steve has just received his license.

Talking about cars, Jackie has just purchased a V Dub convertible. She said this will be the closest thing she gets to a sports car as she drives off with the wind gently blowing her hair. *Just watch those mozzies Jacks!*

Both Robbie and Jim are getting lots of exercise, with many thanks to their new pet dogs. The trouble is, who leads whom?

And last but not least, a big warning goes out to Warwick Paul to watch out for vehicles bigger than his own.

Darwin Branch**Congratulations to:**

Michael De Boer, Sales Representative, has won an **"Achievement"** Award from Head Office Marketing Department. He was presented this by Ian Watson, Darwin Branch Manager, for achieving 57% of Excavator Sales and 48.5% of Wheel Loader Sales for the Northern Territory. Michael was very proud of his achievement and thanked all the staff at the Darwin Branch for helping him gain the award. Darwin, being only small with a staff of 20 people, ranked very well against the major competitor Caterpillar's dealer Hastings Deering, who boast a staff of over 100.



Michael De Boer with his "Achievement" Award.

Michael - Well done, from "Down to Earth".

Perth Branch**PERSONNEL NEWS****Congratulations to:**

Colin Sherack (Sales Dispatch) and his wife Debra, on the arrival of their daughter Lauren, on 24th February, weighing 3.4 kilos. In all his calmness during the baby's delivery, Colin snatched the gas from his wife and took a doze himself - (for a free buzz' (says Colin).

Jerry Leonard, Trevor Fraser, Ian Oliveri and Laurie Randall farewelling Jock Wilson (centre).



Daria Huisman (Accounts) and Robert Audino (Service) tied the knot on Saturday 24th February this year and headed off to Dunk Island for their honeymoon. On arrival back to work, Daria announced that there would soon be a Baby Audino. Must have been some honeymoon! Congratulations!

On the subject of weddings, Dave Howatt (Service) and fiancée Sue, tied the knot on Easter Saturday (6th April). Unfortunately, all did not go to plan when a sewerage truck arrived next door to the wedding and commenced operations. Apparently the odour was so bad that one of the ladies at the wedding actually passed out! Luckily the odour cleared somewhat prior to the bride's arrival. Manure happens!

Heard round about:

Bob Goodlad (Technical Service) got a bit of a fright when he came to work early and set the alarm off. Being a new boy, Bob didn't know the combination to disarm the alarm, and became alarmed himself. He quickly rang Murray Crommelin, who couldn't remember the combination. Jim Moore (Service) saved the day when he came in and turned off the alarm. Bob is said to have received a stern reprimand from the Security Company (alias Mick Hodge) - and a heart transplant!

Deidre Smith (Sales Department) should be ashamed. A married woman with two teenagers, Diedre was solicited by a tall, dark stranger whilst at lunch on Secretary's Day.

The stranger chatted with Dee throughout lunch and told her "I think you're lovely" just before he ran off into the day light. You still got it Dee!

Some employees from Welshpool are finding it very difficult to get to work. Fiona Michaelson (Admin) received a phone call from Amanda Smith (Tech Services), saying 'that her car had broken down and she needed a lift. When Fiona arrived at Amanda's, she was advised that Sue Bouckaert's

(Used Equipment) car had also broken down and she also needed a lift. When Fiona and Amanda arrived at Sue's, Fiona's car - you guessed it - broke down. Needless to say, all three were a tad late arriving to work!

A HUGE welcome to all new employees to the Western Region.

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

The Social Club headed off to Dirty Dicks Theatre Restaurant on Friday 22 March. Guests enjoyed a "primitive dinner" and were entertained by the antics of 4 performers, basing their act on medieval times. The audience were given "unusual" name tags and pretty soon found themselves part of the show. Bob Goodlad (Tech Services) was shackled and ended up singing for his supper, whilst Jim Moore (Service) stood up and revealed a few interesting facts about his sex life. Dal Connor (Sales) was promptly booed off the stage for expressing her delight at the Sri Lankan Cricket Team winning the World Cup, and Dave Finck (Sales) announced his pending engagement to girlfriend Jacquie. On ya Dave! And all Hail Dick Turpin.

Management turned out in force to bid a fond farewell to Jock Wilson on his early retirement on April 4th after 12 years with the Company. We were all sorry to see the "Jolly Scotsman" leave. Jock and his wife Jean have planned a trip back to the HIGHLANDS. Have a wonderful holiday and very best wishes for the future.

BUSINESS NEWS

The first D375A-3 dozer in Western Australia was sold by Jim Chadwick and delivered to Roche Bros in February. The machine is working in the heart of the Goldfields at the Kalgoorlie Superpit. First impressions were excellent but discussions took place between operators, on the fact the machine did not have a radio cassette like the D10.

After a week, operators no longer felt the need for music while they worked, for as only the dozer operators would know, they preferred a ride of a life time that only the new D375A dozer in its class can give.

Glenn Swift (he wants the word "legend" in here) sold the first PC350LC-6 Mighty in Western Australia. The lucky customer is Salt Land Drainage and the machine was delivered in March. On ya Glenn.



▲ Roche Bros' D375A-3 bulldozer

SOUTHERN REGION

Melbourne

Two hospital cases during the month of March. Peter Killey had an arthroscopy on his knee, but was told everything was fine and he would be able to commence footy training three weeks after the operation. To date, he has not taken up training!

Steve Leicester spent three days in hospital for some tests etc. on his back. Steve has told us the drugs given to him to anaesthetise him just didn't work and he was awake during the procedure - Now Steve, that is what we call "tough"!!

April 1 was a great day for our popular payroll person, Edwina Fortuin. Edwina celebrated her 50th birthday. Being a Monday we were a little concerned that with all the festivities etc, Edwina may have made an error with the payroll - but we need not have

worried as everything was fine. Edwina's family surprised her with a party on the Saturday night and we have heard Edwina "rested" in bed most of Sunday - We know it was a late night Edwina!!!!



▲ Edwina Fortuin in celebration mode

South Australia

The newest member for our South Australian branch is Maria Brambilla. Maria joined us on 18 March as

receptionist/debtors clerk, due to the retirement of Barbara Chapman. Barbara was with us for 10 years and we would like to wish her all the best in her retirement years.

During the month of April, Graham Davies was presented with an award from NS

Komatsu for 30 years of service to the Komatsu product. Graham worked on the pre-delivery assembly of the first Komatsu dozer to be formally delivered in Australia. Graham is reluctant to discuss whether this was a diesel or kerosene model!

Birthday list:

David Button	-	10 March
Chris Guntner	-	15 March
Stephen Royle	-	29 March
Neville Sandford	-	8 April
Graham Davies	-	28 April
Allan Lewis	-	29 April

Tasmania

Southern Tasmania has been experiencing excessive rains over the past couple of months, resulting in severe flooding and serious loss of property. Fortunately there has been no loss of life and this fact can in part, be attributed to an outstanding act of gallantry by Douglas Fulton from Hobart Parts Department.

It seems that whilst on his way home from work on Friday 9 February, Douglas came upon a group of cars carefully driving through a flooded road. As he waited his turn, he noticed out of the corner of his eye, someone frantically waving to attract attention. An old lady was standing in approximately 60 cm of water in the doorway, about 200 metres from the road.

Doug's lifesaving experience immediately sprung into action and after carefully parking the NSK vehicle so it would not get caught in the flood (well done Doug!) he removed his socks, shoes, jumper and trousers and waded over to the old lady after firstly organising other bystanders to call the police and ambulance. The lady's front gate was at a lower section of the garden and was under water. Douglas swam freestyle over the fence. The ambulance promptly arrived, and it was decided to place the lady in a lounge chair and four people would then carry her above the water to safety - this was duly done.

Doug's nickname now is "Braveheart" and bravery like this is worthy of an award. Congratulations Doug!

Another great annual golf day was held in March on the sunny east coast of Tasmania at the Swansea Golf Club.

Leigh Bygraves cleaned up with a nett 61 and Dennis Fowler taking the gross on a countback with Shane Stevens.

Numerous prizes were given out on the day, including Rob Yost with "Most use of the Course" - with a nett 136. Best nett for ladies was Maureen Ollard, best gross was Angela Auckland, most innovative golf tactics - Stuart Direen, who prior to the golf day had never picked up a golf club.

The extremely windy weather made it very difficult for golf and more balls were lost than actually struck, but a BBQ, drinks and a trophy presentation at the end of the day made it well worthwhile.

Gippsland

Kevin Hughes, Operations Manager for our Gippsland Branch has left us to take up a new position in Ghana.

Peter Vansittart has been appointed Service Manager Gippsland and Brian Jackson, Service Supervisor for Gippsland. Congratulations, Peter!