

THE SPLINTER

AKD EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



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EDITION 49

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2023



EDITION 49

15

Market Update & AKD's position

16

Meet Mick
Irrewarra's Site Manager

18-19

AKD Team Spotlight
Information Technology

20

2023 Gap Year Employees

22

New Australian citizenship

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TO HEAR
FROM YOU!**

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THE
S P L I N T E R

is AKD's employee newsletter...
it's made for **YOU!**

**Take a couple of minutes to
have the opportunity
to have your say about the
THE SPLINTER.**

**Scan the QR code to start
share your thoughts!**





2023 FOOTY TIPPING COMPETITION



SEASONS START:



MARCH 2



MARCH 16

1ST PRIZE

\$1000

2ND PRIZE

\$500

3RD PRIZE

\$250

LEADER
PRIZES AT
WEEK 8
+
WEEK 15

**HOW TO
ENTER:**

CREATE AN ACCOUNT AT WWW.FOOTYTIPS.COM.AU
AND SEARCH FOR 'AKD' PASSWORDS: AFL - AKD08 NRL - AKD19

PICK ONE OR GO FOR BOTH ~ PRIZES APPLY FOR EACH

*employee and/or customers must be employed or actively engaged with AKD at time of competition conclusion to be eligible for prizes

Health & Safety

Well, here we are at the start of another new year and it is already shaping up to look like another one full of activity!

Hopefully you had a lovely break and were able to spend some time doing those things in life you enjoy - **YOUR WHY**.

Disappointingly, we didn't kick off on a positive note – we had two Lost Time Injuries (LTI's) and two Serious Potential Incidents (SPI's), all of which were preventable.

It's mid February as I'm writing this, and it is pleasing to see that this month is a lot better.

As we do each year, we started back with our Safe Start Up day. It's really interesting to hear the feedback from across the group – both the good and the bad. If I'm honest, I know that this day doesn't appeal to everyone and that's ok. But it's important to remember the purpose of this day – it's about taking some time out to *'get our heads back in the game'* and really focus on making AKD an even safer place to work. When I hear comments like, 'AKD doesn't care about safety' – I think taking a full day out to focus on just that is a pretty big demonstration that the business actually does care.

I have received heaps of positive feedback on this year's guest speaker from Sentis, certainly a different way to think about safety.

I want to take some time to shout out to those people that shared **THEIR WHY** in the video – what powerful messages! Emma, Baylin, Paige, Shannon, Torin, Krissy and Mick thank you for sharing.



SAFETY:
WHAT'S YOUR WHY?



We have another full year ahead of us and there are plenty of projects either underway or in the planning phase. This is really exciting for the business and for those sites - and the teams are heavily focused on the safety elements of each of those projects – contractor management, risk assessments, changing conditions and everything in between which needs to be appropriately planned and managed. **A project is not successful if we injure someone in the process.**

DONESAFE

The Health and Safety Team have been working on a pretty exciting project too! We are excited to announce the launch of our new Health and Safety system 'DoneSafe'. Accessible via Web or Mobile, DoneSafe seamlessly combines the following modules:



INCIDENT & HAZARD REPORTING



INJURY & CLAIMS MANAGEMENT



DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING



COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS



CONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT

Why the change? DoneSafe is a custom built solution for AKD that provides enhanced functionality whilst being easy to use.

All Risk Manager users will transition to DoneSafe when released at your site. Deployment is set for the Caboolture site 1st March 2023, other sites will follow in a staged approach.

CRITICAL RISKS

Chain of Responsibility was the focus for the February Critical Risk Program. While this is very much targeted towards our truck related activities, it's still important for everyone to know and understand the importance of getting this right.

We all drive on public roads. How many trucks do you drive past or drive behind and think to yourself - "I hope that load is secure".... I know I do!

Our truck drivers do a fantastic job moving our product around the states safely but unfortunately when you are sharing the road with thousands of other people, our drivers need to be 'on their game' at all times.



TOP 10 CRITICAL RISKS



CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY

Chain of Responsibility applies to all vehicle operations involving vehicles over 4.5T and parties in the Supply Chain that have any control or influence over any transport task associated with heavy vehicle operations.

AKD's objective is to identify, prevent & manage any risk, as far as reasonably practicable, associated with all activities and service with respect to Heavy Vehicle operations, with a focus on:

All speed & fatigue management requirements under the Chain of Responsibility Legislation.

All mass, dimension & loading requirements under the Chain of Responsibility Legislation.

All heavy vehicles used in transport activities are roadworthy, maintained and meet the required vehicle standards.

Ensuring our conduct does not directly or indirectly cause or encourage any breaches to the Chain of Responsibility Legislation.

Ensuring adequate opportunity is available for employees & contractors to be compliant before commencing work through appropriate procedures & guidelines.

Monitor & controlling procedures & guidelines of Chain of Responsibility.

Providing training & education for employees & contractors to foster a mutual understanding of Chain of Responsibility.

Developing a culture of shared responsibility for Chain of Responsibility.

Promoting compliance & education.

Conducting regular audits/inspections to ensure that the elements of this Standard are effectively implemented.

EVERY LOAD – EVERY VEHICLE – EVERY PERSON – EVERY TIME!

Caboolture

Around the Grounds

Welcome to 2023, in terms of all the activity at Caboolture it feels in some ways like we just rolled on into the new year. When it comes to projects this is true, however we need to reflect on the busy period that was our Christmas Shut, Safe Start Up and back to normal operations.

Over our two-week shutdown the maintenance teams worked tirelessly around the clock to get through the list of repairs and maintenance work, as well as numerous upgrades to equipment.

It was a fantastic result by everyone involved to have all the work completed within the allocated timeframe but most importantly we had a zero-injury result. The focus on ensuring this was achieved was a combined effort by everyone involved, so a big thank you too all.

On January 3rd we returned to work and took part in Safe Start Day. Teams cycled through the various refresher topics including the theme for the day being 'What's Your Why'. Safety Start Day is a time to take it all in and reflect on why we come to work and want to go home safely. There was some really engaging conversations that make safety real for all of us.

This was a great opportunity to introduce the 'Safety Pledge Board' where every person onsite signed their name to commit to being part of an exceptional safety culture and taking a shared responsibility on our journey towards zero. The pledge board will be on display at the entry to site so each day we can be reminded of what we all signed up



Safe Start Up – Renewing team knowledge on SLAM's and Hazard and Incident reports

for. The day was a success with positive feedback from the teams, and a huge thank you goes out to the safety team for all the effort in pulling it together.

In terms of production, we had a great start across all areas, with the site settling back into. We wrapped up January with several achievements including record output in the Log Yard and Green Mill for shift and daily targets, and the Kilns achieved a record monthly result. This was certainly a team effort across all departments and showed us the signs of what we are capable of into the future.

The Green Mill took an extended planned outage over the Australia Day weekend to complete some further works around the Quad Saw. Again, the teams came through this completing all planned works safely and on time.

As we reflected on 2022, it was important to acknowledge everything the site went through over the 12 months, but



Health & Safety

with Greg Levinge
Caboolture Safety Manager



2023 is going to be another great year for Caboolture for growth and change that aims at reducing risk and improving health/working conditions.

Most of the team got a chance to get a break over Christmas, with the remainder of us planning time out in this first quarter to ensure we stay fresh and charged up.

With some extreme temperatures in December and January and a huge shut plan, we met the challenge head on and had a safe shut and injury free January, which we are proud of. Our connections and bringing things back to basic foundation which has severed us well.

The site safety team lead the charge with planning the safe stop, shut and start program which included toll box talks, safety stations, road safety messages, display board messages, hands on safe start practicals.



Safe Dec Campaign – Remember the FATAL 5 when on the roads the festive season and going forward

Big effort from all and great interaction especially the commitment from the entire site with the signing onto our safety pledge board. This board is just another way our team is displaying publicly their commitment to staying safe, their own individual 'why' and to each other.

As we continue to improve our standards on traffic management, we still have seen a few near misses/incidents that reminded us of how discipline and focus is critical to ensure we don't provide the opportunity for injury or asset damage to occur.

A lot of hard work from the team has been evident and the common catch cry is how much the site is transforming both in people and infrastructure.

Whilst systems and processes are being updated and improved, its evident the changes in just December/January physically are outstanding – thank you to all involved and your enthusiasm and passion.

As leaders and co-workers every interaction or demonstration of our safety behaviours is a vote for the culture we will get. We won't choose it, it will choose us, and therefore we want to ensure every time we engage in completing a SLAM, attending a toolbox and having interactions we stay above the line and focus on Think, Work and Be safe.



Site safety pledge board being signed by Caroline (Apprentice Electrician), Matt (Quality Control Officer), Ash (sales) and Mick (Dispatch fork driver)



Progression on the CDK

this was also the time to set ourselves some challenges for the coming year and talk about the future journey. As part of this, we will see some of the major projects come to an end, such as the Pellet Mill and CDK, and further changes continuing to the site conditions and ongoing improvement projects across the various departments.

We will also start to finalise plans on what the next wave of projects will be to take the site another step forward towards our growth targets, aiming to be a key contributor to the overall timber supply nationally.

At the heart of all this remains our people and the addition of new team members will continue throughout 2023. We identify that our onboarding and training needs to be world class. This will continue to be a major focus for the site, providing more opportunities for our existing team is also critical in the training and development space and is equally high on the agenda.

Our commitment to 'raising the standards' has been evident again over the last couple of months, and as a team we need to maintain this mindset in everything we do. At AKD, we aim to create products our customers want to buy on an ongoing basis. Ultimately, our intention is to do this without injuring our people by focussing on getting the basics right. I see examples of this everyday across the site which makes me excited for what lies ahead in 2023.

Andrew Wilson
Caboolture Site Manager



Colac & Irrewarra

Around the Grounds

COLAC

Well, welcome back, it feels like the Christmas break was a very long time ago but as I sit writing this it is actually less than two month ago and what a two month it has been.

After a really engaging Start Up day with some fantastic speakers, we then proceeded to have a challenging start regarding safety incidents and near misses. But as is the way at Colac and Irrewarra, we learned from the events and will no doubt be safer for the experience.

One of the actions we did take was to have some really positive discussions around site about "What's Your Why" and we used Australia Day to ask a couple of simple questions: What are you planning to do on Australia Day and how would those plans stand up if you were carrying a workplace injury? So far, the response has been fantastic and our injuries and near misses through the second half January and into February have decreased.

The other point that was discussed, during these conversations, was around the fact that as much as AKD and it's management tries to make it safe it will never be the case unless every one of us takes responsibility for safety, which includes refusing to undertake dangerous tasks and respectfully asking that the job be reviewed before we rush in.

Another really encouraging advancement for the site is the work done on Fibre recovery in the Greenmills and high-grade recovery in the Drymill.

It's been a huge effort by people like Dan Delahunty, Neil Hunter, Tom O'Connor, Nick Murray, Justin Hickey, Cameron Percy, Steven Lusher, Mick Ritchie, Nannette Sharp, Anthony Elliot and Jaskirat Marwah, just to name a few.

This work has really added some value to our efforts, as strange and as obvious as it sounds you only get a chance to process the log or the lumber once. Once it's done incorrectly you can never get the fibre back but you will always be burdened with the cost of log and processing.

This brings me to Project 150 in the Colac Greenmill and the recently started Project 80 in the Drymill. These projects are starting to show some really strong results around productivity and reliability but please, do not feel like these projects are designed to make you rush and cut corners, the projects are aimed at reducing stoppages and interventions and since most of our injuries occur during upset conditions which require an intervention by the Operator.

The drymill upgrade is still progressing with concrete being poured and still on track for an October commissioning.

The Greenmill is next cab off the rank though with the new USNR revolver lug loader and multi-track fence going in at Easter.

Thanks go out to the Site Project team for the work that goes into making these projects happen.

APPRENTICE APPRECIATION

Prior to starting his apprenticeship, Dylan Tenabel, along with his fellow 1st year apprentices, had no machining experience, and at first, they were a bit apprehensive and nervous about the prospect of operating a Lathe and Mill.

Recently Dylan was given the task to machine a drive shaft, sleeve and retaining washer.

The shaft has some critical dimensions, the largest diameter on the shaft and the outside diameter on the sleeve needs to be a press fit into a wheel hub which previously housed bearing races. The inside diameter of the sleeve also needs to press fit onto the driven end of the shaft. The driven end of the shaft with the keyway fits into a gearbox.

Dylan along with the other apprentices are now machining to high standards. Dylan's work on this shaft is excellent, the surface finish is very good and the critical dimensions are within 0.02 of a millimeter. Well done Dylan.



Dylan Tenabel

John Browne
Colac Site Manager



Health & Safety

with **Cameron Grant**

Colac & Irrewarra Safety Manager



Welcome to 2023 and well let's just say we haven't had the start to the year that we were hoping for.

After having no incidents occur during the Christmas shut period with our maintenance crews working extremely well and safely, we turned the corner very quickly, with a few very close calls and one injury that has resulted in the employee requiring stitches after an incident.



With every incident we find lessons to be learnt and make improvements to ensure we can stop the incidents reoccurring and identify other areas where a similar hazard exists.

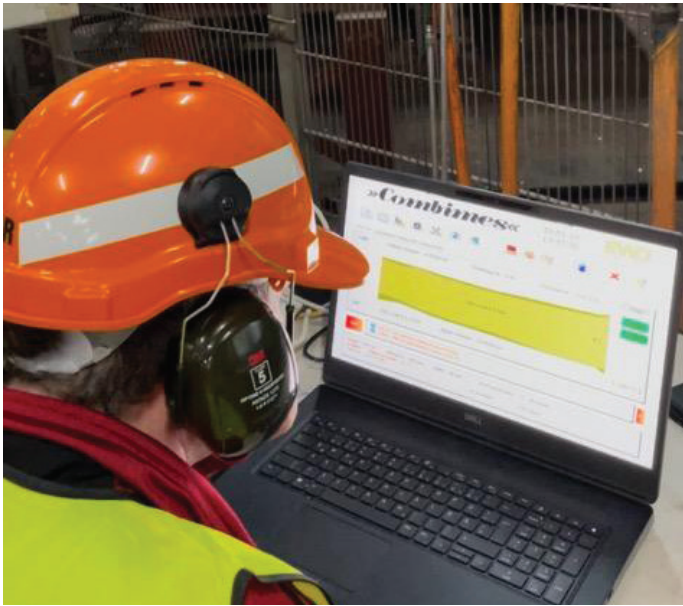
'What's Your Why'? At our Safe Start Up we got to see a great message from members of our AKD family and their reasons for staying safe at work and their 'WHY'S', but being able to think about our own reasons for staying safe at work and the impact a workplace injury would have to our lives outside of work

After the break I sat down with one of our employees onsite who suffered a serious injury at work, just to check in and see how their time off and recovery was going. They had just had family come to visit from overseas who they hadn't seen for about five years, and they were able to say that whilst it was amazing to see their kids and grandkids, the injury limited everything that they were able to do with them. Whether it was walking to the park, going on day trips to places and even playing with them in the backyard at Christmas.

A split-second decision to cross a road without looking both ways, forgetting to double check an isolation before entering an area or even walking downstairs without holding onto the handrail, can result in an incident or injury that can be life altering.

As we continue through the year, think about your health and safety and the impact that an incident may have on you, the holidays that have been planned, the hobbies outside of work that you wouldn't be able to do, the things you wouldn't be able to do with your family and the impact it would have on them.

Since our 'What's Your Why' toolbox talks we have seen a dramatic improvement onsite. Let's continue to think about our safety.



IRREWARRA

In January, we had Germany company EWD visit to do a health check on our EWD gang saw before the saw boxes are due to be changed in July.

Their visit was also beneficial for us with further training for Sam Britton (operations), Nannette Sharps (quality) and Adam Harris (maintenance).

The use of an interpreter was invaluable to break down the language barrier and in their six day visit, there were a number of issues fixed, and some new areas identified for maintenance to focus on after every shift.

The EWD gang saw is running much better after the visit.



Mick Ritchie

Irrewarra Site Manager



Tumut & Gilmore

Around the Grounds

SAFETY

Really good start to the year with everyone coming back refreshed and enthusiastic.

Safe Start Up ran smoothly, with the guest speaker engaging the employees. No injuries since site commenced which really enforced the push towards taking your time, SLAMs and having the courage to intervene.



Unfortunately, we had a Serious Potential Injury (SPI) with a fire that's started in the basement of the Greenmill. This had enormous potential to cause significant damage. Thanks to the fire watch and quick response from the employees on site, minimal damage took place but it could have been a lot worse.

Focus on the site going forward is again looking at the basics, taking the time to access and not walking pass a hazard or unsafe act.

There is nothing so important that it can't be done safely.

PROJECTS

Exciting times for the project team. HSS project is now in full excavation mode, slowly working our way down to ground zero and additional piers have been put into area to stop walls from collapsing. Slab is expected to be poured end of February.

PRODUCTION

We're off to a great start for the year with the site hitting green numbers since day one and it's a real credit to all the employees for their continual passion to ensure the site runs well.

The continual focus for the site is to get the basics right, conversion, grade, downtime recording and obviously safety performance.

I would like to give a huge shout out to the maintenance department for stepping up during this time and ensuring not only the plant continues to run at its optimum, but every job has been done safely. Well done.



Heath & Safety

with Rodney Sutton

Tumut H&S Advisor



Welcome back, I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Christmas and new year and are looking forward to a new and exciting year ahead.

Well, what can I say, not the best start to the year, unfortunately for us a contractor working in the Drymill was injured when he fell from the ladder he was working on, and a fire after a hot work activity in the Greenmill. If not extinguished by one of our Kiln shift leaders could have been devastating for the site. Well done Russell.



Safe Start Up team catch up

Other than that incident overall the maintenance shut went to plan. Well done to the maintenance team that gave up their time with family and friends to ensure the plant and equipment was back to its operational excellence to give us a breakdown free 12 months. I hope I haven't jinxed us.

Speaking of contractors and projects, our HSS project is underway, we have a large hole next to our greenmill where a couple of infeed decks used to be.

There has not been a lot of contractors on site during this initial part of the project, however when we get up to erecting the shed and installing the plant and equipment there will be contractors everywhere doing every type of task. Contractor management and supervision will be a priority for us.

To finish on a positive our journey in the Drug and Alcohol policy and procedure implementation space has been positive for the site, recently roughly 20 employees collectively across both Tumut and Gilmore have been trained in the collection of samples and equipment use. I believe this is a positive step forward for us in ensuring everyone is "fit for work" when they arrive for work.



Farewell Present
from Jon Baker
"Pumpkin"

Farewell Gordon "Gordo" Kelso

It is with sadness we said goodbye to Gordon Kelso, our Maintenance Manager who has been with Tumut since 2011.

He is off to Iplex Australia, and slowing things down a bit by going from a department of 38 employees to now four employees – what a change this will be for him!

He has mentored around 15 apprentices over this time, all of whom he talks about watching them grow up from the young people that would start as apprentices and become tradespeople, get married, buy their houses and have families.

In his time at AKD, Gordo had replaced three cars travelling from Tumbarumba to Tumut everyday, having to dodge wildlife along the way.

We will miss his humour and his loudness – we always knew when Gordo was in the building. He was well respected by everyone, and all of his apprentices looked up to him as a father figure.

Wishing Gordo all the very best in his new adventure.



Gordo with wife Judy, his three children: Liam, Caitlin, Kieran, and grandchildren

Rab Green

Tumut Site Manager



Yarram

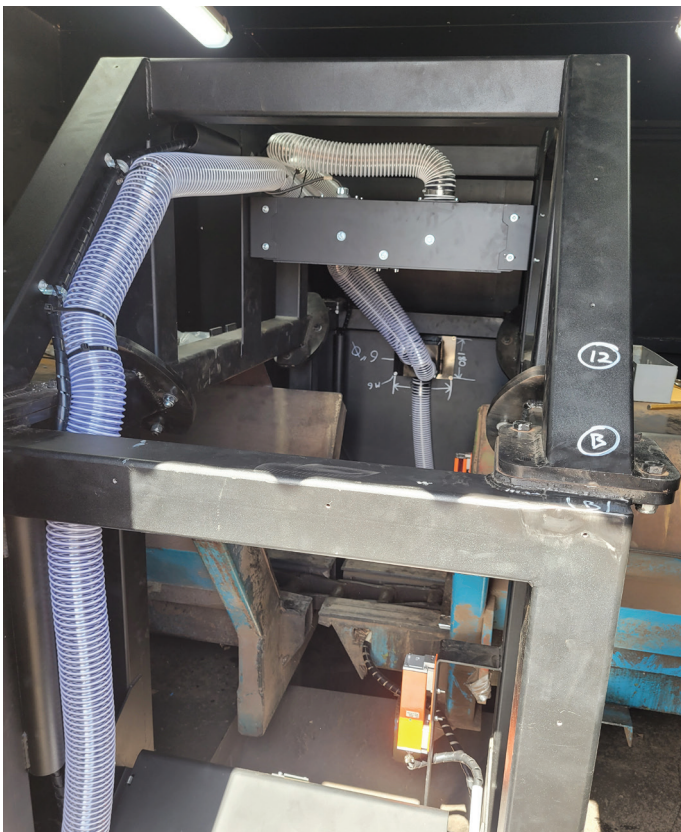
Around the Grounds

Safe Start Up at Yarram this year was conducted offsite at our local theatre. A historical landmark in the area, the Reagent Theatre proved to be a fantastic place to conduct the sessions before we commenced for another year. The manual handling presentation delivered by our local physiotherapist Rebekah Neilson was a highlight, along with the safety trivia, which saw our teams battle it out showing just how much they knew about safety and the local area.

While most of us were off site during the Christmas Shutdown, it was a very busy period for our maintenance team. The debarker log scanner was replaced with the latest scanning technology and have already seen an increase in the scanning accuracy which means we can now be very confident that we are utilising every log that meets our specification.

Bill Wilson did a great job coordinating the scanner frame build through third parties, importing the scanner heads from overseas to site just in time and conducting the installation without any hiccups.

The scanner head job was probably our biggest, and the number of smaller jobs completed was enormous. Really well done to our team, led by Julian, who took on the coordination of this which saw a great completion rate and every job done safely.



Scanner Frame without covers



Hewsaw Guides

The Hewsaw (our primary breakdown saw) also got some love and attention during the shut period as well as getting the R250 well positioned for 2023. The most significant job here saw James (JJ) and Mikayla change over the main guides within the saw.

Whilst replacing the worn out guides we took the opportunity to replace them with an upgrade that features a replaceable wearing plate that can not only be adjusted to suit the wear in the machine, but will mean that the main body of the part will never have to be changed again.

Great work from the team utilising some innovation to improve our cutting performance. The hewsaw itself celebrates 20 years of service for the Yarram site in February and you have to say that it is cutting better than ever now.

In the project space, our main carpark at Yarram received a facelift. The overflow carpark also had the remaining termite ridden trees removed and the area stripped and compacted to allow enough parking for the site.



New carpark

Health & Safety

with **Graham Clarke**

Yarram H&S Advisor



Here we are back for another year. We have been looking at many ways we can improve things at Yarram and safety is just one aspect of that.



Safe Start Up

Recently we had an environmental near miss, a bit of water in a piece of plant where we didn't really want it.

The environment sometimes can be overlooked in our work roles and I am very glad AKD have Sean Maxwell, our Environmental Manager to guide us.

As you will see in other articles about Yarram in this edition, we are making some big impacts. Our new car park looks great, after years of parking where you could be in amongst the trees and dodging falling branches, it will be a pleasure to use.

Safety wise we have plans at Yarram to audit how we handle sharp objects, look at better gloves more suited to tasks and much more. We also have a great safety improvement where we had an area when we stack WIP paling flinch. It is sloping ground, not ideal. A project was set for the Safety Committee on what we could do to improve it and this is the project result (photos below). It is very pleasing to see what a functional group can accomplish. Well done to the Safety Committee and helpers. Also thank you to the Yarram Maintenance Team for making it happen.



Before



After

As we start the year, the Yarram site has said goodbye to Ed Burgess.

Ed has worked at the Yarram site for almost five years and has been a highly valued and much-loved character in our drymill.

At his request, and in hope that his journey can be avoided by someone else in the AKD family, Ed would like to share his story:



Ed in his younger days was a smoker and quite a few years ago was diagnosed with bowel cancer. At the time, he had major surgery but despite the ordeal had received a cancer free diagnosis following his life altering treatment.

However, after receiving that good news, it was still recommended to get ongoing routine checks to make sure the cancer did not return, and unfortunately, Ed did not.

During a routine trip to the doctor for his daughter several years later, the doctor asked Ed why he had not been back for a check-up? 'I am cancer free' Ed replied.

After a serve from the doctor, Ed had a blood test where it was revealed that the cancer had returned.

For the last couple of years Ed has had to undergo constant radiation, chemotherapy and most recently, had more than half his liver removed in a last-ditch effort to beat this deadly disease.

While the operation has been considered successful, the cancer remains and as Ed begins another round of chemotherapy and with tears in his eyes, he hands in his resignation with his body and mind just not able to manage.

So, what are the lessons I ask Ed?

1. Smoking is just not worth it and if you think giving up is hard, try life feeling sick and tired every day just to survive.
2. Don't ignore the routine checks and if you have a family history of cancer be proactive and get checked.
3. Make the most of your life and enjoy yourself while your body can support it.
4. Love your family and work for someone who will care for you because I would have been lost without both.

On behalf of AKD, we wish Ed well as he continues his battle.

Glen Davis

Yarram Site Manager



Post & Poles

Portland Pine

Well, 2023 is here and after an extended break due to a slow sales market the site has started off well.

Safe Start Up included all employees watching the CEO welcome back video, completing re-induction, business updates and training. Hazard ID and SLAM training was completed with employees which has seen an increase in SLAMS at machine centres being completed prior to starting work. An excellent presentation from Eric on "What's Your Why?", our employees then enjoyed lunch before starting up the machines, completing pre-start checks and back into production for the year.

Traffic management plan review was completed late 2022 / early 2023 which highlighted 27 areas that require work across the site, ranging from a signage upgrade to completing small amounts of concreting to help with trucks turning around safely.

Big shout out to Dave Monaro, Lindsay Whennen and Wesley Wombwell and a couple of employees from Lowan steel for all the hard work they did over the break getting our machines back in fine working order.

Production has started out strong with the site hitting budget everyday throughout January. Sales are still slow across Victoria and South Australia, but we are hoping this will pick up into the second quarter of this year.

Recruitment has been busy with new employees commencing in February. We would like to welcome Rebecca Anderson (Office Assistant) and new production employees Melinda Lewis, Keryn Millard and Yakirah Agnew.

February saw some training completed. Jaimmii completed Return to Work Coordination which will be beneficial to both the company and employees by allowing a smoother transition for those returning to work and Matt and Toby were signed off at the treatment plant. Matt and Toby completed their theory components some time ago and having them qualified at the treatment plant gives some relief to Neil who has been running it for many years now.



Daryl Hann
PPP Site Manager



Jelfor

2023 is back in full swing, and at Jelfor the start of the year has all been about opportunity.

Jelfor utilised the Christmas shut to prepare for the year ahead. Our first opportunity for the year was to have a few current employees interested in the maintenance side of the business, come in and help out our maintenance crew. It was great to see them learning about site maintenance, the problems that go with it, and being part of the solution to fix these problems.

Start Up day saw everyone back for another year. A great initiative was the "What's Your Why" message. There was plenty of great discussion off the back of the presentation and the guest speaker. It's a simple message but one I feel the Jelfor site have taken onboard and will reflect on often.

In any business, to be successful, you need to be able to shift when the market does, or risk being left behind. The post and pole market at the moment is extremely competitive with a few new players entering the market. For Jelfor, it has meant many of our traditional customers have options when purchasing.

We have really capitalised on using the broader AKD network to offer our customers more variety and choices. Previously, we have only been offering and selling round timber posts and poles, but when the opportunity presented to quote on other items, we jumped at the chance. Many customers combine posts with other items, so the ability to have all these items on the one truck, for one delivery has seen our sales increase. Many thanks to the teams at Yarram (for sleepers) and Colac (for the sawn product).

Having Portland Pine on the other side of Victoria has also seen us create opportunities that were previously non-existent in the post and pole business. Both sides of the state have slightly different markets, and often we produce products suitable for our own markets. Understanding how both sites operate and what they produce, has led us to working together to supply the whole post and pole market, not just our Eastern/Western areas.

Now when inquires come in around products we don't make at Jelfor, we can fulfill these orders with stock from Portland Pine and vice versa. This has allowed us to keep current customers and look at other potential customers we would not have normally pursued.

Benjamin Bailey
Jelfor Site Manager



Market Update & AKD's position

written by
Kavitha Ponneelan
Business Analyst



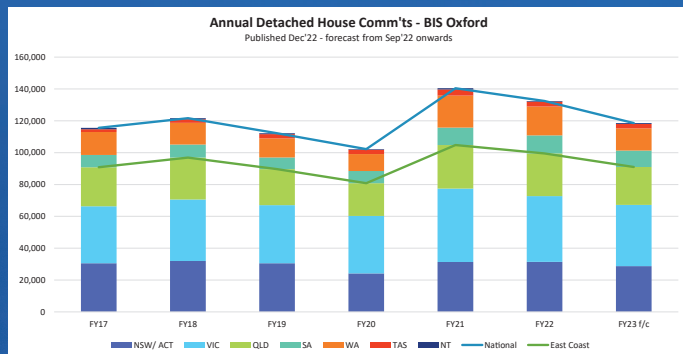
and Christine Briggs
National Marketing Manager



New detached home building in Australia drives most of AKD's product demand. Here, we look in the crystal ball of how this year ahead is looking. AKD uses several external sources to understand the market, one of which is BIS Oxford Economics who specialise in building activity forecasts.

As we move into 2023, there continues to be a mix of factors affecting the Australian housing market such as consecutive interest rate hikes, labour and trade shortages, lack of availability of residential land, inflation, and other economic uncertainties. Recovering from the year of the Covid Outbreak, the Australian housing market was in a bounce-back housing boom in FY21/22. This year is expected to be a year of transition and correction as new house approvals are dropping noticeably; however, there's sufficient work in the pipeline.

FY23 is now forecast to see a correction of 10% downward with all major states falling in terms of house commencements with WA (-23%) forecast to slump furthest followed by QLD (-11%), SA (-9%), NSW (-8%) and VIC (-7%). But FY23 will still track 2% higher than average demand before the housing boom.

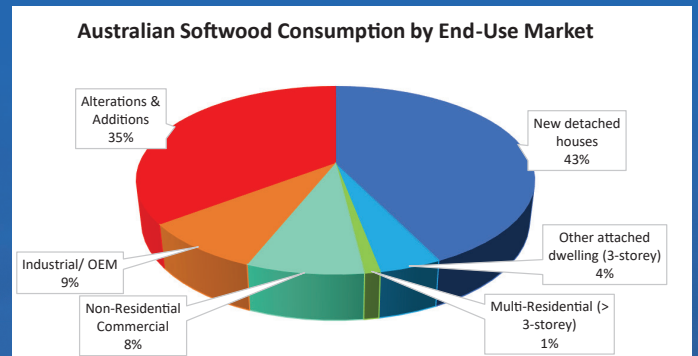


VIC remains the largest market for new detached houses followed by NSW and Qld, which are growing their share. This is good for AKD's plans to grow.

This demand for new houses drives the market demand for timber framing which is supplied 78% domestically and 22% from imports. Other market segments are also key to AKD products' demand which include the Alterations and Additions (A&A) market for outdoor treated products and industrial markets for pallet and packaging.

The A&A market has also experienced a boom during FY21/22 as Australians couldn't travel and many spent a portion of their savings on home renovations, building pergolas, new decks and improving their homes' gardens and landscaping. This market is more stable long term and less cyclical which is attractive to AKD but isn't as big as new houses market where the bulk of timber framing is used in Australia.

The timber pallet and packaging market (Industrial/Other Equipment Manufacturing segment) is a growing segment in Australia now and there is much opportunity for more softwood and improved value for AKD products, especially as hardwood becomes harder to get.



Over the coming years, we will also see the type of dwellings that Australians live in move towards attached dwellings such as 3-storey and townhouses, hence these segments are expected to grow in terms of their structural timber usage.



Meet Mick Irrewarra's Site Manager



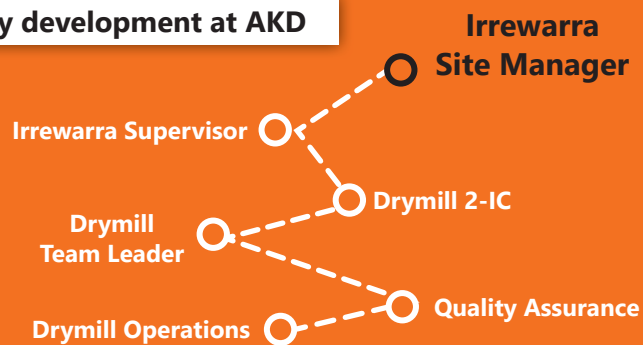
I've been with AKD for almost seven years, starting in the dry mill, then on to the wrapping line before moving into the quality area. At the end of my first year, I become the quality team leader, then 2-IC to John Stevens, Colac Drymill Supervisor.

About 2½ years ago I was given the opportunity to move to Irrewarra as the Supervisor and in November I became the Site Manager for the site.

Born and raised in Colac. I joined the fire brigade at 14 years of age where I started as a Reserve Fire Fighter and worked my way over the years to Captain of the Colac Fire Brigade which included about 45 operational fire staff and 25 support staff who responded to about 300 call outs a year. While in this role I was recruited as a Casual Ambulance Officer for Ambulance Victoria where I served for 9½, after 30 years with the CFA it was time to move on.

I'm the oldest of four boys and have two of my own, Sabian 20 and Riley 17. My wife Shirl and I have been together for 30 years, happily married for 25 years, and met when we both worked in the supermarket industry. In my time away from work, I enjoy working on my garden and lawns, 4x4 driving and spending time travelling and camping with family and friends.

My development at AKD



Shirl and Mick



Sabian and Shirl are also a part of the AKD family



Gilmore DC Truck Rollout

with Brad Kezik
Despatch Supervisor
Gilmore DC



AKD Gilmore Distribution Centre has added three trucks and drivers to the business with each driver bringing a wealth of experience to our AKD team.

Two trucks are brand new Scania V8 – 580's pulling tautliner trailers with AKD emblazoned on the sides and the 3rd and most recent truck is a Scania V8- 620 with a few extra kilometres on the clock. This truck is pulling a flat top trailer giving us more options to run regional drops or

doing shuttle runs between the Tumut and Gilmore sites. All three trucks host plenty of power while pulling trailers up and over the big hills of the Snowy Mountains.

These trucks are delivering material into Metro Sydney, some areas of the Riverina, Southern Highlands and the South Coast of NSW.

Join me in welcoming Robert, Adam and Mark to the AKD family.



Mark Jones

Mark, better known as "Cookie", started with AKD on the 31st of October 2022 bringing with him 44 years' experience in the trucking industry.

Mark and his wife Deirdre live just outside of town up in the hills of Batlow and have four children and nine grandchildren who they love spending time with when possible.

Mark has a love for fishing, 4-wheel driving, gold detecting, jet skiing and anything in the great outdoors. Mark and Dierdre love to travel around this great country of ours and can't wait for the next time they can set off.



Robert Bellette

Robert joined our AKD team in mid-December 2022 and has been a welcome addition bringing 50 plus years of driving experience with him.

Robert owned his own transport company running his Scania and four sub-contractors up until 2020.

Rob is better known as 'Precious' around town and in the trucking industry where he is well respected.

He and his wife, Carmel, have lived in the Tumut region for all but 15 years of their lives. They have a son and two beautiful granddaughters who they love to spend as much time with as possible.

Robert loves to potter around on his farm when not at work tending to the cows and chickens.



Adam McGrath

Adam joined AKD back in late November 2022 and brings 15-year's driving experience to the table. He has worked with Tegra and in the Eulonga Quarry recently prior to starting with AKD. Adam is a handy front-end Loader and forklift operator as well, a skill set which can be utilised if the need arises.

Adam lives in Tumut with his wife Candice and son Brock. He loves getting out on his Harley for rides on the open road and watching his son play football. Adam and his family live just outside of town where he loves to play around in the shed tinkering with whatever he can find.



AKD TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Information Technology



We are a small team with a focus to provide quality service to AKD colleagues and improve your experience with the vast range of Information Technology across AKD sites.

Collectively, our team offers the below services:

- Allocation and management of devices (laptops, personal computers, mobile phones)
- Support to users through IT Helpdesk
- Application support and administration
- IT Project Management, including support and advice
- Set up and maintenance of IT infrastructure at all sites
- Strategic planning of IT services to match AKD's growth



Eddy Chong

Group IT Manager

Passionate about:

Building a strong team for the future and for digital transformation

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:

Enjoying family and friends over time with coffee and food

DID YOU KNOW?

AKD has grown from **less than 200** computers at the start of 2019 to now **approx. 1000** computers nationally.

50% of emails received by AKD are **blocked/filtered** due to spam/potential frauds.

If you are a laptop user, you can now use **facial recognition** (Windows Hello) to login instead of password.



Stephen Pefanis
IT Technology Manager

Passionate about:
Technology, Development
and Security

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
In my woodwork shop, with my
family or volunteering with the SES



Jonathan (Jono) Hill
Business Intelligence Analyst

Passionate about:
Problem solving with our data and
shaping and transforming it to make it
easy to use, helping users tell their story

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
Playing with my kids and video games

Kyle Edwards
IT Service Delivery Manager

Passionate about:
Networking, Infrastructure
and IT Security

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
In the gym, outside taking a hike
or playing inline/ice hockey



Dimi Hughes
IT Project Manager

Passionate about:
IT Projects and delivery of IT
solutions

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
With my family or
enjoying the beach



Eddy Anurak
Application Administrator

Passionate about:
IT solutions that make
our lives easier

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
Travelling and enjoying new things



Derryn Balogh
Application Support Analyst

Passionate about:
App development

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
Catching up with family and friends, at
the footy, fishing or buying unnecessary
items from Aldi special buys

Matthew Benson
Service Desk Analyst

Passionate about:
New gadgets and programming
If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
Reading history, philosophy, manga
and playing retro video games



Chris Allender
L2 Service Desk Analyst

Passionate about:
Setting up hardware, problem solving
and figuring out how things work

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
Spending time with family and
playing video games.



Paul Maderal
Service Desk Analyst

Passionate about:
IT support focusing on system
administration with keen interest on
projects and management

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
I would probably be on a beach
drinking cold beer



David Purcell
Timbersmart employee

Passionate about:
Problem solving, and designing/
building solutions

If I'm not at work, you'll find me:
Cycling, gardening and looking
after a menagerie: 2 dogs, 2 cats, 2
parrots, 6 chooks and the missus



2023 Gap Year Employees

with Michael Swanson
Recruitment Manager



This is our 5th year of the AKD Gap Year Program and building on its success in the past, we have introduced the program to Tumut. This year's Gaps are already making a terrific start.

The Gap Year Program offers action-oriented work experience, inviting gap year employees to perform tasks within the business, granting them the skills needed to work in a 'real world', fast paced environment, all while teaching them valuable skills which they will be able to carry with them in their future studies and careers.

This program aspires to make a greater connection between AKD and the community by building relationships with the local schools and youth by providing an opportunity to explore different career opportunities available to them.

The new employees are spread throughout both Colac and Tumut, and within various aspects of the business including OHS/Wellbeing, Office Administration, Finance and Production. However during their 12 months, while each employee is assigned to a particular area, they will be exposed and gain experience across a number of aspects of the business.

Colac welcomed Charlotte Howell to the OHS/Wellbeing area. Charlotte applied for the Gap Year at AKD 'to develop an understanding of how businesses run, to develop business and professional skills to help me in my future studies, as well as save money to support me while at uni.'

At the Tumut site we welcome two new faces, with this being the first year for the site to invite applications under the Gap Year Program. Eva Nasser is completing her year in Administration, gaining an 'all-round' experience in a number of office-based functions throughout her year with particular interest in Human Resources. We also welcome Ethan Watt who is completing his year in the production areas across the site, gaining a valuable experience that links to his interested in forestry and the outdoors.

The intent and purpose of the Gap Year Program is to provide school leavers, and those looking to start their career, an opportunity to gain valuable business hands on experience in the field, or related field, they are looking to undertake via tertiary study.

Since the program started, AKD have provided development opportunities to 17 Gap Year employees across Colac and Caboolture.

We wish the 2023 Gap Year employees all the best for their year ahead with AKD and welcome them to the business. Please be sure to say hello and make them feel welcome as a part of the AKD community.

“

"The gap year has been great so far, I've learnt a lot and AKD has been a great place to work."

EVA NASSER



”

“

"I was attracted to this role to gain experience in the workforce, as well as experience in the timber industry as I am wanting to pursue a career in Forestry."

ETHAN WATT



”

“

"What I've found in my time here so far is meeting new and supportive people, and being able to work in a great team environment"

CHARLOTTE HOWELL



”

Camp Quality Convoy

A truckin' good cause

with
Troy Jones
Truck Driver,
Colac



On Sunday February 19, myself, along with 170 trucks and 30 motorbikes, shined up our rigs and celebrated our collective fundraising effort for kids with cancer.

Myself, along with Brooke McEwan, AKD's Brand and Communication Coordinator, met up with 14 other local trucks at 5:30am to travel together to the Avalon Raceway to participate in the 2023 Camp Quality Geelong Convoy.

Camp Quality Convoy Geelong brings the community together over a love of trucks and a desire to help children with cancer. Altogether, the Convoy raised over \$150,000.

With hands on the horns, we travelled together in a 60-kilometre loop, down the highway, taking us around Geelong and back through the town centre, where hundreds of families lined the streets in support, waving and doing the classic truckie arm pump.

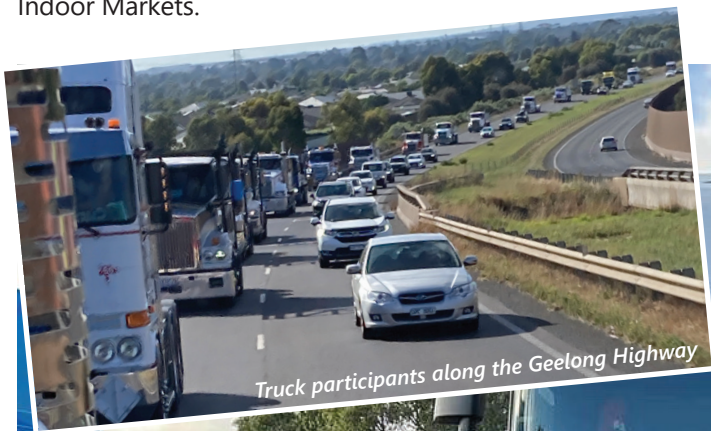
I'm one of five drivers and their partners in a local Camp Quality fundraising committee and last year we had set a fundraising target of \$15,000 by holding BBQs, Raffles, and Indoor Markets.

We ended up raising an impressive \$35,151 thanks to the generosity of our community and local businesses. We also won three awards for the day; Highest fundraising individual, Highest fundraising team and CEO Appreciation Award.

Camp Quality gives children with cancer the chance to be children again. Their services and programs are created specifically to support children aged up to 15, who are dealing with their own cancer diagnosis, or the diagnosis of someone they love.

The not-for-profit organisation provides children, their siblings, and parents with a break from cancer through fun experiences, education, specialised cancer care, counselling and a supportive community; in-hospital, online, at school and away from it all on camps and at retreats. Camp Quality's free services and programs help the 8,900 children registered for services and programs at every stage of the cancer experience.

The committee and I would personally like to thank everyone who supported our fundraising events and to AKD for their sponsorship.



Truck participants along the Geelong Highway



Colac Camp Quality Convoy For Kids' committee

Congratulations

ON YOUR AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP

Marina Milic - Wood Technologist, Technical

After going through many visa applications, I am happy to report that I became an Australian citizen!

I came from Serbia - a country with a beautiful and diverse history and the landscape situated in South-eastern Europe.

I've migrated to Australia in September 2016 with my husband Aaron. Within a year, I started my career with AKD.

I've learned a lot during this time through language, culture and career.

I was lucky to have come across good people who supported me

in my journey both professionally and personally.

Australia offered me different perspective on life, good advancement opportunities and sophisticated cultural awareness.

For me, Australian citizenship means that I can now travel visa free into 169 countries, and re-enter Australia on my terms.

The opportunity of being able to have a good lifestyle at any stage of career help me make the decision to apply for citizenship.

I'm happy that I had the opportunity to experience what it means to build a life in another country.



Brian Clough - Finance Manager, Tumut



Brian and partner Fonnle

My partner Fonnle and I arrived in Australia and started working in Tumut in December 2017. Our move to Australia from South Africa was a bit of a sudden and unplanned change to our lives when Fonnle received an offer for a position at Visy.

What initially started as an adventure to live and work in another part of the world, changed into us establishing ourselves and putting down roots towards becoming Australian citizens.

It was hard leaving behind family and friends so far away, essentially leaving behind a big part of ourselves and who we are. We however, found comfort from the great new relationships and connections that we built over the past five years in the Tumut community, our new Australian families. We also have been making sure that our families

come to visit often, so that we could share everything about our new lives, and the people in it, with them as well.

Australia, it's people and their way of living, the environment, and what has been achieved here, has been, and still is, an amazing experience for us that offer the people who live here many and great opportunities and benefits.

We see everything and everyone here as something that is precious and that deserves to be protected and further developed for the future generations to come.

Now, as fellow Australians, we can work towards achieving and doing this side-by-side with everyone else! We truly love living and working here and are looking forward to now starting our own family here.

45

Dale Tillack

YEARS AT IRREWARRA

written by
Neil Hunter,
Irrewarra
Sawshop Manager

Dale started with AKD back in 1977 in the planer mill as a wood machinist. Back then the planer was Jonsered and was located at the old finger jointer plant with a crew of around 20 employees.

In 2007 Dale was asked to help out in the saw shop by the supervisor at the time, Steve Baudinette. This led to a permanent transfer and an Apprenticeship as a Saw Doctor.

The green mill at the time was the Vislander line that still sits alongside the USNR processing around 230,000m³ PA of log in. The new USNR line was installed in 2018, Dale now services and maintains saws from the USNR line that process around 650,000m³ PA of log in with higher recovery at much higher feed rates than the Vislander line. This has allowed Dale to experience the challenges and demands that a modern saw line presents at much higher feed rates and recovery demands.

Dale has seen, and been a part of, many changes at AKD. From the company growing from a small local sawmill located in country Colac Victoria, to being the largest saw milling company in Australia, and now working on a saw line that has world class, state of the art, sawing technology, an industry leader.

In the time I have worked with Dale, I can understand and appreciate how Dale has worked through the 45 years of service and experienced with the company seeing many changes, with all this happening each day.

Dales approach to his job is always professional, in a polite manner, efficiently as possible, bringing a no nonsense and no problem attitude to the saw shop regardless of any situation. He is a solid performer and team member within the group.

When not at work Dale, enjoys family life, riding his Harley Davidson motor cycle, restoring and driving his SS Holden Crew Cab Ute, traveling holidays, with Bali a popular destination on the calendar.



"Congratulations Dale on your 45 years service at AKD. It has been wonderful to have you in the saw shop and looking forward to the next 45 years."

Neil Hunter
SAWSHOP MANAGER

30 David McGinness YEARS AT AKD

written by
Clark Rodger,
GM Human Resources

It is with pleasure that I get to acknowledge, thank and congratulate David on reaching the milestone of 30 years service.

David commenced with AKD on 9 February 1993 as the company's Chief Financial Officer and held this position over 15 years. The key role was to bring the financial reporting inhouse as AKD was getting too big to be done by the local external accounting firm. At this point in time AKD was processing approximately 76,000 cube of log and had 60 -70 employees.

What was not known then, was that David would go on to play a major role throughout the next 30 years in identifying and contributing to the growth and progression of AKD to what it is today and that he would perform roles or have responsibility for almost all parts of AKD throughout different stages of his career and time with AKD. Including in roles such as CFO, National Risk and Environmental Manager and now currently Workplace Relations Manager.

In these roles David has held responsibility for Human Resources, Health & Safety, Payroll, Workcover, IT, Sales & Operation Planning, Procurement, plantation land acquisition and the Post & Pole businesses.



David with his grandson Thomas and daughter Letitia.

David has an exceptional eye to detail and a memory like no other. He has been behind the commercial aspect of many of AKD's major projects and acquisitions. Including the acquisition of Irrewarra, Jelfor, Yarram and also the NSW and QLD Sites. David has indicated he is also very proud of his involvement in purchasing substantial plantation land in the early 2000's, which has grown into a significant asset for AKD and been a key foothold and supporter of future growth from this point.

"We are extremely lucky to have David as part of the AKD Team... His nature, his humbleness, kindness and care and the effect and contribution this has had on developing and guiding the AKD people and culture."

Clark Rodger
GM HUMAN RESOURCES

"David is a man of absolute integrity and has been a mainstay of AKD's leadership for now 3 decades. When you are described by others and they use words like loyal, hardworking, honest, dependable, intelligent, you should be proud. Those words come easily when I describe David"

Shane Vicary
CEO

David was also the founding Director and Company Secretary at the establishment of SPE in 1996, AKD's joint venture which exports woodchip overseas to China and Japan. David is currently the Chairperson of this business and has been at the core of building long term relationships with our overseas customers. This year SPE will see our biggest ever export volume with an expected 500,000 tonne being exported.

David is a continual learner and challenges himself to continue to learn and develop, this was most recently evidenced by his completion of a Graduate Certificate in Industrial Relations late last year. This adds to his Bachelor of Business, Graduate Diploma in Corporate Governance, being CPA qualified and also an associate member of the Governance Institute of Australia. He has built a strong network of relationships within the industry and is a strong advocate for the industry, its development, and its people.

David's exuberates love and excitement when he speaks about his wife Jacinta and children Letitia and Declan. He is often seen at the back of one of Declan's heavy metal concerts and is proudly sharing his passion for



Letitia's Wedding (L-R) Jacinta (wife), David , Letitia (daughter), Shannon (Letitia's Husband), Lauren (Declan's Partner) and Declan (son).

the Geelong Cats with Letitia's son (his grandson) Thomas. We also take this time to thank David's family. David's contribution to AKD has meant sometimes sacrificing personal family time to travel and support the business. This does not go unnoticed, and this is truly appreciated.

For those that know David well, they know his eccentric style, love of a dance and don't forget the bold colourful shirts, glasses and socks.

It is evident from the above that David is an intelligent, driven and competent individual. One that we are extremely lucky to have had as part of the AKD Team. But more so, David's contribution has been his nature, his humbleness, kindness and care and the effect and contribution this has had on developing and guiding the AKD people and culture.

David, thank you for all you have done for AKD and continue to do so.



David's recent graduation Graduate Certificate in Industrial Relations

25 Kim Self YEARS AT TUMUT



written by Brad Kezik, Gilmore DC Despatch Supervisor

After approaching Kim for a story for her 25 years of service, she is wondering where the years have gone!

Kim started work here in Tumut at the end of 1997 at the green mill manually stacking cleats in the cleat hopper and also working on a couple of other machines in there. She said that was "Hard Yakka".

She then went to the planer mill learning all the different work centres, manually stacking timber on the long chain, paul dockers, grading station and pack ID.

A position came up to join the stud cutting crew, which consisted of four females, two on day and two on afternoon. Kim remembers studs were a good selling product at the time.

Kim then decided she needed to put herself through a course at TAFE NSW, learning computers, excel and moving around the internet, just in case a position arose that of course needed knowledge of this, she said she had no computer skills previous to this.

The mill went through a quiet period for a while and a most of the Tumut employees were transferred to Gilmore until business picked up again. At the time the finger jointer was running, so she joined a shift in this section. The finger joint material was made for Corinthian and Hume doors. She also had a stint on the timber dockers whilst at the Gilmore mill.

The industry picked up again, so Kim transferred back to Tumut where a position came up for Inventory and Stocktake Controller, so she applied and got the job! Kim's computer skills paid off and she is still learning so much more.

She has now been working in Dispatch coming up 13 years, has again moved out to Gilmore, loves her job and great

team of people she gets to work with.

"We are the AKD Gilmore Distribution Centre and our new building / office is great. I have made a lot of lifelong friends and learnt so much in my time in the timber industry".

"Kim is a major contributor to the ongoing success of Gilmore DC. Her knowledge, attitude and personality make her a valued member of the despatch team. Congratulations on your 25 years of service for both Tumut and Gilmore sites. Thank you for your hard work and dedication, I am sure there are many more years to come."

Brad Kezik
Gilmore DC Despatch Supervisor

Kim is happily married to Brian, coming up 27 years together. Brian also works for AKD, 12 years at the green mill after 20 years as a spray painter. They have three children, Shane, Mark and Tereasa, who all live on the Sunshine Coast with their seven beautiful grandchildren, aging from 10 to 18.

Their hobbies are dancing, motorbike rides along the country roads, caravanning and gardening.

Kim and Brian both love being part of the International Harley owners' group and joining others from all over the world at Rally's. The stand outs for them were New Zealand, Tassie, Tamworth, Coffs Harbour.

"We had a very memorable time at Tamworth, when in the big horse arena there was around 20 horses combined with around 20 Harleys and the horses didn't even flinch with the sound and roar of the Harleys...all riding alongside each other carrying flags of all the different countries. We also love to join in with the Christmas Toy Runs and donations for the Kids"



Kim waiting for Thunder Run to start

20 Darren Pevitt YEARS AT PORTLAND

written by
Daryl Hann,
PPP Site Manager

Darren commenced with Portland Pine in February 2003, beginning as a mill hand. He has proven to be a valuable member of the crew, learning each machine, helping to train new starters, gaining his loader licence and qualifications to run the treatment plant.

Darren is now one of our main loader drivers, responsible for unloading log trucks, loading bark and chip trucks, maintenance and repairs of site roadways and assisting in production and dispatch when required.

At home, Darren, his wife Bec and two children, Cooper and Scarlett, have a farm which requires a lot of work and attention leaving them with very little down time.

"We like to keep quiet, visit family and friends sometimes. Occasionally we go to the speedway, and we enjoy fishing. We have a chocolate Labrador named Oden and we just got a new puppy, a golden Labrador, named Stormy".

"Between work, the farm, the kids and their activities, we don't usually go on holidays but this year we are planning one for later in the year."

"Congratulations Darren and well done on your 20 years of service to Portland Pine. We are grateful for your contribution and dedication"
Daryl Hann
PORTLAND PINE
SITE MANAGER



Darren with his children, Cooper and Scarlett

10 John Borgia YEARS AT YARRAM

written by
Julian Hay,
Drymill/Kilns Manager

John came to the Yarram Mill 10 years ago in 2013 after having previously been a truck driver. Spending his time on site in the Drymill, John has also represented the site as a HSR and ECC member.

One of the most standout moments for John was when there was a fire on site in the Moulder room just after he began.

John has lived at McLoughlins Beach for 15 years with his wife, of 32 years, and his grandson Phoenix.

Outside of AKD, John is a member of the McLoughlins Fishing Club and Residents and Rate Payers Association. Spare time is spent in the outdoors fishing and camping, especially with family.

"Congratulations John on your 10 years of service at Yarram. There's certainly been some changes over the years, and I would like to thank you for your input as a HSR in the drymill in making it a safer place to work, and your mentoring of new employees as they start their AKD journey. Again well done on this milestone."

Julian Hay
DRYMILL/KILNS MANAGER



10 John Browne YEARS AT AKD

written by
Shane Vicary,
CEO

"John is curious and intellectual and always interested in both "why" and "why not". He is passionate and driven and fiercely loyal."

Shane Vicary
CEO

I had the pleasure of interviewing John ten years ago, so I take great joy in being in this position of celebrating his ten years anniversary.

When I first met John, I wondered if he had been raised by "Pirates" as he seemed to start every sentence with an "Arrgh" and there always seemed to be a hearty laugh involved. It was only the eye patch and the parrot that were missing.

John has had a long career in the timber industry starting at the Myrtleford Sawmill in the early 80s, as most employees in our industry, he started on the green chain or dry chain then got the opportunity to become a sawdoctor and eventually opportunities in leadership from team leader through to eventually Site Manager. He was also a union official and ran a training facility along the journey.

When John joined AKD, it was a much smaller company than it is today, and we had a large number of challenges both internal and external. John was always clear that we had to earn the right for investment, and he worked hard with his team to extract more value from existing assets rather than focus on what could be purchased. He has worked with his team on continuous improvement projects and not to allow setbacks or disruptions on the 'journey' to change the focus on the 'destination'. John has been one of the drives behind AKD's safety culture improving every year.

I would describe working with John as both fun and challenging at the same time. John can be both intense and disinterested. It is this blend that works. John is a truly unique leader. John is curious and intellectual and always interested in both "why" and "why not". He is passionate and driven and fiercely loyal. Through the years I can think of many spirited conversations with John and two things I have always admired:

1. He is loyal and protective of his people.
2. He doesn't hold grudges, he can move on to another subject after vigorously disagreeing (read arguing) on the previous one, with no hangover from the previous discussion.

Talking about John and focusing on work is a massive disservice to this man who manages the balance between work and his personal life really well. John loves outdoor activities, due to his disappointment with the St Kilda football team, John has directed his weekends towards fishing, hunting, outdoor activities and his holiday home in Peterborough. John and Karen are incredibly proud of their son and daughter Dylan and Bianca and you can't help but



Dylan, Karen, John and Bianca.



John and his co-pilot Nadja

recognise the pride when the conversations turn to them.

I feel like at this point I need to share a funny story or two. I can recall when we were researching sawmill equipment, we needed to use a small plane in Idaho to visit an isolated sawmill. The pilot looked at our group and decided we needed to balance passengers between the left side and the right side. The pilot was reasonably direct about where John should sit. I tried to create new nickname for him of "Ballast".

There was also another time that John, whilst sitting in the Portland airport, also nearly got stabbed in the eye by a plastic Starbucks straw by a homicidal angry kiwi but that is a story best told over a beer.

John has been a fantastic leader in our business and like so many others his consideration has made our company stronger and more fun to work at.

Mateo Gutierrez

*Structural Engineer,
Colac*



I come from Colombia, and I was fortunate to grow up in a family of architects and engineers. My grandfather was a civil engineer, my father was an architect, and my uncle worked as a civil engineer and construction manager.

I discovered my passion for engineering at a very young age after experiencing a devastating earthquake in my hometown in 1999. After seeing the destruction and sadness left by the tragedy, I believed that engineering was a medium to prevent buildings from collapsing in those kinds of events.

After finishing my bachelor, I realised I did not want to work with traditional building materials in Colombia and that is when I started to investigate how to use natural materials such as bamboo, a prevalent material in some Latin American countries.

I completed my PhD in Civil Engineering at University of Queensland where I investigated the impact of fire on load-bearing bamboo structures and also assisted with teaching structural mechanics, structural design, and fire safety engineering and provided fire engineering consulting services.

My partner, Elizabeth and I recently relocated from Burnie, Tasmania to Melbourne where I am currently based. A key responsibility of my role reporting to General Manager Sales Liam Buchanan, is continuing to work with builders and fabricators to understand today's house designs and how we can make more wood fibre available and increase the value that we can extract from the logs we have available.

Outside of work I like hiking and camping. I love the calm that walking the mountains brings. This activity also reminds me of the mountains back in my home country, where I used to climb volcanoes and snowy mountains at 5000 meters above sea level. On a typical weekend, you will probably find me drinking exotic filtered coffees, brewing beers or looking for hidden microbreweries, watching sports, visiting museums or art exhibitions, collecting records and playing basketball and soccer.



Allan Davey

*Engineering Manager,
Colac*



I grew up in Tumut. Coming from a 3rd generation farming family, life seemed very simple and as far as I was concerned Tumut was the centre of the universe. Growing up there, I was bound to join the Timber Industry and I developed a passion for all things timber.

I started my career as an apprentice Boilermaker many moons ago and then have spent the last 40 years in manufacturing building products. I have been lucky enough to work up and down the east coast of Australia and the north island of New Zealand where I have been exposed to dedicated maintenance and production Teams where my life learnings continue.

After finishing my trade, I become interested in how people think, what motivates them and what a good workplace consists of. I have been fortunate to have had several mentors to help guide my career into Engineering Leadership and the processes that are needed to drive a safe and successful maintenance team.

My engineering career has allowed Jeni and I to travel the world and experience different cultures and work environments, some great and some so not so good. These experiences have influenced my leadership style and helped me realise the importance of setting goals, considering other opinions, and people really can make a difference.

Apparently, I fell in love with my beautiful lifetime partner, Jeni on our first day at school, for me kindergarten was a very confusing time in my life. I have no recollection of this event. My version of this event was Jeni spent 15 years chasing me before we became an item and now our marriage is celebrating 44 years.

I have one daughter Emma and two grandsons, Hamish and Sam who are the joy of my life. I enjoy being with my family by the water, swimming, fishing, or boating and in winter you will find me on the slopes.



Craig Karrani

*Continual Improvement
Manager, Colac*



I am the middle child of a family of five kids, three sisters and one brother, born and raised in South Africa, in a steel town near Johannesburg.

Like most people who lived in my hometown, I worked in the steel industry, manufacturing steel oil and gas pipes. I was in the steel industry for 23 years in South Africa and 10 years in Australia.

I have been married to my better half for 33 years, Belinda, and we have known each other since high school. We have two daughters and four grandkids, two girls and two boys.

Since immigrating to Australia, Belinda and I have lived in Wollongong, Adelaide, Mount Gambier and Colac, slowing working our way across the country.

I am a very proud Australian however, I just can't get myself to support the Australian cricket team when they play against South Africa. Coming from South Africa, I am a massive Rugby Union supporter but, as Belinda keeps saying, if drying paint was a sport, I would be watching that as well.

Belinda and I are very keen caravanners and take every opportunity to go camping, with plans to definitely be grey nomads when the time comes.

I have not had the ideal start at AKD, falling down stairs at the Irrewarra site on day six, however what it did show me is what type of company AKD is with the great support, of not only myself, but for Belinda as well, during my hospitalization and subsequent recovery journey.



Paul Ryan

*Project Manager,
Caboolture*



I am the second youngest of six children, with now three of my own: Ashleigh, Sophie and Nathan, and five beautiful grandchildren spread across Queensland from Cairns to Brisbane. I have been based in Queensland all my life with both a love of the bush and ocean, mainly travelling to Fraser Island in my younger days.

I have had a career in the timber industry for the past 44 years, covering both hardwood sawmilling in the early days through to softwood sawmilling. I have worked in several different roles covering Operational Management, Site Management and now Project Management for the past 7 years across NSW, and QLD. The past 7 years have covered both new installation, commissioning sawmills, Continuous Drying Kilns (CDK's) and process improvement.

In the past, my success has been through the people I have worked with. Only after a month with AKD, I can see why this company is so progressive as I have had nothing but support from this team making the transition to this company very welcoming.

My interest outside of work is family, boating, fishing for whiting in the Sandy Straits and in the Northern waters south of Cairns. This hobby comes with question and the three most common I get are: (1) Do I see sharks? The answer is yes, they live there as well. (2) How long do you hold your breath? Long enough to shoot a fish. (3) How deep do you dive? Comfortable at 42 feet freediving any deeper is my son's or nephew's job.

I enjoy passing as much of the water skills to my children who all have boat licenses from an early age and their families. Staying in touch with my four-month-old granddaughter and throwing a set of goggles and flippers on her as soon as my daughter allows me. Currently teaching another granddaughter to freedive.

So, what's next:

Apply my skills with the team at AKD. Challenge the norms and hopefully pass on some of my knowledge to the new generation of sawmillers and provide a safe place of work. And yes, I do back Broncos (Cowboys second).

And don't forget "have fun" which we so often overlook.





AKD welcomed these new employees in January and February and encourages everyone to make them feel welcome and work together to keep them safe.



ALDRINNE GASLANG
DRYMILL
COLAC



BEAU MAKINANO
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



BEN LINDSAY
GREENMILL
YARRAM



CALEB COX
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



CAMERON GEEVES
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



CAMERON MILLER
GRADUATE
CABOOLTURE



CAYDEN WARD
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE



CLAUDIA CARTON
DRYMILL
COLAC



COREY VICINO
APPRENTICE WOOD
MACHINIST - YARRAM



CRAIG CLARKE
MECHANICAL DESIGNER
CABOOLTURE



DANIEL MASSIE
SAWSHOP
CABOOLTURE



DARREN HLYWA
GREENMILL
TUMUT



DOUGLAS JARVIS
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



DYLAN FREEMAN
MILLHAND
GILMORE



FARDEEN HOUSEEN
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE

CONTINUED...



GABRIELLE MARTENS
GREENMILL
YARRAM



HARLEY KEMP-GEITZ
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



JOSHUA WRIGHT
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



JOSHUA ZAMMIT
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



JUSTIN MAGEE
GREENMILL
IRREWARRA



KANDACE COLLINS
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



KANE GRIMSHAW
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



MELINDA LEWIS
POST & PEELER
PORTLAND



MOHAMMED HASSAN
GREENMILL
COLAC



NICOLA TRELOR
GREENMILL
YARRAM



OLIIVA SCOTT
DRYMILL
COLAC



PAUL MADERAL
IT
COLAC



RICK PILCHER
PRODUCTION
JELFOR



ROBERT BELLETTE
TRUCK DRIVER
GILMORE



RUSSELL STAIB
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



**SAMANTHA
HOLLIDAY MARTIN**
PLANER MILL - TUMUT



SARAH BRODSKY
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



HELEN FULLER
GREENMILL
YARRAM



JACK MCCALLUM
MECHANICAL INTERN
CABOOLTURE



JAYDE MITCHELL
GREENMILL
COLAC



JETT STUBBS
SCHOOL STUDENT
TUMUT



JOSHUA SALY
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



KARLYN HALL
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



KATRINA MASON
DRYMILL
COLAC



KEITH SHIELDS
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE



KERYN MILLARD
POST & PEELER
PORTLAND



KIERA JONES
APPRENTICE FITTER
TUMUT



PAUL RYAN
PROJECT MANAGER
CABOOLTURE



PEYTON LIPETZKY
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



RAY DAVENPORT
PRODUCTION
JELFOR



REBECCA ANDERSON
OFFICE ASSISTANT
PORTLAND



REBECCA GAVIN
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



STEPHANIE BERGIN
CASUAL EHS
TUMUT



TONIA GIBBS
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



TYLER GERRIE
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE



YAKIRAH AGNEW
POST & PEELER
PORTLAND



ZACKERY PEIRSON
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

NAME	YRS	DEPT.	SITE
Dale Tillack	45	SAWSHOP	IRRE
Darren Wilton	35	DISPATCH	CAB
David McGuinnes	30	HR	COL
Warwick Hammer	30	FORESTRY	COL
Kim Self	25	DISPATCH	GIL
Darren Pevitt	20	POST & PEEL	PPP
Adam Deacon	15	KILN	TUM
Eric Hunziker	15	MAINTENANCE	CAB
Andrew Marwood	10	SAWSHOP	IRRE
Jack Smart	10	MAINTENANCE	TUM
John Borgia	10	SAWSHOP	YAR
John Browne	10	SITE MAN.	COL
Angus McConachy	5	MAINTENANCE	CAB
John Lynch	5	ELECTRICAL	COL
Joshua Van Bremen	5	MAINTENANCE	COL
Kevin Everett	5	DRYMILL	COL
Kim Reid	5	DRYMILL	COL
Lachlan Warton	5	TREATMENT	COL
Lee Williamson	5	DISPATCH	COL
Marina Milic	5	TECHNICAL	COL
Richard Hicks	5	FINANCE	COL
Ryan Stevens	5	DISPATCH	COL
Thomas McDonald	5	GREENMILL	COL



Rose Mollenhagen, of Caboolture's Finance team, and partner Lindsay welcomed their first child

Lachlan Norman

born 9th February 2023
weighing 3.29kg



Anthony Bland from Yarram's Greenmill, along with partner Stacey and son Zachary, welcomed

Riley Bland

born 10th September 2022



Colac Greenmill's Seth Reid and partner Caitlin welcomed

Kylo Reid

born 18th January 2023
weighing 2.89kg

Yarram Drymill's Matt Camburn and partner Tayla welcomed

Phoenix Camburn

born 11th January 2023



Colac Greenmill's Frazer Osborne and partner Abby welcomed

Isaac Osborne

born 27th of January 2023
weighing 2.9kg



Andrew Devitt, of Yarram's Electrical team, along with partner Hollie and siblings Indi, Oakley and Parker welcome

Harlow Devitt

born 8th November 2022



The Wrap-up



Today I said farewell to an employee who finished after 13 years. John Browne sent me a text and asked if I knew it was Joe Muvengi's last day. I was unaware and shot out the door to find Joe in the EWP grinding room, to say goodbye but more importantly to say thank you.

In your working life you get to meet many people. Some have no impact, some you remember, some have a real influence and then there are those unique and special individuals who make an impact you will never forget. Joe is one of those unique and special individuals.

Joe, myself and John had a good chat for about 20 minutes at the end of Joe's last day as we shared stories about our shared journey at AKD. John has also just completed 10 years. We had a few laughs, but we also had an honest chat about a few serious subjects as well, with a bit of emotion shared.



Joe Muvengi

Joe worked at the EWP (Engineering Wood Products) part of the Colac site which we effectively mothballed last year after nearly 15 years of operation. Joe immigrated to Australia from Zimbabwe with his family and has worked at AKD most of the time since. He leaves AKD to focus on his retail business that he owns and operates in Colac with his wife.

You cannot miss Joe in a crowd. He is a tall proud African man with presence, but the feature that stands out the most is his smile. Joe's smile accompanies his sense of humour and nature. Joe joined AKD and started working in a challenging part of our business where in 2010s we faced a lot of hurdles and Joe worked hard and was always looking for opportunities to improve the performance of the operation.

Joe inspires me as he came to rural Australia and started a new life with a young family. Joe has been successful, and this is based off his likeable personality, his work ethic, his curiosity and his personal drive.

Joe told me he was sad to be leaving AKD as it was **"more than a workplace"** I thought about this later and it's a really interesting point. At AKD, we try and

“It's not what you say that is remembered but how you make someone feel”

create an environment that is based off a positive and safe work culture. But ultimately our culture is not one person's responsibility, it is not an individual manager nor is it an individual supervisors, it is not one particular group, it is everyone's responsibility. We all own AKD's culture, we all contribute to it every day, it is our collective responsibility

A quote I heard last year **"it's not what you say that is remembered but how you make someone feel"**.

Think about your actions, how do people remember their interactions with you, how do you make them feel? It's more than a workplace, it's our culture and our collective responsibility and I think of how Joe made a lot of people feel, how easy is a smile?

I want to call out a massive congratulations and thank you to the service recognition of Dale Tillack with 45 years (wow!). David McGinness 30 years, Kim Self 25 years and Darren Pevitt 20 years. Your contributions to your sites and AKD is appreciated.

Farewell to Flash Gordon, thanks for your efforts at the Tumut site and all the apprentices that you had a positive impact on and thank you Joe. I would like everyone to take a moment to think about the message of the Yarram page from Ed Burgess. If you smoke or vape, is it worth it? Why are you choosing to harm yourself, why risk all the health issues, an early death and the painful consequences that cancer brings.

As always, take care, look after yourself and your workmates, and be safe.

Shane Vicary
CEO

