

NS KOMATSU

Down To Earth

NS KOMATSU NEWSLETTER

Maintain our customers' confidence

This is our first magazine for 1997 and almost the beginning of our new financial year.

I reflect on 1996 and remember a year which was very busy and filled with many success stories, due to our great efforts. As our new year begins, we have now established all our product lines, and it is time to concentrate on utilising this advantage to the maximum.

The market this year will be very tough and we will have to fight hard to continue to win our share of our customers' business. Continuing alertness and attention to our customers' needs will be factors in our business success.

This is not difficult, if we think about it in everyday terms. What do you do to ensure the love of your loved one? Many ways are possible, but to think deeply about that person's needs, and to work to make ourselves most attractive, is fundamental. Being appreciated by our customers can be considered in the same way.

More practically, I would like to ask all employees to consider your own performance, from the customers' perspective. Will they see or hear the



Amber Rickard and Brennan Garbutt,
Head Office trainee engineers

most professional response to their inquiry - promptly and courteously? If the answer is yes, then we are on the right path, and we can be hopeful of winning their order.

I urge us all to continue our efforts towards self development, keeping in mind our professionalism and the need for standardised activities, to maintain our customers' confidence.

Thank you for the successes of 1996 and let's do it again in 1997.

- Tom Hirano,
Managing Director

NS Komatsu's investment in the future

Our company's future relies on the skills of our people, so development of our in-house expertise is highly desired. Head Office Service is investing in the future, with the NS Komatsu Trainee Engineer Programme. Our first trainee intakes Amber Rickard and Brennan Garbutt commenced work in September and December 1996, respectively.

Amber is completing her Mechanical Engineering Degree at the University of Technology Sydney, part-time, and is now in her 3rd year. Brennan completed 1st year full time at Sydney University and has now transferred to Wollongong, where he will also continue his studies part time.

We are fortunate to be able to develop Amber's and



Brennan's skills during their training period. They will be transferred around Head Office & Fairfield Departments, gaining an all-round knowledge of NS Komatsu operations in Service, Parts and Sales, in receiving on the job training over the next 3 or 4 years.

Together with their Engineering Qualifications, we expect to develop well rounded employees, capable of filling future supervisory and management positions. Keep an eye out - we expect to see big things from them in the years to come. Welcome Amber and Brennan, our first Trainee Engineers.

Robert Wilson

IN THIS ISSUE

Townsville Branch	Page 3
Neville Drayton - 30 yrs	5
David Mitchell Limited	6
NS Komatsu - 'CAN-DO'	6
Owner operators	7
Tradition of Excellence	8
Who Am I?	9
Head Office Canteen	9
Play it safe - on & off the job	9
Working closer with our customers	10
Problem Solving Teams	11
Self defence programme	12
South Qld apprentice of the year	12
Regional News	13

◀ Townsville, the subject of our Special Branch feature 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) 9795 8222 Fax (02) 9795 8230

Editor: Barry Potter
Assistant Editor: Rhonda Summerhayes
Head Office 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) 9205 9300 Fax (03) 9205 9350

North Queensland

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

Fairfield

Sue Mcleod
Phone (02) 9795 8300 Fax (02) 9795 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
Telephone (02) 9609 3055

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

© NS Komatsu Pty. Ltd. 1997

Editor's Comment

This is our first 'Down To Earth' for 1997, and we would like to wish all our readers a successful and prosperous year. Our circulation is growing and 'Down To Earth' is now being sent to increasing numbers of customers, due to the general level of interest in articles submitted for the magazine. Thank you to all contributors, who have submitted information for the magazine, leading to its success.

To help us to prepare future issues, we would like each Region to let us have stories and photos for three or four machines sold, since the previous version of 'Down To Earth'. Please keep this in mind, and be sure to let your Regional Contact know, so it can be included.

Who is NS Komatsu?

Some more of our people who have long experience on our products. If you have been involved with one of our products for ten years or so and haven't had your name mentioned yet, please tell your Regional Contact, so we can print it.

Perth Branch:

Rolly Lluisma 11 yrs
Kim Francis 11 yrs
Les Vine 10 yrs

Victoria:

Dean Daniel 10 yrs
Brian Morham 10 yrs
Jim McTigue 12 yrs
Neville Drayton 30 yrs

Tasmania:

Richard Locke 10 yrs

South Australia:

Neville Sandford 12 yrs

CBT in Southern Region

In the Southern Region, Competency Based Training (CBT) is well and truly happening, with all Branches preparing their tradesmen for their assessments. Each is required to undertake various assessments to meet the NS Komatsu national criteria. CBT is aimed at improving skills, professionalism and ability, which helps both the tradesman and the company in providing an improved service support to our valued customers.

Dave Field, Training Manager - Southern Region is travelling around the Region assessing tradesmen on KOWA, KUC and Service Literature modules. The results to date are very

pleasing, showing a combination of training, self-learning and interest in improvement is alive and thriving in the Southern Region.

Trevor Dowling, Field Serviceman from Adelaide Service Department, is shown below, undergoing his KUC assessment. (Incidentally, Trevor was the first 'victim' to be assessed in the Southern Region). Dave is pleased to report that Trevor's assessment was successful.

Congratulations, Trevor

- Editor

VALE Earl Martin

North Queensland Region lost Earl Martin, one of their people, just before Christmas. Earl's workmates have put together this tribute

Mackay Branch would like to take this chance to say 'Farewell Earl'. Earl started work with NS Komatsu Mackay on 23rd April 1996, quickly fitting in and making friends. We will remember his smile, his frown, his courage, his zest for living, his love of life and all the significant moments and fun times we had with him. We would like to dedicate a poem to express how we as his friends saw him.

THAT MAN IS A SUCCESS

*That man is a success
Who has lived well,
Laughed often and loved much;
Who had gained the respect
Of intelligent people,
And the love of children,
Who has filled his niche
And accomplished his task;
Who leaves the world
Better than he found it,
Who has never lacked
Appreciation of Earth's beauty,
Or failed to express it;
Who looked for the best in others
And gave the best he had.*

'Down To Earth' extends sympathy on behalf of all NS Komatsu to Earl's family and to North Queensland Region.

▼ Trevor Dowling, Adelaide Branch, undergoing competency assessment.



Townsville Branch

Situated on the North Queensland coast, between Mackay and Cairns, Townsville is a port city serving the mining, sugar, manufacturing and cattle industries. It is the government administrative centre for North Queensland and is the ideal location for NS Komatsu Townsville Branch. In this issue, 'Down to Earth' is pleased to present Townsville Branch to our readers.

Townsville Branch is part of our North Queensland Region, under the authority of the North Queensland Regional Office, in Mackay. Townsville Branch Manager, Gary Cunningham, told us that considerable expansion has occurred in the recent past and will continue, due to the buoyant sales activities.

The service area looked after by Townsville Branch runs from Bowen on the coast south of Townsville, westwards right across Queensland through Mr. Isa to the NT border, and north including all of Cape York Peninsular and islands in Torres Strait. This area includes some of the most remote locations, ranging from hot and dry inland, to tropical jungles and rainforests in the far North. In the dry season, roads are generally passable but in the wet season, road travel is impossible to many locations, and air travel is the only way to get to a job. Gary Cunningham said: "We use commercial flights, charter flights or any means possible to get there. Customers in locations such as Thursday Island, Mornington Island, Bader Island and missions at Bamaga and Doomadgee are mostly the local Aboriginal Community, who generally have small excavators and small bulldozers. These customers are very important to us, as we know how important the machines are to them."

Townsville Branch's fleet of service vehicles



This is actually a very small part of our total business, but is probably the most memorable, because of the exotic locations and sometimes adventurous ways needed to get to the job. It goes without saying that resourcefulness is one of the most important qualities of our fitters who go to these jobs".

Gary went on to explain that the total customer base, and the industries they operate in, is very diverse. "Our largest customers include Mount Isa Mines, Kidston Gold, Eltin Mining, Thiess Contractors, Cooks Constructions and Comalco Weipa. We also have many small to medium contractors, such as local contractors J. J. McDonald, and Markwell Rock Breaking who have sizeable excavator fleets, to name a few".

Townsville Branch has a total of twenty people (not including Cairns sub-Branch) and with a machine population of 350 to look after throughout their area, it is obviously a very busy operation. The machine population has a large percentage of excavators, closely followed by dozers and there are also numbers of wheel loaders and dump trucks.

"Townsville is a support city for several industries", said Gary. "A lot of sugar is grown in the irrigation area around Ayr and our rural industries are also centred on the Burdekin Irrigation Area as well as the sugar growing areas from Ingham to Cairns. Then there is the gold belt around Charters Towers and Ravenswood. Finally there is the Carpentaria Minerals Province around Mt. Isa, producing copper, nickel, lead, zinc, gold and silver."

"Mt. Isa is now in a boom period. Everything that happens in our

area is reflected in infrastructure in Townsville. For example a new zinc refinery will be built this year, as well as port extensions and road and rail expansion".

Townsville actually consists of twin cities, Townsville and Thuringowa. Gary told us that Thuringowa is the fastest growth area in the nation, in terms of new building approvals. A lot of government employees are moving to this area, as it is the 'Capital of North Queensland'. The armed forces are well represented, as Townsville has been regarded as a very strategic location, since World War II. There is a very large army base and the army's water borne division will soon move from Sydney to Townsville.

Townsville Branch has grown from five people to twenty in only two years and this growth is set to continue, with a greatly increased customer base due to NS Komatsu's taking on the new product lines of Haulpak, Ingersoll-Rand and Demag. A new workshop, office and parts building was built two years ago and due to the growth experienced, further expansion in these facilities will be needed in future. "Parts sales in particular are buoyant, under the control of our Parts Supervisor, Richard Astill", commented Gary.

When asked about the climate, Gary said "It's bloody hot! It is a hot and dry climate, but we have no shortage of water. Townsville itself is dry, but it rains a lot to the north and south. The Ross River is dammed and also water can be pumped here from the Burdekin Dam. Townsville has the highest number of sunny days. When I came here, the old established buildings attracted me, and Magnetic Island is a great place for a holiday".

'Down to Earth' congratulates Townsville Branch on their enthusiasm and performance, and thanks all the staff for their assistance in preparing these articles.



Gary Cunningham, Townsville Branch Manager.

Rick Skennar

I have been employed by NS Komatsu for 4½ years and before that, by ANI Komatsu. I started as a resident serviceman at Coffs Harbour working for branches in Sydney, Muswellbrook, and Brisbane. During a holiday, I visited North Queensland and decided to take the resident serviceman job at Cairns. After 12 months, I transferred to Townsville as Workshop Leading Hand, my current job.



▲ Rick Skennar (right), explaining a job instruction to Matt Archer.

Working in most branches on the East Coast has given me a broad perspective and I have a good understanding of how each Region operates. Also, I know a lot of people to talk to, which helps me in my job.

We have three permanent fitters and one apprentice. When Field Servicemen are not busy outside, they work in the workshop. Also, we have casuals and subcontractors who work here as well. In my job, I am responsible for all people and all work in the workshop. My time is split about 50-50 between supervision and working.

Our work is varied, ranging from exchange water pumps at the small end, to D375A power modules or HD785-3 transmissions, our largest jobs. The HD785 transmissions are for the HD1400B bottom dumpers at Comalco Weipa, on the Gulf of Carpentaria near the top of Cape York Peninsular. In the dry season, road transport is possible, but in the wet season, everything from Weipa is sent by barge to Karumba near Normanton, then trucked overland through Cloncurry to Townsville.

During my time at Cairns, I stayed at Weipa for up to 6 weeks, and also travelled to jobs in the remote north, including Thursday Island etc, so I got to know most customers in this area.

Now, this is very helpful as I know their work practices and what they expect from us.

My job provides a real challenge, which I enjoy. We are all learning about our new products and I see my job as well done, if our customers and our workshop staff are all happy.

Our workshop is now too small, following our continual growth. We have had five transmissions from various machines at once, which completely filled the shop, and all other work had to be done outside. There is a lot of additional work available, so if we extend our shop, we can employ more people and do a lot more work.

NS Komatsu has a very big future in North Queensland, especially after taking on our new products such as Ingersoll-Rand and Demag. These and the Komatsu products are very well accepted in many industries now, and we are 'mowing down' the opposition. We are all one company Australia wide, and customers know who they are dealing with. Our reliability in the workplace is there and our good parts availability plays a major role in customer satisfaction.

I am married, with no children. My wife is also very busy with her job, Sales Executive for Magnetic Island International Resort. She travels to work every day by ferry to Magnetic Island, when she is not away on business.

Because of both our jobs and their future prospects, we have decided to settle in Townsville for quite a while and have just moved into our new home, which we built.

On weekends, I will have to put in gardens, and also enjoy working on our computer, developing my computer skills. Computers are definitely part of all future jobs.

We go out to the movies once a month and try to go out to dinner once a week. I like cooking and can do washing and ironing. Marriage is a partnership, especially when both are very busy in their jobs.

Helen Porter ▶

My ambition is to progress as high as possible. I can see there will be a lot of promotion opportunities here, as we will continue to grow in future. Performance in a job should be the determining factor in winning promotions, so my philosophy is always to do my very best.

Helen Porter

My position is Service Clerk/Receptionist and I have worked for NS Komatsu for 18 months. When I started, I was responsible for telephone reception and filing for five people. Now my job has expanded and I also look after about ten service people, as we have grown.

I do mainly service work, but I am also involved in sales support activities as well. Every Monday, I do the timesheets, I compile all documents for service jobs and enter details in the computer, prepare the pro-forma invoices, and also do the end of month reports each month. I make all travel arrangements, including commercial and charter air flights, hire car and motel accommodation for all our people. Every morning, I do the banking. Every Friday I arrange the Social Club raffle and get-together with Rick Skennar and every year the Social Club Christmas party. This year we went to Magnetic Island.

Before joining NS Komatsu, I was an accounts clerk, which didn't have a lot of interest. I like my job with NS Komatsu, as I have to talk to everyone in the Branch and know what is going on. Everyone here gets on really well and often we have BBQ's after work.

I believe that NS Komatsu's reputation is continuing to get better, which is reflected in the many large customers who continue to buy our machines. When I started, we had about ten people in the branch. This has grown to about twenty due to our successful



sales. I know most of our customers and they have confidence in us.

My boyfriend and I live with my parents at Kelso, about half an hour's drive from work. In July, I am going on a five weeks' tour of the USA, starting in Los Angeles, travelling all over and finishing in New York.

Originally we came from NSW and I still follow NSW football, especially in the State of Origin series. I am the only Cockroach, so I am outnumbered but that doesn't dampen my enthusiasm. I play touch football, both in the winter competition from March to September and in summer from September to December. This means I am either playing or training, three nights a week. Last year we made it to the finals.

In May, I usually go to the Mingela Rodeo, which is an all-weekend event.

We have two dogs, both small cocker spaniels.

Aaron Tilbrook

I have been employed by NS Komatsu for a year now, currently as Parts Interpreter. I take orders over the phone or by fax, book parts into stock on the computer when they arrive, and book them out again when ordered by customers.

I initially worked in the store, and was promoted to Parts Interpreter a few months ago, so I am still learning about our machines.

We can generally supply most parts from stock, or if some have to come from another branch, they arrive the next day. Fast availability is the most important thing. My job is interesting and challenging. I get a lot of satisfaction from working hard, especially as everyone here gets on

very well together.

I know some customers personally - my sister's boyfriend owns machines and I have some friends who work for construction companies, so this helps me to understand our customers' needs. Townsville is pretty small and most people know each other.

Our new building is good, but due to our quick growth, we need more space. Taking on our new products has helped our business and also helps our customers, as many of them can now buy parts from us for their other machines, as well as Komatsu.

I play football (Rugby League until now, but I am planning to switch to Rugby Union). One reason is that Rugby Union plays on Saturday, so I will have Sunday to recover and be fresh for work on Monday. Sprint training, exercise in the gym and touch football all help to keep me fit.

I am also very keen on adventure sports, white water rafting at Tully, rock climbing (I abseiled down Mt. Stuart and from a high bridge at Cairns), camping and water skiing.

Neville Drayton - 30 Years Service

Neville Drayton joined Wabco Distribution Australia - Victorian Branch on 6 February 1967 as a demonstrator and sales representative, after three years experience as a demonstrator/salesman and nine years as a plant operator.

By the time Wabco ceased operations in July 1980, Neville had handled every sales area in Victoria as a representative, won several sales awards (including two trips to Japan and one to the United States of America) and served as Victorian Sales Manager for fifteen months.

Neville joined Forcepower Victoria on day one of operations 1 August 1980 and then transferred to ANI



▲ Neville Drayton - 30 years employment.

Komatsu when they became Komatsu distributor in 1988.

Highlights since 1980:

- Sold the first PC650 and PC1000 excavators in Australia to Roche Bros.
- Sold two of only three D155S large crawler loaders to be sold in Australia.
- In 1989 successfully carried out a rehabilitation test trial on a PC1000SE excavator and D375A-1 bulldozer on the Republic of Nauru, a tiny independent nation in the Central Pacific, and has subsequently negotiated the sales and support of further Komatsu machines sold to Nauru, including the apprenticeship training of two Nauruans at NS Komatsu Victoria branch.
- Currently employed as a Sales Support Manager, responsibilities include overseeing sales of Komatsu equipment to local government throughout Victoria and the NSW Riverina area, Republic of Nauru, David Mitchell Limited and AH Plant, demonstrations and operator training, OFR studies and assisting the sales staff generally in sales of Komatsu equipment throughout the Southern Region.

Neville's interests, whenever time permits, include fishing and 4WD touring. Neville has been married to Margot for 34 years and they have a son Russell, a daughter Leanne, and three grandchildren Daniel, Rebecca and Georgia.

Congratulations, Neville.

They say the first 30 years are the hardest, then it starts to get easier!

— Editor



▲ Aaron Tilbrook

Job Story- David Mitchell Limited Komatsu WA380-1

David Mitchell Limited (DML) is Australia's largest and oldest limestone products quarrying company, with 15 quarry sites throughout Victoria, Tasmania, NSW, Queensland and WA.

The company's history goes back 125 years and is still a family owned company. DML began purchasing Komatsu equipment for their quarry operations at Lilydale on the eastern outskirts of Melbourne in 1980 and since that time have operated a D155S-1 large crawler loader, two HD325-2 30 tonne rear dump trucks, a W260-1 face wheel loader, a W90-2 wheel loader (sales yard), two WA600-1 face loaders, a WA380-1 loader (sales yard) and a PC300-1 Mighty hydraulic excavator at their Lilydale operation alone.



David Mitchell Limited's WA380-1, with Neville Drayton and Operator Brian (Spot) Moloney, pointing out the still original bucket pins, after 19,200 hours of operation.

During this time DML has never traded in a Komatsu wheel loader when due for replacement. They have, on each occasion, put the machines into second life in one of their lower production quarries. As a result, these loaders have achieved some significantly high operating hours with remarkably low repair and maintenance costs. For example, W260-1 approximately 29,000 hours, W90-2 approximately 24,000 hours.

The best example of this is the WA380-1 employed as the sales yard loader at Lilydale. Delivered in November 1989, this machine has

Newlands' 830E Haulpak during overhaul.

operated for 19,220 hours (current). The total mechanical repairs on this machine have been one engine head gasket, one change-over fuel injector pump and 2 or 3 radiator hoses.

This machine is operated by Brian Moloney ('Spot'), one of DML's longest serving employees, having been with the company for 44 years. When asked about the Komatsu WA380-1 wheel loader he had this to say:

"The machine's mechanical history has been excellent. We load nine different products with this machine into a variety of truck and trailer combinations, without any problems."

"When you consider the number of hours and the conditions that this loader has worked in, you can't go past the Komatsu loader and as far as cabin conditions go towards making it easier on the operator, Komatsu is better than the rest."

comments to make:

"DML has never traded in one of the Komatsu Wheel Loaders that we have owned. All have gone on to have a second life. The machines constantly work 11 hour days, 5 days a week. On top of this they are expected to be in service on weekends during peak periods."

"The machine's reliability and availability says a lot for NS Komatsu service maintenance contracts. KOWA is an excellent tool in the area of preventive maintenance. It allows us to schedule repairs that work in with our production requirements."



'Can Do ? - NSK Sure Can!'

Newlands Coal Mine, 200 km west of Mackay in North Queensland, holds significant relevance to NS Komatsu. Newlands operate the first ever fleet of Haulpak 830E dump trucks delivered into Australia.

Due to the close working relationship between NS Komatsu and Newlands Mine maintenance personnel, the fleet of five trucks has achieved very high availability figures. With the trucks approaching 26,000 operating hours, Newlands realised that major work would be required in order to maintain the high level of availability and as a result the first truck underwent an overhaul 'in-house' at Newlands. Unfortunately, this did not realise the desired outcome that Newlands had expected.

With the scheduling of the next 830E for overhaul, negotiations began between Newlands and NS Komatsu with several options being tabled. It was finally decided that the most cost effective approach would be to carry out the overhaul on-site at Newlands facilities using 100% contracted labour. Further negotiations between Newlands, NS Komatsu and the various trade unions finally saw NS Komatsu with just two days lead time to organise every facet of the overhaul.

The overhaul of the truck was scheduled to be completed over eight full working days. A team of NS Komatsu fitters was assembled to give round the clock coverage, working 3 x 8 hour shifts. This team included Terry Dyke, Wayne Phillips, Gary Johnstone, Earl Martin, Jason Ward and David Sykes. Three

boilermakers were contracted from local firm Westhill Engineering to carry out all welding requirements, along with two fitters from Detroit Diesel-Allison Australia to undertake the engine mid-life overhaul.

The entire operation was organised and supervised by John Laidsaar (Tech Services), with assistance from Tony Hosking (Mackay Service Manager), Ken Westwood (Workshop Supervisor) and James Gibson (Mackay Workshop). All parts needed for the project were arranged by Mike Teuwsen (Parts Supervisor) and a new dump body organised by Steve Thompson (Parts Manager) and David Curry (Head Office).

As the basis of the agreement was to utilise Newlands' tyre fitters and crane facilities, all personnel were required to be passed out on Crane and Cherry-picker operation as well as being subject to Site Inductions and union clearance. All other needs were organised by NS Komatsu including accommodation, meals, local transport, Hot Work Permits, new parts and components and specialised tooling (a shipping container full of tooling was despatched from Mackay).

The scope of works covered the removal and replacement with exchange units of most major and minor components including the replacement of the G.E. GTA26 Alternator in-situ (no easy task), weld repairs to the frame and superstructure, implementation of modifications, supply and installation of a new dump body, and, as is often the case in projects of this size, the many other 'little' jobs that arise along the way.

Despite the logistics of organising and overseeing a project of this size in the

time available, the NS Komatsu team had the truck completed and tested within six and a half days, a full day and a half ahead of schedule. Compared to the first overhaul, NS Komatsu achieved a 35-40% larger workscope 60% faster. This accomplishment has earned NS Komatsu a great deal of respect around the Bowen Basin area and we are now recognised as a 'CAN DO' company.

Five months have passed since this truck was returned to work, and in this time Newlands have enjoyed both high availability and reliability from the truck and agree they have had an excellent return on their investment.

Article prepared by John Laidsaar, Mackay Branch.

*Congratulations to John and his team,
on a job very well done.*

Owner Operators

Ns Komatsu cares about the owner operator just as much as it does about large fleet customers. On a recent visit to the south west corner of Australia, we had an opportunity to catch up with several of our smaller customers.

Head Office people accompany branch representatives on their regular visits, to meet the customers and understand their business and also to ensure that product support is continuing to the field personnel as well as their customers.

Graeme Reid (H.O. Operations Mgr. Parts) recently accompanied Dean Jones (Western Region Parts Representative) on his regular visit from Perth to Albany.

We visited a number of customers who welcomed us to their sites, which ranged from Council maintenance workshops to single machine owner operators involved in various forms of contract works in the area. One such contractor was Nigel Palmer, who operates a D155 in the Denmark area and who was at the time contracting to the Conservation and Land Management Department.

Nigel was many dusty miles from home working in a native forest plantation, clearing trails to improve fire access. He was a long way down the road from his trusty support vehicle, involving a reasonable amount of 'machine walking' for refuelling and even lunch stops.

The blade was bright and shiny from dozing in the sand and the ripper points and protectors glistened as if they had been chrome plated. In this situation the machine could have looked quite dirty, as is typical of most dozers up to their bellies in dirt, but Nigel had it spotless.

Nigel trades under the title of Rivermouth Holdings and operates a recently purchased used D155 unit which we were happy to say was purring like a kitten and according to Nigel Palmer, 'just not wearing out any ripper points at all!'

Nigel's brother David also operates in the general area, under the title of Denmark Holdings. David has 5 machines including excavators, dozers, and a backhoe (FKI) recently purchased through our equipment sales representative Tim Greenham.

Communication between Dean, Tim and the area's Technical Representative, Barry Campbell, together with the resident Field Service Representative Brian Pearce, provides a customer with many points of contact for all forms of product support.

From time to time Nigel Palmer calls on these people to ensure his machine is 'up and running', as in Nigel's case a single machine down is a loss of income. He relies on our people to keep his income rolling in.

When Dean and Graeme visited, Nigel was really out in the bush. Directions were of the kind that the Leyland Brothers would use. Notwithstanding that, Dean found Nigel, on a bush track where a four wheel drive was really needed. However he 'plowed' the Falcon through the soft sandy soils as he had committed himself to the appointment.

These visits strengthen our commitment to our customers, through a better understanding of their needs and the conditions under which our equipment is used. They demonstrate how important it is to maintain communication with customers and keep them up to date with NS Komatsu activities now and in the future.

Graeme Reid

▼ Dean Jones, Parts Representative, discussing with Nigel Palmer, D155A-1 Owner Operator.



A Tradition of Excellence

Over the last five issues of 'Down to Earth' I have given a very condensed account of the life of Robert Gilmore LeTourneau. Most of the information I reported was from his autobiography 'Mover of Men And Mountains' which was published in 1960. I also obtained information from old Wabco publications that had short stories of his achievements.

Whilst I was writing my article I had many phone calls telling me of a new book on the market about R.G. LeTourneau, and from the calls, it appeared this book was very good. I made inquiries and found the book everyone was talking about was 'The LeTourneau Legend' by Philip Gowenlock.



▲ 13½ acres beside the Parramatta River, the site of LeTourneau's Australian factory. C. 1940.

I purchased a copy and find it to be an excellent publication. If you are interested in LeTourneau and his machines this publication is all you will need to read. Philip Gowenlock is from Brisbane and I believe has not been involved in the construction equipment industry. However, the way he has put this book together you would think he was standing behind RG way back in the early years as he was designing and building his machines.

The book can be purchased from Hugh Smith in our Brisbane office.

The Tradition of Excellence continues with the Wabco Australia Story.

Over twelve months ago Barry Potter asked me to do a brief story on Wabco Australia for 'Down To Earth'. I got a bit carried away and the last five issues have been devoted to R. G. LeTourneau.

I will start the Wabco Story in this issue.

Le Tourneau Australia's first three employees. Left to right - Kelly Brogan, Les Hemsworth, Dave Brambrick.

Unfortunately, there are no publications available that tell us the history of Wabco in Australia. I did not join Wabco until 1970 which was 30 years after the first factory was built.

We have many employees at NS Komatsu who are old Wabco employees and I would appreciate anything you could contribute that would help to make the Wabco Story interesting. This will be a story of the company and personalities. Whatever you can remember could be of interest.

In 1940 R. G. LeTourneau sent his number one man Al Losche to Australia to set up a manufacturing company for the local construction industry and to supply machines for the armed forces during World War two. Al Losche was accompanied by Jack Fremon, both these men had been with LeTourneau since his early days in construction work.

As early as 1938 he had sent Jo Johansen to Australia to survey possible sites for a factory in Sydney, but the

restrictions on the import of American machines had made expansion to Australia impractical at that time. However, the needs of war had eliminated those restrictions. The quickest way to get machines to the island hopping troops was to manufacture them in Australia.

LeTourneau formed a partnership with George Bryant and LeTourneau (Australia) Pty. Ltd. was born, with LeTourneau supplying 75% of the capital and Bryant 25%.

The first three Australian employees hired by Al Losche were Adrian (Kelly) Brogan, Les Hemsworth and Dave Brambrick, Kelly and Les have died within the last ten years. I believe Dave is still living.

The first machines were manufactured in a factory at Alexandria. By Christmas 1940 they purchased 13½ acres on the Parramatta River at Rydalmere and a 12,000 square foot



factory was built. Within eighteen months this had increased to 81,000 square feet and production increased to over \$3 million. Most of the machines produced were for the US and Australian Forces.

The first equipment produced at the Rydalmere plant included bulldozers for Allis Chalmers, International and Caterpillar tractors. With Kelly and Les running the manufacturing, the range of equipment quickly increased to include Power Control Units, drawn scrapers and Overloaders.

As new models were introduced on the US market, LeTourneau Australia modified the designs to suit the local conditions. They also designed a dozer blade to fit on the Matilda tank for use by the Allies in Papua New Guinea.

By 1945 the production from the Rydalmere plant included rooters, sheepfoot rollers, logging arches, PCU's, winches, scrapers, cranes and dozer assemblies.

During the war, the Allied Construction Equipment Training School was located at the LeTourneau Rydalmere factory. The chief instructor, Martin Noone, had a reputation as a fearless but safe operator. After the war he was employed by LeTourneau as an equipment demonstrator.

At the end of the war many of the machines that were used by the Australian and US Forces in the Pacific were shipped back to Australia. Among these machines were a number of LeTourneau rubber tyred Tournapulls which were manufactured in USA. These were the first rubber tyred Tournapulls sold to Australian contractors. Many of the ex-Army machines were repowered from Caterpillar and Cummins engines to GM.

— Tony Holloway

Head Office Canteen

18 months ago, Head Office introduced the idea of a fully serviced canteen. As there are more than 100 people employed at Fairfield, having good hot and cold nourishing food available for purchase at very competitive prices, would save a lot of people the bother of going outside to find lunch, would save them money and improve the working conditions for employees.



▲ Sandra Attwood and Margaret Sandy, in period costume for Australia Day.

The canteen is run by P&O (yes, the cruise ship people), with a staff of three, with Manager Sandra Attwood, supported by Margaret Sandy and Iris LeClaire. Cleanliness and food quality are both of a very high standard, and the delicious aroma of cooking certainly ensures that everyone has a healthy appetite at lunchtime. Some even enjoy breakfast before starting work.

Whenever there is a day of particular significance (eg. Melbourne Cup, Football Grand final, etc), the canteen staff go to a lot of trouble to decorate the canteen, even to the extent of coming to work in fancy dress to suit the occasion. For Australia Day, we were treated to gum trees, koalas, kangaroos and Australian flag decorating the canteen, a suspended billy 'boiling' over a campfire and various Australian icons such as Billy Tea, Sunlight Soap, Golden Syrup, etc. The canteen staff were dressed in period costume, adding to the atmosphere and the fun of the occasion.

The popular view is that the canteen is very successful. Our thanks to Sandra and her staff, for their hard work, happy atmosphere in the canteen and above all, beautiful food!

Celebrity Guessing Game - Who am I ?

Dave Field, Southern Region's Training Manager has continued true to form and has selected another unsuspecting subject for this issue's guessing game. Can you guess who this is? If you think you know who it is, send your written entry to Dave at Melbourne Branch, for your chance to win a novelty prize.

- I am an Aussie citizen.
- I am married, with one daughter.
- I live in Middle cove, and practice golf on my front lawn.
- I am a keen golf player.
- I am a meticulous trouble shooter of machine problems. My main language helps me in this.
- I like Aussie Country and Western songs.
- I hate smokers.

- I play the role of a 'Customer' once a year in the Advanced Technic Contest.
- I am particular about the colour of my company car.
- Some people call me ITARU, pronounced 'EYE-TAR-ROO'.

Results from Issue 8 'Who Am I?'

Last issue's celebrity was Richard Locke, Product Support Manager for NS Komatsu Tasmania, based in Hobart.

Correct entries were received from:

- Tina Vandoorn, Gippsland.
- Rod Green, Melbourne.
- Ike Murata, Head Office.
- John Halantas, Melbourne.
- Rachel Chapman, Adelaide.
- Geoff Deller, Head Office/Melbourne
- Daryl Bennett, Adelaide.

As usual, the correct entries were placed in a hat and the winner selected. And the winner is:

Tina Vandoorn, Gippsland.

'Tina will receive a 25-day holiday to the Loy Yang Power Station, with \$5,000 (Monopoly money) spending money.' (Dave Field)

Congratulations Tina - we have really sent you a novelty prize, as usual.

- Editor



▲ Richard Locke, Product Support Manager for NS Komatsu Tasmania, Issue 8 'Who am I'.

Play it safe - on and off the job

Be it at home, work or play, there is a cost to an injury. The only things that change are the location and the cause of the accident. If you try to work out the odds, the chances are you won't take the risk in the first place.

Let's take a look at what it costs if you are injured at work. The first thing you lose is freedom - freedom of unrestricted movement, to do what you want with your leisure time. The list continues, with your inability to play sport, the suffering and inconvenience to your family and friends when they have to cater to your needs, or to visit you in hospital. There can also be changes to your social life.

Then you can start adding costs such as damage to equipment, cost of repair or replacement, compensation, administrative time, modifications to equipment or procedures to prevent a similar accident, costs to find somebody else to do the work, cost of medical treatment, the time it takes you to catch up to date when you return, - and so the list goes on.

A fairly conservative statement of the cost of injuries is that it STARTS at about \$400 per day. This cost can increase dramatically, when including other costs as above.

For injuries away from work, your costs increase - you have to pay for replacing equipment or repairing damage.

- You don't play with 240V power at work, so why re-wire power points or make your own extension leads at home?
- You wear safety glasses when grinding or drilling at work, so why not at home?
- You don't drive a company vehicle after a few beers, so why drive your own vehicle after consuming alcohol?

Don't allow yourself to be used as an example to others. Take the time to do things properly and carefully at work and at home.

Remember - THINK SAFETY, BE SAFE AND LIVE SAFELY

Dave Field

Working closer with our customers

Over the past 12 months Fairfield Service Department has been sponsoring our customers' apprentices by allowing their apprentices to work along side NS Komatsu workshop and field service staff.

The main customers involved with this programme have been the Army and Integral Energy. Their apprentices spend about two months each in the workshop and on Field Service, developing their skills on the Komatsu Products. The development of this relationship better strengthens the bond between the organisations and develops the future potential of the apprentices.

▼ Tamzin Van Der Weg, Army Apprentice, with Warrant Officer Jeff Maurice.



Army Warrant Officer Jeff Maurice from Holsworthy has been the main contact person with the army apprentices over the past 18 months. He has rostered some 10 apprentices through the Fairfield Site.

One apprentice of note was a female of considerable ability. Her name was Tamzin Van Der Weg. Tamzin was born in South Africa and migrated to Australia with her parents only a few years ago. Staff at Fairfield considered her to be one of the most knowledgeable apprentices from the army this year. One other asset of note was her willingness to get into a job rather than watch.

It was also noted by management that the staff worked well with Tamzin and were keen to have more females on the job as long as they could do the job as well as Tamzin. We were also pleased to hear that Tamzin passed her selection for training as an Officer Cadet at Duntroon, which she will start soon. She is very interested in becoming a Mechanical Engineer, specialising in hydraulics.

Integral Energy's Apprentice Greg Dunn was also of exceptional note. He was a keen worker and always beat our apprentices to the Field Service Supervisor, Terry English each morning. He subsequently had more trips out and enjoyed himself. Again the response from staff working with him was very positive.

Greg's Tafe record is of a high standard, coming second in 2nd year at Wetherill Park Tafe and was placed 3rd in the Workskill Olympics regional competition held through Tafe. He was also awarded a distinction in stage three last year. This qualification is a very rare award given to very few Tafe students. As an ex-Tafe Teacher, I have only ever seen two of these handed out in 20 years. Due to this fine performance we have now offered a position with N.S. Komatsu to Greg and he will complete his apprenticeship with us at Fairfield.



▲ Integral Energy Apprentice Greg Dunn.

This close relationship with these customers has strengthened and improved our understanding of the customer's needs, as well as letting them see the professional attitude we have to the service and maintenance of their machinery.

I would also take this opportunity to advise you that the other Tafe award was an Honours in the Toolmaking trade, awarded to our own Rex Farr, previously a TAFE student and now our Major Accounts Manager. This was the only award of this level issued to any TAFE student for that year.

- Doug Decean

NEVER GIVE UP

When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you, till it seems as though you could not hold on a moment longer, never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.



- Harriet Beecher Stowe

Problem Solving Teams

Maybe you have heard of the Japanese QC Circles, or Quality Control Circles. Even though these are thought of as Japanese, they are in fact operating in many countries in the world, often using different names. In America, they are often called Employee Involvement Teams. In Australia, different names are used, but generally, they are Problem Solving Teams.

Problem Solving Teams operate on the simple premise - the people doing a job are the experts and they are the best ones to identify problems in the job and to come up with solutions to the problem. NS Komatsu has decided to start Problem Solving Teams in two locations, on a trial basis. Komatsu Japan has a world wide policy of promoting QC circles, and what we are doing fits in with that policy.

After initial presentations on the concept, employees at Melbourne and Fairfield Branches have volunteered to start Problem Solving Teams. In Melbourne, the team is from the Workshop. In Fairfield, it is a combined Fairfield Branch Parts Department and Head Office Warehouse team. The first step was to elect a team leader in each location - in Melbourne it is John Silvester, Workshop Supervisor and in Fairfield it is David Robertson, Parts Interpreter.

Next, we organised a training school for the team leaders and also for other

"Circle Q" team members left to right, Chris Kemp, Matthew Watton, David Robertson (Leader) and Steve Johnston. Central Region Parts Manager John Higgins is second from the left, in a white shirt.



▲ *"Ted's Troubleshooters" John Silvester (Leader), Bernie Maher, Warwick Thompson, Gareth Jones, Shane Riley and Jason Panlook. (Gareth has now left the company, and has been replaced on the team by Rob Gardner).*

people who could benefit from leadership training. This training school covered the procedures and 'tools' used in Problem Solving Teams, forming a team and working on a problem identified in a brainstorming session. The problem selected was how to overcome damage and short life to steam cleaner hoses (this is an actual problem in several of our branches).

As well, the school included various team-building activities. In one case two small groups were formed and their project was to find a way to drop a raw egg from eye height, while standing on a chair, onto a hard tiled floor without breaking the egg! The only materials available were a packet of drinking straws and a packet of pins. In only 15 minutes, both teams found a way to protect the egg so it didn't break, even though each approach was quite different. This provided a lot of interest, and showed the resourcefulness of NS Komatsu staff!

The team leaders have gone back to their work places and each team is meeting regularly, working on problems they have selected. Each team has chosen a name to identify itself - in Fairfield, "Circle Q" and in Melbourne, "Ted's Trouble Shooters".

The problems chosen by the teams are not huge problems, but are ones which re-occur continually in the workplace. "Ted's Troubleshooters" is working on improvements to the oil handling procedures in the workplace, and "Circle Q" is attacking the problem of W.O.G. orders (to consolidate parts in customer orders, rather than individual shipments).

When the idea of Problem Solving Teams was decided on, Managing Director Tom Hirano said that just like in Japan, while solving the problems is good, the main objective is the personal growth and motivation the team members feel. They solve problems and get recognition for their efforts, making them feel better about their job. Step by step, these improvements make the company stronger, for the people in it and for our customers.

The two pilot teams will continue for a period to solve several problems, after which the idea will be offered to all Regions to adopt, on a voluntary basis.



SEEN ON A WHITEBOARD IN HEAD OFFICE

'The need to be right all the time is the biggest bar to new ideas.'

It is better to have enough ideas for some of them to be wrong than to always be right by having no ideas at all.'

- Edward De Bono

Self defence programme

Training in Central Region has taken a small twist as we encourage the female staff to become more independent and capable of taking control of their work environment. During the latter part of 1996 a number of self defence programmes were conducted by Mr Rob Gear, a specialist in self defence techniques. Rob has developed these skills from 20 years martial arts training and conducting training for Army personnel.

The programme was conducted over a couple of mornings and covered a number of areas of concern for the women who attended. These areas consisted of:-

- Vulnerable parts of the body
- The body as a weapon
- Seven movements of close quarter combat
- Ground defences
- Knees/elbow techniques
- Vehicle defences
- Multiple attacks
- Adverse situations (bear hugs, grabs)

The female staff from both the Fairfield and Head Office sites attended. They participated well in all activities which included theory as well as the practical sessions. The feedback from those who participated, indicated that the programme's physical component was a two-fold benefit as it was invigorating and also gave them the skills to physically defend themselves if required. One participant avoided her practical sessions when it got too physical, by pretending that she had a broken foot.

Thanks must go to Tom Hovatta and Jeff Warton, as these two fellows assisted, by being punching bags for



▲ Lea Bailey defending herself against 'assailant' Jeff Warton.

the session. It was obvious to them that these women had a lot of unused energy as they delivered blow after blow for 2 hours straight. One lady was rather concerned that these two fellows should be wearing appropriate protection and was relieved to find out later that they were 'well' protected. One of the 'test dummies' was heard to say 'why did I volunteer' as he counted the scratches, bumps and bruises he sustained.

Annemaree Gear, Personal Assistant to Charles Foo, is married to Rob and also participates in the rigours of self defence training. As a previous MP in the Army she had many a drunken soldier to put in place.

*Well done Tom and Jeff.
You are very brave!*

- Editor



▲ Head Office and Fairfield Branch self defence students, with 'assailants' at the ends, and instructor Rob Gear, seated centre.

South QLD apprentice of the year

On 17th January, NS Komatsu Brisbane Branch held a presentation ceremony for our Inaugural Apprentice of the Year for 1996. The awards were presented by Phil Atley, Service Manager, and Anthony Warton, Apprentice Co-ordinator.

South Queensland Region's Apprentice of the Year was Andrew Murray. Andrew won \$400 worth of tooling, a replica shield, and a certificate. A large shield hangs in the workshop office with his name engraved on it. Andrew completed his apprenticeship towards the end of 1996.

The runner up was Edward Brown. Edward won \$100 worth of tooling and a certificate. Edward is a 3rd year apprentice and has another 12 months before he finishes.



▲ South Queensland Apprentice of the Year, Andrew Murray with Service Manager, Phil Atley.

This programme was introduced by Anthony Warton, and assisted by Phil Atley and Mark Lock, Workshop Manager. Using assessment forms which set out a criteria, the Leading Hands fill these forms in at the end of each roster. These forms are then assessed by Anthony Warton throughout the year. At the end of the year Anthony and Arthur Rogers, acting Workshop Manager, reassess the forms as well as look at the way the individual apprentice handle their responsibilities by filling out their diaries, to be signed at the end of each week, and doing their tasks when their roster is due.

Congratulations Andrew and Edward.

- Editor

Region News

You will notice that we have not printed all the individual birthdays which were submitted. Because space is limited, and because we have 800 people in the company, we can't print every one. We have decided to concentrate on those special birthdays, such as 21, 30, 40, 50, etc. We hope everyone will understand. Please be sure to mention any special birthdays etc. to your Regional Contact, so it can be printed in 'Down To Earth'.

- Editor

HEAD OFFICE AND FAIRFIELD BRANCH

Head Office/Fairfield Christmas Party

Our Christmas function was held in our Canteen and Training Centre just before Christmas last year, with professional caterers providing a wonderful spread. It was a very happy atmosphere, with everyone joining in the fun and celebrations.

Managing Director Tom Hirano gave a short speech, telling us all the good end of year results, thanking everyone for their efforts. He wished all a safe and happy holiday period, and is looking forward to another successful year.

Roy Burgess was the proud(?) recipient of the annual Stirrer's Award. It was a special recognition of Roy's ability, as this was the second time he has won this award!

Everyone was given a lucky ticket, with the major prize winners, all winning weekends away for two:

- 1st Matt Opalniuk, at Bundanoon Health Resort.
- 2nd Viktor, at Dooralong Lodge.
- 3rd Tom Hirano, at the Hunter Valley.
- 4th Hans Wehrmacher - Lillianfels, Katoomba.
- 5th Nigel Newton - Hilton Hotel Sydney.
- 6th Jon Wiley - Whale Beach.

Congratulations to all the winners. Nancy Chen was one of the winners of a Harley Davidson ride. We heard that she felt that a Harley ride was a bit tame, so she swapped her prize for a shopping voucher.

Also we hope Tom Hirano enjoyed his weekend in the Hunter Valley, on pleasure, rather than business for once!

PERSONNEL NEWS

Welcome to:

New apprentices commenced 13th January 1997.

Nathan Finch
Justin Henry

Demag/Komatsu Merger
We welcome Ron Palmer to the fold, joining us early December 1996.



◀ Eddie Shimizu (centre) at last year's Advanced Technic Contest awards night.

Farewell to:

Eddie Shimizu, who returned to Japan at the end of January. All Eddie's friends will miss him.

Citizenship:

Tony Wafer became an Australian citizen on Australia Day. Tony is English by birth, he has an Irish passport. He also has a New Zealand passport and citizenship. Tony is a Mixed All Sorts Nationality!

Congratulations on the citizenship, Tony. Congratulations also on finding another way to get a mention in 'Down To Earth'!

- Editor.

Congratulations to:

Richard Meyers and Jacqui Schroeter who were married on 22nd February.

Lea Bailey and Allan Coleman who will be married on 7th March.

Special Birthdays:

Charles Foo (Big '50th') 8 Mar

Other:

Steven, watch what you drink!

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

Another successful Children's Christmas Party for 1996 with an

assortment of rides on site at Fairfield.

A big thank you to 'Santa', Sandra, Margaret and their families for catering.

H.O. Marketing Dept:

Christmas Function

Marketing Dept enjoyed a comedy show at the Parramatta Riverside Theatre including a three course meal. Then the 'youngins' went out and danced the night away.

HUNTER VALLEY

EMPLOYEE NEWS

Congratulations to:

Peter and Donna Crawford on the birth of their daughter Lauren Kate on 21st November 1996.

NORTH QUEENSLAND

Mackay Branch

PERSONNEL NEWS

Congratulations to:

Di & Nick Roberts
Brett Roberts
Lisa & Michael Toms
on the birth of their daughters.

Special Birthdays:

Katrina Harvison (21) - 6 Jan

BUSINESS NEWS

The last 830E Truck for Ernest Henry Mining is due to arrive in Mackay's workshop on the 7th February 1997.

BHP - Saraji Mine have taken delivery of their new Ingersoll Rand DM-M3 Drill.

Large Excavators seem to be popular at the moment with Evanbank Pty. Ltd. purchasing a PC1000SP-1 and

Golding Contractors Pty. Ltd. purchasing one new PC1600-1.

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

Mackay Branch's Christmas festivities were held at Hamilton Island again in 1996. As in 1994, we all had a great time relaxing, drinking and eating by the beach situated in the beautiful Whitsundays.

Unfortunately, there was a tragic ending to our weekend with one of our Workshop Fitters, Earl Martin, passing away.

(See VALE Earl Martin, page 2)

Townsville Branch

Townsville Branch has it's share of births and marriages this month.

Congratulations to:

Donny Ireland, one of our workshop fitters, on his marriage to Janelle.

February saw the birth of Leigh and Debbie Foran's fourth child. Another boy, which evens things up.

PERSONNEL NEWS

Many new arrivals have come to our branch since the last issue.

Richard Astill has become our new Parts Supervisor. Casual staff that have become permanent include Michael Lowth in the workshop, Karl Heald in the Field, and transferring from the store to inside Parts Dept. is Aaron Tilbrook, who is our new Parts Interpreter.

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

Our Christmas Party on Magnetic Island was a success with everyone having a great time, including the kids.

SOUTH QUEENSLAND

PERSONNEL NEWS

The Children's Christmas Party and Staff BBQ was held at Nixon Park, Corinda on 1st December, 1996. Once again we had a good attendance of staff members and families and of course Santa, making the day a very enjoyable one.

A very special thank you must go to Neil and Cheryl Spackman for all their help and assistance over the last few years, and also to other members of the staff who have helped erect the marquee, buttered the bread rolls,

chopped numerous kilos of tomatoes and cucumbers, cried over the onions, and perhaps burnt a snag or two.

The Social Club Christmas function was held at the Australian Football Club at Sherwood on 23rd November, 1996. I am sure that the 60 or so people that attended had a good time. The music was great, the food was great and the company was even better.

Peter Adams did not take long to get a result following the recent return of his fishing boat. He's been seen flashing a photo of a 30kg plus Murray Cod around the Sales Department.

Bruce McNichol, Ingersoll Rand Representative turned detective, had his near new Falcon stolen on Friday night - reported same to police, etc. All seemed lost, but Bruce continued his patrolling and found it himself four days later - 10 points to Bruce.

BUSINESS NEWS

SQR 'Big Deal' machine delivery to Eltin Limited.

SQR is currently preparing 20 plus machines for Eltin to work at the Ebenezer open cut coal mine near the Willowbank Raceway.

The fleet includes:

- 11 x 630E Haulpak Dump Trucks
- 5 x HD785-3 Komatsu Dump Trucks
- 1 x WA800-2 Komatsu Wheel Loader
- 2 x HD465-5 Komatsu Water Carts
- 3 x D375A-3 Komatsu Dozers
- 1 x D475A-2 Komatsu Dozers

This large deal was concluded with Eltin, a Western Australian (Perth) based company, who are soon to open an office here in Brisbane. This deal offers some additional employment to SQR and considerable experience opportunities for many of our staff in Brisbane.

SOUTHERN REGION

Campbellfield

History tells us the SOS Titanic sank on its maiden voyage on 14 April 1912 after hitting an iceberg. On Saturday 21 December 1996 Social Club members and their partners experienced the thrills and intrigue of that fateful voyage and all survived! Upon arrival at

the Williamstown Park, guests were then transported by horse and coach to the Prince of Wales Hotel. Some staff members really got into the swing of things and dressed in costumes appropriate to that period. Lucky door prizes for 'Sweet Charity' were won by Dean Purchase, Sharyne Andrews, Bernie Maher, Steve Leicester and Geoff Deller - Congratulations to you all! Again, all Social Club members extend their appreciation to Edwina and Darren for all the work and effort they put into these nights and a very special mention must go to Lana Fortuin who was the artist behind all those drink coasters.

PERSONNEL NEWS

Used Equipment Manager - Southern Region.

Mr. Bob Bramwell has been appointed Used Equipment Manager for the Southern Region. Bob's background has recently been in materials handling, but before this, was involved extensively in the buying and selling of



▲ Edwina Fortuin and Darren Attard, Social Club & Events Managers, trying to stay afloat.



▲ Bob Jones had a great night.

used equipment for the forest industry.

Welcome to NS Komatsu Bob!

Sales Manager - New Equipment

Coming up to his 10th year in October, David Laidlaw has decided to depart from Melbourne and take up the position of Sales Manager NS Komatsu Mackay. David, you are going to miss out on all those great 'Melbourne' things ie; real football, (Geelong may get into the Grand Final - again!) the Grand Prix and the Melbourne Cup. All your colleagues wish you and Jan all the best in your career move.

Andrew Lambing, Branch/Sales Manager for our Wodonga branch was appointed to the position of Sales Manager - New Equipment effective from 1 February 1997. Welcome to Melbourne, Andrew.

BUSINESS NEWS

Komatsu D21A-7 Dozer

Shayne Morrall, Melbourne Metropolitan Representative has delivered the first Komatsu D21A-7 Dozer sold in Australia. Shayne sold this unit to local contractor L.G.P. Services and was specifically purchased for tight dozing in environmentally sensitive areas.

Launceston:

NS Komatsu Launceston enjoyed their Christmas function at the Great Northern Hotel. A fantastic night of food, drink and most importantly dancing. We are all looking forward to next year where a night cruise down the Tamar is planned.

PERSONNEL NEWS



▲ NS Komatsu Hobart Golf Classic.
Left to right. Eddie Shimizu (Head Office), Shane Stevens (Hobart Branch), Frank Carpenter (Pioneer), Leigh Bygrave (Hobart Branch), Gary Shaw (Shaw's Excavations) and Ike Murata (Head Office)

It was goodbye to John Ride (Service Clerk) and we welcome John Davis who has joined us to replace John. We are wondering if a pre-requisite for this position is the name 'John'. We wish both Johns well!

Special Birthdays:

Alison Mathews in reaching the 'Big 30'. Alison claims it is an error and should read '23' - Nice try Alison!

Congratulations to:

Craig and Angela Wright on the birth of number two child 'a girl'.

Hobart

NS Komatsu Classic

At 8.30 am Friday 13 December 1996 some sixty (60) keen golfing customers of NS Komatsu (Tasmania)

assembled at the Tasmania Golf Club in preparation to tee off at 9.00 am and off into battle in order to win the prestigious NS Komatsu Classic team prizes.

The weather was idyllic - 'what's that I hear some of you Tassie bashers saying - impossible!' for golf with absolutely no wind and a sunny day of 22°C.

Shane Stevens and Leigh Bygraves had already determined the makeup of all teams (making sure all team members were compatible!) This task was made somewhat easier by obtaining all handicaps beforehand. In this way, all teams were evenly matched. The Classic, using 4 ball, best balls, Ambrose Rules, is taken very seriously.

However, due to the demanding terrain, all participants were continually thirsty and required significant quantities of 'refreshments'. This was necessary to prevent dehydration from setting in! With this in mind, Spare Parts 'Guru' Mike Auckland drove the 'anti-dehydration' buggy with much dexterity and having a thorough knowledge of the course (he is a club member) managed to avoid flying white balls whilst he attended to our every need.

Eventual winners were :

Overall Best Team:

Frank Carpenter (Pioneer Quarries), Gary Shaw (Shaw's Excavations) Shane Stevens (NS Komatsu) Leigh Bygrave (NS Komatsu).



▲ L.G.P. Services' D21A-7, the first of this model sold in Australia.

Longest Drive:

Geoffrey Hazell (Hazell Bros) and
Shane Stevens (NS Komatsu)

Nearest the Pin:

Kevin Quon (Hazell Bros) and Nick
Free (Ansett Air Freight)

Our sincere thanks and appreciation must also go to Ike Murata and Eddie Shimizu who represented NS Komatsu Head Office and presented all trophies and prizes. The 2nd Annual Tasmanian NS Komatsu Classic was an outstanding success and we look forward to teeing off once again this year.

WESTERN REGION**Perth Branch****PERSONNEL NEWS**

Our sympathies go out to Julie Reid (Reception) who copped a mouth full of cricket ball in January at a local cricket match. Julie was knocked unconscious, taken to hospital by ambulance where they discovered she had broken 5 teeth and split the whole of her lip. But Julie says on the bright side, she could only suck food through a straw for two weeks and ended up losing a bit of weight!. What a way to start the New Year.

Tamara, Tamara, - Has anybody seen Tamara. Seems like the boys in the Technical Service Department (especially one in 'partikiltular') have seen quite a lot of Tamara lately. Here's a hint - she works in Kalgoorlie, she works behind a bar and probably gets pretty cold in her uniform.

▼ Merv Laing 'Oh Joy, Oh Golly - it's Christmas'.



WANTED: a brave and courageous person to show Nathan Ellement the correct procedures when driving and parking cars.

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

On Sunday 8th December, Western Region Social Club members took their families for an outing to the Perth Zoo. Santa rocked up (in a Zebra Cart) and gave the kids their presents and some lollies and then they took off for an afternoon of exploring. I could go on about people visiting their relations and staring into mirrors but why wear out the already worn out ones? A good day had by all.

On Saturday 14th December, Western Region Social Club members headed off to the Duxton Hotel to celebrate Christmas. This turned out to be a great evening, (except that the DJ just had to play 'The Macarena'). Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves - though there were a few unanswered questions remaining:

Which lady from the purchasing department was seen leaving the hotel the day after,



▲ Receptionists Julie Reid (left) and Margaret Harris. 'If you feel lonely, call us.....'



▲ Glenn Balch (Service) and Mick Ibbotson (Field Service) on the right. 'Oh, go on then Mick. But only because it's Christmas!'

walking very slowly, looking quite pale and under the protection of extremely dark sunglasses?

Which Welsh salesman showed us all that Elvis Presley had nothing on him?

Which of our New Zealand neighbours from Field Service was seen snuggling up to which Electrician's ear?

Which person who retired last year and attended the Christmas function was making sure he gave all the girls a kiss to remember him by?

Overall - a top night. Our thanks to the Social Club Committee for all their hard work.