

THE SPLINTER

AKD EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



Colac Dispatch team celebrating teammate Ross Maw on receiving the Victorian Transport Association 'Driver Salute Award'



AKD EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

EDITION 52

JULY-AUGUST 2023



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'AKDSoftwoods'   

THE SPLINTER

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AKD OFFCUTS

RED AND BLACK CLUB MILESTONE



Jaden 'Bluey' Angus,
from Colac's Maintenance
team, and his family
celebrated his 250th game
with Irrewarra-Beac
Football Netball Club.



AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONS OFF TO CHILE

Taylor (14) and Charlie (12) Holmes, daughters of Colac's **Ben Holmes and Toni Kirkup**, competed in the National Championships held in Sydney – both winning their divisions and returning home as **Australian Champions!**

As if that wasn't exciting enough, after the tournament, it was announced that the girls had been selected as part of the Australian Team to fight in the **2023 World Cup** in Chile this December.

The girls are the youngest people to ever be selected for the Australian Team!



Victorian Transport Association 'Driver Salute Award'



with Rachel Scilley
National Freight & Logistics Manager

On the 5th July I had the pleasure of being part of a presentation from the Victorian Transport Association to Colac's Truck Driver, Ross Maw, recognising his "Driver Salute Award"

This bi-monthly award recognises and honours heavy vehicle drivers across Victoria who demonstrate outstanding and consistent safety practices behind the wheel. Ross was selected out of 15 nominated drivers by a committee that includes Optix (formally DriveRisk), VTA, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and Goodyear Dunlop.

On accepting this recognition, Ross said he was thrilled to receive the award and was ecstatic when he heard his nomination had won. Ross's award has earned him applause from the entire AKD business with Shane Vicary extending his own personal congratulations.

"It is employees like you Ross who serve as role models, inspiring others to prioritise safety in their daily tasks and contributing to our collective goal that makes AKD a truly great company," Shane Vicary said.

Ross has been a valued member of AKD since he joined the company in July 2000 and has always taken a pro-active approach to his safety and the safety of others. The dedication, passion and enthusiasm Ross has for his job is shown every day in all his tasks, he has the respect of all his fellow workmates and is always ready to lend a hand and offer advice where he can.

Upon accepting the award, Ross thanked his dispatch teammates for ensuring he was loaded safely every time we drove out the gates.

"The guys I work with, all the dispatch people, and driving the trucks themselves, it's just something I've always loved, and I do it with a passion," Ross said.

Congratulations once again Ross for this well-deserved recognition!



IN THE WILD

While on a recent cycling trip to Halls Gap, **Paul Corkill**, AKD's Payroll Accountant, came across a picnic table made of AKD timber.



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Health & Safety

EVERY DIGIT COUNTS



Life can get hectic hey – and I'm not talking specifically about work, just life in general. For those of us that are parents with younger kids, running them around to friends or to sports – juggling the groceries, paying bills, dealing with sickness, dealing with loss be it a friend or family member...the list goes on. Sometimes, we all just need a little 'time out' for ourselves.

I don't think there would be many people out there that aren't navigating through one of the challenges life throws our way. I mention this, because at times I think we need to remind ourselves that everyone is dealing with something outside of work. Whether it's the person you work with, the person serving you at the supermarket, or the person that gets your order wrong at the takeaway shop that appears distracted or makes a mistake – rather than getting frustrated, remember – they too could be dealing with issues you are not aware of.

Well, the last couple of months have certainly been challenging, with a number of finger related injuries sustained across the group – all of these involved tasks that are done ALL DAY – EVERY DAY....manually handling timber.

While we have people having to turn boards, fix skewers or remove boards or posts from the process, we run the risk of injury. We have to take steps to improve our processes and our equipment, so over the next 12 months, 'hands in process' will be a focus and we really need the input of our key operators to get involved – after all, you're the ones with the knowledge and solutions!

There are times when we see our team members turning boards on infeeds to trimmers or stackers for example when

they don't really need to – I wonder if that's a behaviour we have tolerated for so long that it's what our teams think is expected? I do understand that there are times when boards need to be turned – if they are bowed or need to be checked for quality purposes.

But I pose the question, are we touching timber for the sake of touching timber?? Do our teams think that is what the Supervisors or Managers expect?

The fact is, we don't want to see people touching timber if they don't need to. So, if the machine you are operating is running well and you see a manager approaching, don't think you need to start touching timber to show you are busy – that's not what is expected.

In July, we had a HSE (Health, Safety and Environment) Board Subcommittee meeting and I was able to share an overview of what we have been focused on, some of our challenges and some of the great improvements that have occurred over the last 12 months.

For me, (having worked in other large companies), to have such strong support and commitment from the Board was impressive – trust me, you don't see that everywhere. Following the meeting, we took them on a site tour of Colac and rather than having a focus on operations, their focus was purely on safety and enviro.

In July, the decision was made to amalgamate with the Environmental function Health and Safety. Given the strong alignment and synergies between Health and Safety and Environment, bringing the two functions together is an enhancement and supports the work both functions continue to carry out. I am really excited to have Sean Maxwell joining the team!

While I'm the first to admit, we still have areas that we need to improve (and we will), I am also very proud of the sites for the improvements



that have been made. Sometimes it's easy to focus on the things that aren't going well or the things that haven't improved – but, taking the time to look at what has improved is just as important (something I keep having to remind myself of).

As a continuation of our Top 10 Critical Risk Program, the focus for July / October is Work at Heights. You will note that this Critical Risk will be spread over a four-month period, this is due to the focus incorporating emergency response and permit issuing.

Working at heights is a high-risk activity, and a leading cause of death and serious injury in Australia across a number of different industries. A fall in the workplace (regardless of the height) can result in a range of injuries (minor to significant) to fatality.

EMPLOYEE SHOUT OUT

On the previous page their was an article regarding Colac Truck Driver, Ross Maw, so I won't go into detail about it here, but Ross – a personal shout out from me mate, well done – absolutely deserved and a real credit to you!



Ross Maw

Another shout out is to Jaimmii Jackway from Portland. For those that don't know Jaimmii, she is the Planning Coordinator but her involvement, support and leadership when it comes to



Jaimmii Jackway

Health and Safety is excellent. Outside her role requirements, Jaimmii assists the site with Injury Management, training and anything in between! She is always there to help and a pleasure to work with.

TOP 10 CRITICAL RISKS

HIGH RISK WORK: WORKING AT HEIGHTS

Working at heights is a high-risk activity, and a leading cause of death and serious injury in Australia across a number of different industries.



A fall in the workplace (regardless of the height) can result in a range of injuries, including:

- **Serious injuries**
(e.g. broken bones, muscle and tendon tearing)
- **Permanent injuries**
(e.g. spinal injuries, loss of mobility)
- **Fatality**

All fall hazards from one level to another (regardless of height) need to be assessed and appropriate controls implemented to minimise the risk of injury. The risk of permanent injuries or fatality increases significantly if working at a height of 2 metres or greater.

Do not perform any task that involves Work at Heights unless you have been trained to do so.

Prior to commencing any task where there is a fall risk, hazards are to be identified and appropriate controls implemented.

Always follow task specific instructions. This may be in the form of an SOP, JSA or the Work at Heights Permit requirements.

If you are using fall prevention or fall arrest equipment, always conduct the required inspections prior to use.

Tools & equipment used while working at a height must be secured at all times. Falling tools & equipment can also result in serious injury if they contact a person(s) working below.

'No-go' zones should be established below where the Work at Heights task is being performed to prevent unauthorised access.

If you are unsure how to safely perform tasks that involve work at heights or have concerns with the Work at Heights requirements – STOP and ASK.

Work at Height breaches are serious and will be investigated accordingly.

Always report incidents, near misses or hazards associated with Work at Heights to your Supervisor / Manager.

Caboolture

Around the Grounds

SAFETY

On average every year in Australia over 8,100 serious injuries are recorded due to a fall from heights. That's the statistics but what about the reality?

While some of us are comfortable with heights for others it's one of their top fears – we are all different and no matter what your comfort level is there is no denying that failure to use or incorrect use of equipment can have dire consequences.

At Caboolture we are working through our critical risk program for Working at Heights and have completed risk assessments, started online awareness training and have approximately 50% completed in the space of external refreshers.

We have identified some key learnings through great feedback. Some of the key things being fall prevention methods and work positioning before we head straight into using harnesses and fall arrest techniques. We are working hard on closing the gaps through training, education, and access to the right gear.

At the end of the day there are a lot of stories where it has not ended well for workers that have suffered a fall from heights, for those that survive life is very different – let's make sure you or a co-worker is not one of these stories



Jack McCullum getting an insight into suspension trauma.

and we use them as inspiration to THINK, WORK and BE SAFE.

The little things make a difference! Ensuring good clear communication enables many hands with one mind to achieve a lot quickly. Our Pellet mill and Kilns/Boilers have been practicing this to ensure their work area is top notch.

As it gets warmer we are preparing for heat and with this comes our need to control dust. This site has a lot of unsealed surfaces, the traffic flow is high, and it looks like Queensland is set for a dry summer.

This has been challenging to manage and we are really stoked to announce we have a truck sweeper unit for our site on its way to compliment the water truck.

Shout out to Dennis Gould who has been chipping away with procurement, sweeping, watering and the training of co-workers – it has made a difference, but we still have some work to go to ensure we improve working conditions.

A great July and August for the site with **zero** treatable injuries and a safe July shut. I do have to take the opportunity to recognise the hard work of all our team onsite with respect to closing training and SOP gaps over the last eight weeks. It's been a long slog with the end game being more informed, better equipped and educated teams.

Like dust control it's a work in progress and we are looking forward to improving all other gaps and SOP quality every day, every week and every month. Thanks to Bella Roberts, Kilns/Boilers/Pellet crews and Jayden Martin for your persistence and tenacity.

PEOPLE

Earlier in the year, Coby Kinnear and Jessica Temple, from our night shift cleaning crew, celebrated the arrival of their beautiful baby boy, Xavier, into their family.

Understanding the importance of supporting our employees through different stages of life, we worked closely with Jess to ensure a smooth transition back to work after her maternity leave.

Originally assigned to a full-time night shift role, we recognised the need for flexibility and transferred her to a full-time day shift position in our log yard. This adjustment allowed Jess and Coby to balance their responsibilities at home while continuing their career with us.

Initially, the site lacked the necessary facilities for Jess to comfortably express during her workday. Within a few months, Jess now has access to a private space exclusively designated for her use, providing all the necessary amenities for expressing.



Dennis Gould, Paul Hamilton, Ben Grimshaw and Jessica Temple

Jess will also soon be transitioning into part-time, thanks to AKD's flexible work arrangements. This change will allow Jess and Coby to strike an even better work-life balance, ensuring they can dedicate ample time to their growing family.

After working in AKD for six months, I am immensely proud of our employee's resilience and dedication, and the supportive workplace culture we have fostered here at AKD. Jess's story exemplifies our commitment to accommodating the unique needs of our team members, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive both personally and professionally.

My hat off goes off to both of you and with the assistance from Rachelle Holt, Caboolture HR Manager, and the log yard team it was made possible.

PRODUCTION

The new financial year has started with the revised targets moving from a 315,000 m3 annualised rate to 365,000 m3. We have had a very average month in July with major bearing failures on several pieces of critical equipment however August has started significantly better.

After a week of closure to install the first stage of the Log Turner upgrade providing a great improvement to log gap control on the quad bands. The second stage to be implemented in October.

Following this week of commissioning we had MPM Engineering on site from Canada to give our Alstrom Edger a long overdue tune doubling the board rate from 14 to 28 boards-per-minute. A really positive change.



Jess Temple, Coby Kinnear and Xavier

I would like to thank all our people on site over this period who have provided support for these upgrades which is setting the site up to achieve the new forecast volumes.

As we get into the middle grind of the year, never stop focusing, never stop learning and never stay quiet. Stay healthy – THINK, WORK and BE SAFE

Paul Ryan
Caboolture Site Manager



Colac & Irrewarra

Around the Grounds

SAFETY

It has been a tough winter in regard to safety for the Colac/Irrewarra Sites with vehicle near misses and minor collisions through to numerous hand and finger injuries.

No m³ is worth an injury, take the time required to carry out your tasks safely and if you see a hazard, report the hazard and if you don't see action then escalate the issue to ensure we all go home to our families fit and healthy.

Over the past few months, we have had multiple compliance audits conducted on both Colac and Irrewarra. These audits, not only help us identify areas where we need to focus on, but also provide a fresh set of eyes overlooking our processes and offers advice on how we can make improvements on our already existing safety systems. This will ensure that we maintain a safe working environment for all employees, contractors and visitors to our sites.

Some of the other compliance audits that have been undertaken have been guarding audit, stores racking systems and most recently an air monitoring audit conducted in the Greenmill Colac.

The air monitoring was focused on the Greenmill to ensure that we are maintaining a safe working environment for all employees who work in this area, and we continue to monitor any changes from new products or process that we put in place. This will also be conducted in other areas towards the end of the year with focus being on the yards for dust, treatment plant and also maintenance areas.

EA "IN PRINCIPAL" VOTE ACHIEVED

The first thing I would like to acknowledge is the spirit in which the recent EA negotiations were conducted. These have been difficult times with all of us being impacted by inflation and rising interest rates and for the company tough market conditions. Overtime reductions for employees has been unfortunately necessary due to reduced demand and growing stock. I thank all involved in the negotiation process and look forward to another four years of industrial stability.

MARKET DOWNTURN IMPACTS

This industry definitely runs through cycles and just as it was up for the last few years, it will be up again before we know it and demand will be back strong again. The focus of the site right now is to be safely extracting the most value out of what we have, whether that's equipment, logs, time or grade yield.

The slow-down will give us an opportunity to do some

well needed maintenance, as well as structure shifts to allow more maintenance contact hours which, in turn, will help us continue the path to internationally competitive efficiency and productivity rates.

This change in production focus has meant that people are starting to be redeployed across the wider business and while this can be disrupting, I also think it's a great opportunity. We will have more and more employees with a deeper understanding of the whole process from 'Stump to Store'.

PROJECTS

The big project at Colac at the moment is the Drymill Trimmer Project. With the new building now going up it's impossible to miss the imposing structure that has developed along Forest Street.

Richard Pierce, Colac Project Manager, and his team have been working tirelessly for some time now to ensure it all comes together. Many of these people have responsibilities outside of this project so it's a good opportunity to recognise that fact and thank them for taking new and additional responsibilities.

I'd also like to thank all the drymill employees. They have put up with many disruptions through the project and have worked cooperatively to get us to where we are now.



New spiral rolls for the drymill.



Over-height alarms now in operations.

While the Drymill project has been taking a lot of the focus and resource from the site this has not stopped numerous in-house projects being carried out. David Wilson, Kilns Area Maintenance Co-ordinator, Kiln Operators and the Electrical team have completed over-height alarms which will sense the heights of the packs going into the kilns and avoid internal damage. This is a fantastic continuing improvement initiative that is now complete.

John Browne
Colac Site Manger



IRREWARRA

During the month of July, our key focus was to ensure we had an incident free shutdown while we diligently carried out preventive maintenance across the entire site. A big round of applause goes out to all those who played a pivotal role in making this accomplishment a reality.

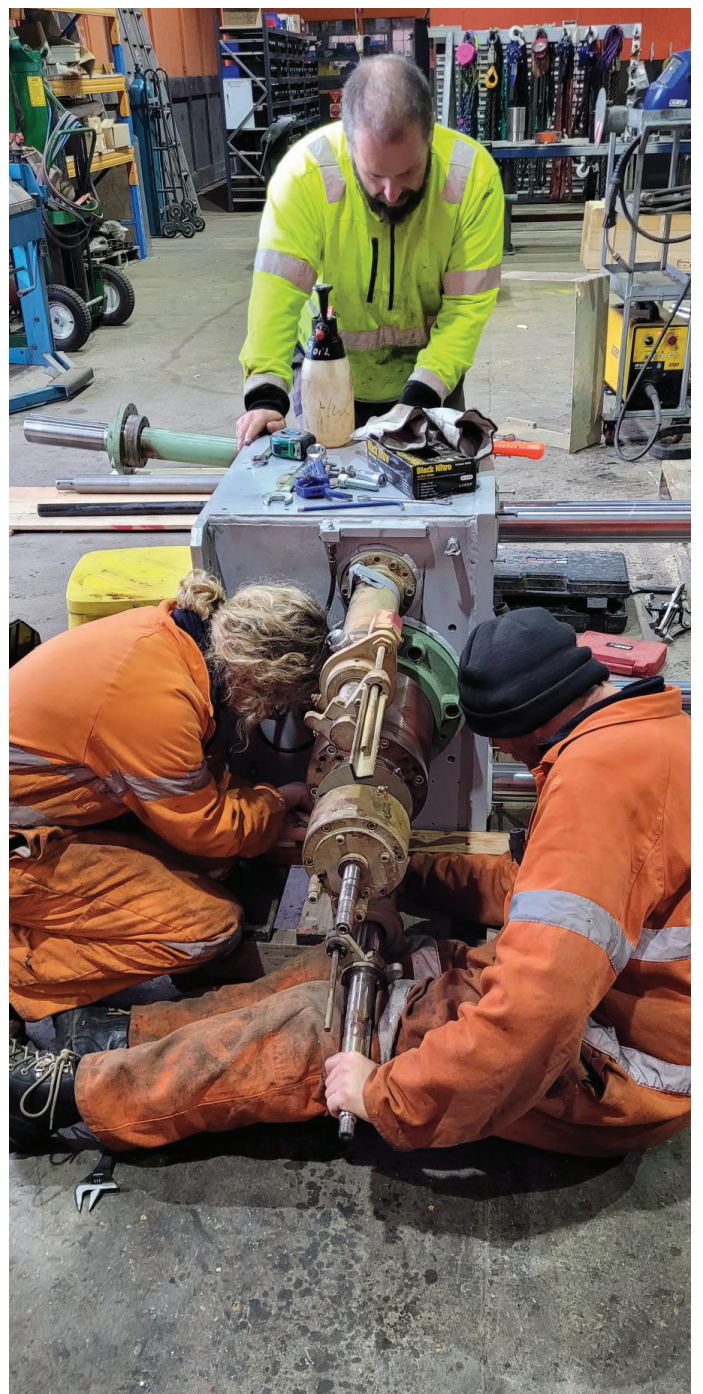
Our counterparts from Germany, EWD, joined us on-site to lend their expertise to our maintenance team. Together, we successfully executed the replacement of both saw boxes on the Gang Saw.

This comprehensive task included the installation of new saw spindles, bearings, and lower guide bushes. Precise calibration of the box levels was undertaken, and meticulous alignment checks were performed. A comprehensive health check of the Gang Saw was also conducted.

In the aftermath of these improvements, we're delighted to report a significant upswing in our recovery performance.

Our SOPs are on the verge of being fully updated. An impressive feat, with 71 out of 74 SOPs now finalised. This achievement stands as a testament to the effort invested by all those involved.

Mick Ritchie
Irrewarra Site Manager



Nicole Veress, left, and Ben Grinter, right, working with EWD Hans Stoemmer on the saw boxes.

Tumut & Gilmore

Around the Grounds

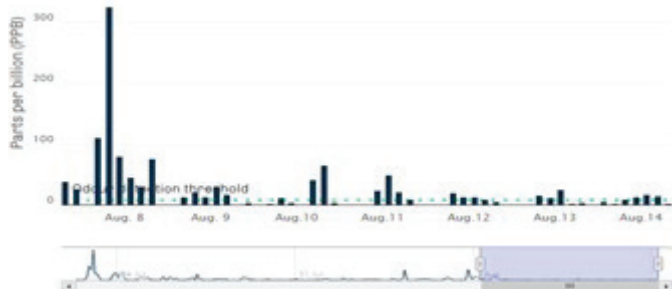
SAFETY

Here we are eight months into the year, we are at the back end of the colder months and looking forward to the warmer weather. Our project safety has been injury and incident free. It has been amazing watching the 350-tonne crane in action.

Safety wise the site is performing well, hand and finger injuries remain our number one concern. We do have to reach into the process in a few areas, there is no getting away from that, however we continually need to challenge why, is there a safer alternative way that can complete the task.

Around our Gilmore site, it literally 'stinks'. It has been impacted by a strong smell of 'rotten egg' gas. Around mid-July the odour has filtered right through the Tumut Valley. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) have found the source to be at the Waste Management Facility, directly across from our Gilmore Treatment facility. The EPA working with local Fire and Rescue and SafeWork are continuing to perform gas monitoring. EPA have installed hydrogen sulphide monitors along their site boundary, to monitor the smell. The odour has been identified as Hydrogen Sulphide (H₂S or Rotten Egg Gas).

The graph below is live data from the EPA website and available for anyone to view. We are hoping that we can soon start to smell the roses again!



These charts show the concentration detected in each 10 minute sample of air collected by the hydrogen monitors.

With Working at Heights our current Critical Risk focus, we rolled out training using the portable training unit. Working at Heights is an integral part of work for most building and construction industry workers. Fall protection equipment is required for anyone working at heights of 2 metres or higher. There are different types fall protection systems, and the one that is most appropriate for your premises will depend on the fall hazards that are present and the type of work that is carried out. 33 employees are now trained in Working at Heights.



Working at Heights training being completed using the portable training unit.

Brody Hiller and Ashton Baker completed their Dogging high-risk work licence that allows them to direct the crane operator when moving loads around a construction site. It also involves using various slinging techniques and dogmen are responsible for ensuring lifting gear is in a good working condition.

Our electrical team completed Low Voltage Rescue Training which is a first aid course specifically designed for those who work around electricity, such as electricians. It was created so that those who work in these kinds of industries have the capability to be able to rescue and help someone recover from receiving an electric shock.

PRODUCTION

Tumut continues to run well and with market conditions being what they are, the focus remains on quality, presentation and delivery service to our customers.

We are currently looking at our product range to ensure what we produce suits the current market. Providing a quality product is essential and always ask yourself would I buy it, if not then don't release it and fix it. There is nothing more important than building trust with our customers, so I ask everyone to ensure what we put to market is fit for purpose. Stock age and rotation is critical.

32 Tonne MCC being lifted into position.



Kilmour Group on a site tour.



Steel Work for Mezzanine Floor.

VISITORS

We had three shareholder groups plus AKD Directors, from IRD, WH Bennett and Kilmour visit our site at the perfect time to watch the major HSS components being lifted and locked onto the foundations.

The Tumut team was pleased to be able to tell the story of the sites journey since becoming part of AKD, as well as being able to show where the Tumut and Gilmore sites are on the journey, and the plans to continue with consolidating and developing both sites.

PROJECTS

Good progress continues with the Horizontal Shape Saw (HSS) project. The Project team has successfully completed the key milestone tasks with the flow of contractors and

equipment being maintained as per the project timelines.

To date, 19 containers have arrived and been unloaded with 80% of the equipment now installed, including the MCC building. Two more containers remain to arrive which are tracking on time.

The equipment lifts were completed using a 350 tonne capacity crane. The crane has a static load of 275 tonne with 150 tonne on counterweighting which is assembled on site.

The safety outcomes from the HSS Project have very pleasing with **zero** incidents to date.

Peter Annetts
Acting Tumut Site Manager/
Engineering Manager



Yarram

Around the Grounds

SAFETY

Yarram is working on some improvements around site including a new ramp for loading bark into trucks. The current one has been here for some time, so due for replacement, and it will have a lot more safety controls built in.

We are getting closer towards a full roll out of the BodyGuard i-Tag, Pedestrian Warning System, to all our forklifts soon with a successful trial of one forklift so far.

Unfortunately, we experienced a hand injury recently. It however points out a few things:

1. Even though we attempt to automate work processes, during upset conditions it usually requires 'the hands on' approach.
2. Our hands are important to us – usually an incident of this type requires time off or modified / alternative duties.
3. They can have lasting results.

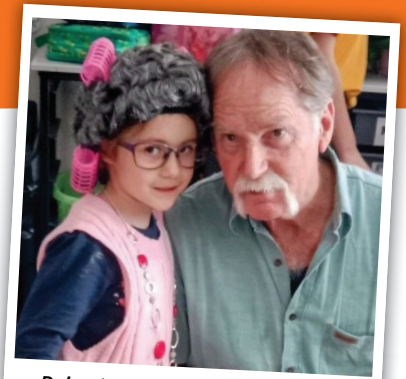
Some wise words from our H&S Advisor, Graham Clarke:

"Those who know me well enough, know I am missing a piece of a finger. I did it when I was a young kid during training in a recreational sport.

14 days in a hospital, heaps of injections, surgery, a couple of ongoing surgeries, didn't finish my last year of school, couldn't do reactional sport for a long time. Longer term and even now, it can ache on cold frosty mornings, I still can't pick up small things with that hand [small screws, bolts and nuts etc], I definitely don't like catching metal objects with that hand.

Not complaining but you learn to live with it, but really you don't want to? The cause – a spur of the moment decision, not recognising the risk.

It was interesting, I was chatting with one of my fellow workers here. We were comparing 'bucket lists' – old blokes yeah, I know. It turns out we are both going to 'Grandparents and Special Persons' days with our grandkids. So, we claim 'bragging rights' by sharing a couple of photos of that day. This is strongly for both of us our "Whys". Take that extra minute, observing what is happening, thinking it out to keep yourself safe"



Rob with granddaughter Poppy.



Thomas, Graham and Xavier.

VISITORS

Our site has had quite a bit of involvement with Yarram Secondary College hosting three local work experience students with our electrical and mechanical teams.

We also held a site tour and information session for a number of other students from the same campus. As part of Yarram's education program, they had decided to focus on the timber industry and after a visit in the forest, came to our Sawmill to have a look at the process, the types of opportunities that are around and generally learning about the "Stump to Store" process.

Big thanks to Julian and Clarke our tour guides who provided plenty of engaging information for the students. I have to say it was great to see such polite, respectful, and inquisitive students and teachers on site.



Yarram Secondary College on tour.

YARRAM WILD HOGS



Rob Lewandowski, Steve Lawler and Justin Barron.

WILD HOGS

Rob, in recent months, has purchased a new bike and together with Justin Barron and Steve Lawlor often get out on the open road and ride together. We jokingly refer to the group as the 'Yarram Wild Hogs' referencing the 2007 movie with John Travolta, but in reality, we have three employees who have all suffered significant loss in recent years, getting together and having some fun. I just hope they have their ear protection in when they ride off because that bike of Rob's - wow!!

PRODUCTION

The month of July saw the annual shut take place with a huge amount of work completed to keep the site in tip top condition.

In her new role as Maintenance Planner, it was Ange Youen's first taste of planning and implementing a large scale shut with a lot of moving parts. Well supported by the rest of the maintenance and production teams, a successful shut period occurred with seamless start up following.

Not only has Ange been busy at work but she has also been extremely busy hosting her daughter Brittney's wedding at her home in Alberton in her spare time. By all accounts another well run event that went off without a hitch.

One of the highlights for Ange was her Grandson Bellamy walking down the aisle as a ring bearer after having a



Ange with her family at Brittney's wedding.

pretty tough start to life in and out of the Royal Children's hospital for the first 15 month of his life. Awesome work and congrats to Brittney and Kieren!

A big shout out to all of our maintenance team and in particular recognise Rob Lewandowski and Justin Barron for all their hard work in our mechanical team during the shut.

Glen Davis
Yarram Site Manager



Post & Poles

Daryl Hann
General Manager
Portland Pine



On site, our dedicated team has been diligently and tirelessly working through the steps of our Traffic Management Review. In line with our commitment to safety and efficiency, we installed new, highly visible signage at the entrance points to our dispatch and treatment plant areas. This enhancement is designed to greatly improve the clarity of restricted access zones, ensuring that all personnel and visitors can navigate our facilities with a heightened sense of awareness and compliance.

One of the smaller CFA stations in our area approached our maintenance supervisor Dave Monaro, to see if he could build a cabinet to cover the new Hydrant Pump at the Condah CFA station. This will allow quicker refilling of water and is a more reliable approach to firefighting in a high risk bush fire area. Great work Dave on your willingness to support.

The Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards are to be held shortly and as part of this Portland Pine was invited to attend a 'celebrations night' held at the Royal Hotel in Portland. A small group representing Portland Pine attended and had a very enjoyable night. The night consisted of a variety of attendees, council members and local business who sponsor the awards. It was great for us to be able to mix with others in our industry and hear from guest speakers who are trying to highlight the amazing work our people do.

We took time for a team BBQ to celebrate the dedication and hard work of two employees and their service recognitions. Matt May reached the 5-year mark, while Wes Wombwell has been with us for a decade.

Over in the East, the moving of stock from Jelfor to the Morwell Distribution Centre has been full steam ahead. With running four B-Double loads per day, in just four weeks we have moved across nearly 80% of the stock on site. It has been a challenging process with many



New signs.

Congratulations to Daryl on your well-earned progression to General Manager of Portland Pine Products. Your commitment to safety, calm and measured approach, and passion for people, make you a great choice for GM of Portland Pine.



Wes Wombwell and Matt May.



Hydrant Pump.



PPP team at the Green Triangle celebrations: Damien Simpson, Tara Anderson, Daryl Hann, Rebecca Anderson, Jaimmii Jackway and Toby Pumpa.

packs to move, however the positive is that Morwell can be set up to support Portland Pine Products.

It's an exciting time as we lay the foundations for the future of the post and poles business and the

future looks promising. Big shout out to Ben Bailey and Nadia Cormio, and also Rosco from Colac, without your help this would not have been possible, so thank you.

World Conference on Timber Engineering

with **Mateo Gutierrez**

Structural Engineer



In June, I embarked on a trip to Oslo, Norway, representing AKD at the biggest and most prestigious World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE).

The conference brings together over 900 leading professionals and experts in the field of timber engineering from around the world, providing a platform for sharing knowledge, innovation, and promoting the use of timber in construction.

Besides immersing myself in the latest trends, cutting-edge techniques, and groundbreaking ideas in timber construction, the conference was an excellent platform for networking and supporting the ARC Advanced Timber Hub on their journey to organise the next WCTE 2025 in Australia.

During my visit, I had the chance to visit some innovative industries and iconic mass-timber buildings. Some of the highlights include Wood Tube, a company dedicated to manufacturing wall studs made from large paper rolls; Wiksfors Technology, which offers services in the field of volumetric modular housing (the equivalent concept to IKEA-type houses).

We visited buildings like The Viking Ship, an ice-skiing arena completed in 1992, in which the roof is shaped as an upside-down ship made of large-scale glulam trusses spanning up to 96m, and the Oslo Airport, consisting of glulam trusses with a total length of 136 metres.

The cherry on top of the cake was the visit to Mjøstårnet, ratified as the world's tallest timber building by Guinness World Records. The building is 18 stories at 85.4m tall and hosts a hotel, offices, and restaurant.

Attending WCTE 2023 was a wonderful experience, and I am incredibly grateful to AKD for supporting my participation in this event. The timber industry is an ever-changing beast, and we at AKD understand that we must be across the worldwide advances.

Feel free to reach out if you want to know more about this experience and save the date for 2025, as Australia is hosting the next conference (WCTE 2025) in Brisbane.

Mjøstårnet the world's tallest timber building by Guinness World Records.



Branching into Retirement:

“Don’t panic” and “do what you say you are going to do” are the two rules Neil Harris, AKD’s first Forester, has lived by throughout his staggering 43 years of service with AKD, and it’s fair to say they didn’t fail him.

Neil, a Colac local, began his forestry career by completing his Bachelor of Forest Science at ANU Canberra and Melbourne University. When asked why he chose to become a forester, Neil simply reflects, “it just seemed the logical thing to do, as it matched my interest in the natural environment.” Neil then spent the next two years as a trainee at Beecham Wright’s Altona head office before moving to their sawmilling and forestry operation at the current Irrewarra Sawmill location, what was then known as Victree Forests.

Neil started as Victree’s first Forester and became Forest Manager in 1990, overseeing their extensive plantation expansion in the Otway Region until 1999 when AKD purchased the Irrewarra Sawmill assets of the Victree business. Whilst the plantations were sold to the Midway group, Neil was retained by AKD – arguably one of the best decisions that was made.

Neil’s role with AKD was Resource Manager with the responsibilities of log input into our Colac and Irrewarra sawmills, organising the export of low-grade logs, as well as managing all the harvesting, replanting and silviculture of our pine plantation estates. In terms of innovation, Neil pioneered the approach of matching the markets to the products. Whilst supplying the mills was paramount, Neil’s holistic approach always actively sought to get the best financial value for AKD from the trees.

Neil is very proud of the legacy he is leaving behind at AKD. As our first forester, when asked of his contributions, he responds with a tired smile, “I’ve done a hell of a lot.”

When Neil started with AKD in 1999, AKD owned 2,000ha of pine plantations which has now grown to 12,000ha. And whilst this growth in both volume and value is incredible, it is quality that has always been at the centre of Neil’s philosophy – “you only get one go every 30 years, so you’ve got to get it right.”

Of all Neil’s achievements over the past 43 years, it’s hard for him to pick a standout favourite, but to sum it up in just a few words it would be his significant achievements in plantations and procurement. Neil was an integral part of the team that negotiated the HVP 15-year contract in 2008

and the OFO 10-year contract in 2011 which made AKD the first Victorian processor to be awarded a significant contract across the SA border. Neil was also on the Board of Tree Breeding Australia for over 10 years, the peak body for tree breeding and genetic improvement, and has been a part of multiple other working groups and this just shows Neil’s dedication to the industry beyond his position with AKD.

One of Neil’s favourite plantations is Tomahawk Creek, as this is the first plantation that he managed from 1st thinning right through the entire growing and harvesting process. Neil was therefore able to shape this entire plantation, a feat that not a lot of people can say they’ve accomplished. The Elaine plantation is another favourite of Neil’s as it is a part of the philosophy of expanding the estate for long term fibre security.

Being with a company for such a long time, Neil has been a witness to plenty of change and recognises how far the company has come. He believes AKD to be a progressive, innovative and stable company and it’s this approach to business that he feels has been a significant benefit of working for AKD. Combining hands on with innovation when it comes to the focus on genetics and site preparation etc. means the best possible outcomes. Neil feels that he helped create an environment within the Forestry team, where people could develop their careers without the rigidity in expectations, and anyone dedicated enough could expand their horizons in whichever aspect they were interested in.

When asked what he will miss most, Neil paused for a moment before stating that “it’s just too difficult to put into words.” For Neil, answering a question like this is near impossible as “it’s such a multifaceted job.” It’s more than just missing the Forestry team and the work we do. It’s being a part of, and intimately knowing, every plantation. To put it simply, Neil will miss being able to contribute at all levels of the business.

Whilst Neil has loved his career with AKD, it’s also fair to say he is more than ready to hang up his hardhat and put away the spreadsheets (he had a million of these!) and enjoy retirement. Neil is eagerly looking forward to the change in energy as he heads into retirement (for real this time - it has been a five-year transition process!). Neil is particularly looking forward to just being able to fully switch off – as difficult as this may be, he acknowledges.

“Neil held the role of “Resource Manager” for AKD for over 40 years, when you amalgamate his first 20 years’ service with Victree. Neil has successfully represented the forestry side of AKD both internally with successive leaders and owners, and externally to suppliers, growers and academics/researchers.

When thinking of Neil, I immediately think of an ambassador, a role that is defined as “an official envoy, a diplomatic agent of the highest rank”. Nothing else would seem to accurately represent an individual who has been at the forefront of both growing and expanding AKD’s plantation asset, but also AKD’s log supply that has enabled the wider business to grow.

There are not many private plantations in Australia of the scale or quality of the AKD plantation estate, and this is due to the forestry team and Neils leadership of that group through many years.

I have often teased Neil about being a hippie from Forrest, and I truly hope that Sue and Neil enjoy their retirement with their “good life” out there. The character of Neil truly shone when he retired from his leadership role several years ago, as he was not ready to walk away fully, until he was sure the plantations were in good hands. Now is the time for goodbye and thank you, and your legacy “grows on”.

Shane Vicary - CEO

Farewell to the Harris's

He's looking forward to getting stuck into projects at their Forrest property and more travel adventures.

AKD has played such an integral part in Neil's life, and he is grateful to have been entrusted by the shareholders with the responsibility to manage and grow the asset to what it is today.

Sue, Neil's wife who is also a Forester, joined the AKD team about 10 years ago after a long career with the Victorian Government's Forestry Department. Sue was in the first intake of female students at the Victorian School of Forestry at Creswick in 1976, which was groundbreaking at the time.

Sue's initial role with AKD was Environmental Project Officer, overseeing various native vegetation projects across the AKD estate, such as the Ecotender revegetation project at Moreep. Sue often worked quietly in the background and spent most of her time at plantations focused on inventory for permanent plot tracking as well as plantation valuations and surveillance of overall plantation health.

Karen Johns, AKD's Forest Solutions Analyst and colleague of Sue's, recalls spending a day with Sue out in plantations several years ago measuring permanent plots. "It was a fantastic experience," Karen states, acknowledging that Sue is in her element when in the forests, "she struck me as tough and spirited in caring for the trees and she moved through the forest in a smooth and controlled way – she was hard to keep up with!" Sue's passion for the industry is clear to those who have had the pleasure of working with her during her 10 years with AKD, as she is a very generous individual who will happily share her valuable insights with those who are interested.

Sue has made a valuable contribution to AKD and her knowledge in the forestry team will be greatly missed.

Congratulations Neil and Sue on your combined 53 years of service to AKD and enjoy your well-earned retirement!

“

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Neil over many years. Neil's gentle leadership allowed me to grow in my many roles within the Forestry Team and he was especially supportive and encouraging when I was completing my forestry degree. Neil leaves behind a very large legacy in the shape of a well-managed plantation estate which has grown exponentially during his career with his foresight and careful land purchases. There are so many memories but our trips to China and New Zealand, to visit export customers back in 2017, are a standout.

During Sue's time with AKD she managed various native vegetation projects which included collecting seed, raising seedlings and obtaining grants. Sue's extensive knowledge of native flora species was extremely beneficial to the business and to me personally. Sue was also an integral part of our inventory program.

Neil and Sue, 53 years of combined dedicated service is an outstanding achievement! I wish you all the best to you both on your well-earned retirement and make the most of your vineyard or just visit Tuscany again!"

Jo Foster - HARVESTING MANAGER

”



Full steam ahead for Caboolture

with Marcus Solman
Engineering Graduate



This year has seen the delivery of Caboolture's largest capital investments in decades. The flagship of these projects is the Continuous Drying Kiln (CDK) in the heart of the Mill. Boasting some of the latest drying innovations from global leaders of timber drying technologies, this project enables future investments integral to the continued growth of the site.

The decision to invest circa \$15 million in the people and future of Caboolture Mill, by means of the CDK project, was made in early 2021. The upgrade would not only increase timber production capacity and efficiency, but would also uplift the quality of timber produced, leading to higher recovery in the Dry Mill and a better product for our customers.

Demolition and construction began in mid 2022. The CDK project did not come without its challenges; from concurrent projects such as the Pellet Mill, Fuel Shed and other mill upgrades, regional events such as flooding and unprecedented rain delays, and needless to say, a global pandemic. There were significant delays that couldn't have been foreseen but nonetheless with help from every department onsite (at one stage or many), all challenges were overcome.

After nearly a year of watching construction alongside other key projects, the Kilns and Boilers Operational Team were eager to learn about and contribute to the new equipment that would automate the drying process and allow production of higher quality timber. A fast-tracked commissioning process saw a lot of work get done very quickly. As expected with any complex system, commissioning revealed many challenges that required quick thinking and collaboration.

Even as operations push into production commissioning tasks such as fine tuning, process development and learnings post start-up continue. These early commissioning challenges again have showed tenacity of the operational team, pushing ahead to solve commissioning issues and restart the CDK every time.

The completion of the CDK project comes at a time when many other site investments are yielding great results. The people of Caboolture mill have a lot to be proud of and a lot to look forward to onsite as both the technology and team continues to grow.



"Thanks are owed to several dedicated teams during the CDK project. Firstly, the operations team deserves recognition for their adept handling of interim measures while civil works were ongoing. Their ability to manage this transitional phase was crucial to the project's success. Additionally, the boiler operators demonstrated remarkable flexibility, seamlessly transitioning between batch and continuous kilns as required by the operation.

Lastly, the QA team's diligent efforts in scrutinizing timber packs susceptible to commissioning variability played a pivotal role in ensuring the project's quality standards were upheld throughout the commissioning phase. These teams' unwavering dedication and expertise were indispensable to the project's overall success."

Neil Cooper

GENERAL MANAGER – PROJECTS

From Sharpening Blades to Sharpening Minds



Tumut Saw Doctor David Dean

Around 10 years ago the Saw Doctor training facility in Sydney was earmarked for closure due to decreasing student numbers. This loss would have had a major impact and could have been the end of saw doctoring as a standalone trade.

After hearing this news, Rab Green, Tumut's Site Manager, lobbied to have the training facility moved to the Tumut campus. The successful outcome has brought the training facility out of the city and into a regional town, closer to the forestry industry and in turn closer to the apprentices'.

TAFE NSW Tumut campus needed a new trainer so they approached Bill Stuckey, Tumut's Saw shop Supervisor, to see

if there were any saw doctors on site that would be interested in becoming a trainer.

Bill took two shift leaders to the campus for a look around and fortunately David Dean expressed his interest straight away. David has almost 30 years' experience in the timber industry. He started in the Tumut sawshop completing his apprenticeship and returned to the Tumut mill and is now a shift leading hand.

He will share the six one-week blocks with another trainer from Hyne teaching the Certificate III in Saw Technology (saw technician) to the next generation of saw doctors. With this new venture, David is studying to receive his diploma in training and assessing.

Diversity Group Update

with Jo Foster
Harvesting Manager

We welcome Jared, Rachele, and Christian as valuable additions to our team. Their presence signifies the continuity of the accomplishments made by The Gender Diversity Working Group to date. With their unique perspectives, knowledge and diverse ideas, they are set to enrich the group's capabilities, contributing to its further growth and success.



Jared Pietsch,
Colac Production
Manager
who has worked
at AKD for 9.5
years.



Rachele Holt,
Caboolture
HR Manager
who joined AKD
this year.



Christian Gibbs,
Caboolture
Production
Manager *who has*
worked at AKD
for 7 years.

Recently we undertook a comprehensive review of uniforms across all our sites. Our primary focus was to ensure the uniform ordering experience included diversified selection for employee's choice.

Central to this review is the offering of a variety of pants fit choices, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and comfort. Uniform orders for every site now encompass a trio of choices: the classic standard fit, the sleek slim fit, and a distinctive ladies/green fit. This latter option caters to a more versatile fit around the hips while maintaining a snug waistline.

This thoughtfully curated assortment guarantees that all genders have access to a minimum of three fitting alternatives.

By adopting this approach, we acknowledge the diverse body types and preferences within our workforce. We believe that this uniform review not only streamlines the ordering process but also fosters an environment where everyone can work comfortably and confidently, while adhering to safety standards.

The amenities audit is scheduled for October, and we are currently in the process of developing a standardised audit form which will aid us to comprehensively assess our facilities. Once the audit is completed, a proposal will be formulated to address any necessary upgrades that emerge from the evaluation, ensuring that our amenities consistently meet the highest standards of quality and functionality.

We encourage you to reach out to the Gender Diversity Working Group with your thoughts and concerns. Please share your feedback by emailing us at akd.genderdivgroup@akd.com.au.

Walking in the ANZAC's

The gruesome WWII campaign of Kokoda resulted in 1,600 brave Australian troops wounded and another 625 losing their lives in action. Venturing into the wilds of Kokoda, they faced extreme environmental challenges like deep gorges, sweltering ridges, countless rivers, treacherous swamps, and deceptive false peaks. In June 2023 six AKD staff, 12 students and two teachers from Trinity College and Colac Secondary School, embarked on a journey to Papua New Guinea to walk in the footsteps of these great people.

This journey proved a mental challenge as much one of physical endurance as the long days of trekking the 96km of narrow tracks winding up ridge lines and down steep clay covered declines, took its toll.

The purpose of our trip was leadership and personal development, but it immediately became more than that, the situations we each found ourselves in bonded the group into a tight knit unit full of what will be lifelong friendships built on the encouragement needed to get each of us through the pain, fatigue and at times, tears.

To help us through the eight days were 20 PNG porters, a trekking guide and medic, who ensured our wellbeing both on the track and at camp where the porters would cook our meals and join us for evening singing and storytelling.



Footsteps

Our days on the track were simple, 5am wake up to pack and eat before sunrise to take advantage of the cooler mornings. Stopping during the day for morning tea and lunch which usually included taking boots off and getting wet gear out of our packs to dry while we enjoyed a quick snack. Reaching camp after around 10 hours walking, with enough time to set up our tents before dinner. This routine kept the team busy, and exhaustion quickly turned to choruses of snoring before we would awake to start it all again.

Along the track we visited numerous war memorials and battle fields which served as constant reminders of the ideals we had come to embrace. Courage, Endurance, Mateship and Sacrifice. Each of which affected us in different ways, sacrificing time with loved ones, building relationships with strangers while growing the mental hardness to keep moving and endure the hardships the track forced upon us.

Every day was different, all were difficult, but the team faced the challenge with positivity all the way to the end. The emotions felt crossing under the arches at Owens corner, were unparalleled in what really was, a once in a lifetime experience.

Simeon Oborn
Colac's Production Planner



35

Clive Sexton YEARS AT GILMORE



Clive Sexton first started at 15 years old as a casual stacking RSKD before becoming full time as the stacker-planer operator. He left to see if the grass was greener, but returned in 1988. Since then, he has worked on the Stacker in Tumut, Gilmore forklifts, leading hand, treatment stacker and currently Incisor operator.

Clive takes pride of the product he gets to assist in produce. Working with and getting to know a variety of people over the years, some of whom have become lifelong friends, has been highlight of his time at AKD.

Outside of work you can find him and wife Lorna bushwalking, cycling on rail trails on his e-bike, kayaking, fishing, camping and traveling in their new caravan.

Clive describes that a perfect day would be flyfishing in the middle of the Goobarragandra River in NSW.



Clive and wife Lorna

"Clive has been a part of my working life since I started here 29 years ago. When you greet Clive, you can expect one of his many positive responses, like when you ask him how are you today? Clive will say "Always a good day when you're in love", and at our toolbox meetings it's a "Have a nice day" as he gets up to leave the room. Congratulations and thank you for your 35 years' service Clive."

Matthew Hardwick
GILMORE MANAGER

"I have known Clive for the past 35 years. Starting back in the old softwood holding days at Tumut, Clive used to operate the wadkin planner back in the 80's. Then around 1993 Clive move out to Gilmore which during this time I have been Clive's coworker and direct supervisor at AKD for the past 20 years. During this period Clive competently filled varying roles from operating site machines to stacking timber, also training up new employees. In my role as supervisor, I have always found Clive to be a great team player and always prepared to do what has been asked of him."

Shane Barton - SUPERVISOR

"Clive asked me to go fishing with him down to the old Tumut bridge, and hanging over the edge he caught a fish and was reeling it up, when I got that excited, I ripped the rod out of his hands and started reeling it in. Then the trout dropped off and I realized what I had done, I looked at Clive and the blank stare and the little shrug said it all: He said I know you, you got excited."

Ian Blundell
CO-WORKER/
HIGH SCHOOL BUDDY

35

Steven Beaven

YEARS AT TUMUT

Tell us about your journey at AKD

I started on site on 26th August 1988. Since then I have been Hand Stacker, Planer Operator, Stress grader Operator, Finger Jointer Operator, Forklift Driver, Quality Control and Dry Mill Team leader currently.

What is your favourite part of your job?

What we call the yarn walk, when doing yard audit in the fillets or pack yards and we come up with plans to improve people processes.

The long-life friends I've made along the way, it's not a job more a like a comedy club at times with the people I work along side.

Leaving each day to go home and see my family. Knowing that I've completed the day with no harm myself or anyone els. Also assisting people to develop and grow in their roles.

What has been the highlight of your time at AKD?

Friends in general. There is just some unique characters you deal with on a day-to-day basis and Opex, I had a special connection with Tim Dalmau.

What's your least favourite food?

I eat just about anything, just ask the cook, except for vegemite - just can't stand the stuff!

How do you like to spend your time outside of work?

Nowadays just pottering around the garden and supporting the Sydney Roosters.

Describe your perfect day?

I do like to spend an afternoon at Bunnings. There is always something I "need" or think I "might need".

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Didn't want to grow up, some say I still haven't. I think everyone should be happy being themselves but to answer the question would have loved to play cricket for Australia.

What's something that recently made you smile?

Seeing my daughters grow up and be independently successfully.

What's something no-one would know about you?

I enjoy shopping.



"Steven is a wonderful caring family man as well as a great co-worker and leader, not every person in leadership has the ability that has earned the admiration and respect he has, he is approachable but direct, reassuring as required, empathetic to people's needs Always quick to lend a helping hand and share his thoughts, he is an excellent mentor to people in general regardless of their position within the organisation. Congratulations to Steven on his 35 years of service."

Raymond Lucas
DRY PROCESS MANAGER

"Great team member, willing to help out whenever needed, Beaver has a great working relationship and respect with all his fellow workers doesn't shy away from the difficult issues, is always there to lend a helping hand or give honest advice"

Jim Presser - KILN SUPERVISOR

"I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Beaver on this incredible achievement of reaching his 35-years service! I spent most of my days in the mill under Beaver's command and always found him to be not only a great leader but a great human being as well. Congratulations mate it has been a pleasure to work with you. 7 MORE YEARS!!"

Mark Johns
QUALITY & COMPLIANCE

30

Jo Foster YEARS AT COLAC



written by Neil Harris
Forestry

Jo Foster commenced with Victree in 1993, managing timber stocks and the weighbridge, before seeing the light and joining the Forestry team a couple of years later.

Her first role was Forestry Administration, accounting for log purchases for the mill and the various plantation harvesting activities. When AKD purchased the Victree Jo continued in a similar role whilst also taking on payroll duties, much to her delight.

People often laugh that Jo can tell them the exact date of when AKD purchased Victree, which was on the 12th of March 1999. This isn't because of her dedication to the business (not to say she isn't dedicated though!), but rather the fact that she married her husband Chris the very next day!

In 2004, Jo took on the newly introduced Log Quality Control program and she was instrumental in developing safety procedures for the log yards and bringing log suppliers and contractors into line - not an easy task! Jo also played a key role in implementing the company's Truck Overload Policy in 2006, being one of the first in the industry to have a formal program of monitoring and actions.

Jo took some time off work to start a family with her first son Jarrod coming along in 2006, followed by twins Brad and Kiara in 2008.

The pivotal moment of Jo's career came in 2010 when she came into my office and declared it was time to take the next step and obtain formal qualifications to advance her career in Forestry. Jo commenced studies at Southern Cross University and in 2015 completed a Graduate Diploma in Forest Science and Management.



Jo and husband Chris.



Jo's children Kiara, Jarrod and Brad.

"It has been a pleasure to have worked with Jo over so many years and to see the development in both technical and personal skills. Jo's attitude, culture and approach to people creates a great workplace environment, not just within the Forestry Team but company wide."

Neil Harris
FORESTRY PROJECTS

Jo was then promoted to Resources Forester. This role covered the full range of activities in the Forestry team at the time covering silviculture, harvesting and log supply.

In 2016 Jo accepted the role of Harvesting Manager, a role that she still retains today. Within a year, she was responsible for the implementation of the "STICKS" harvest production tracking system and the "Silvia" harvester cutting program, both of which have changed the landscape in harvesting planning, control and information gathering. Jo was also part of the working group negotiating with HVP on a new Code of Procedure to facilitate the transfer from manual sawlog measurement to scanner measurement.

Outside of work, Jo's focus and motivation is her family. Jo and her husband Chris, along with their three kids, love going camping and travelling together whenever they can. Jo also spends countless hours taking her kids to different sporting activities around the state as they

"I haven't known Jo for as long as others at AKD, but I feel like I have known Jo for ages. I think it's because Jo is accepting and a wonderful person to know and work with"

Simon Gatt
RESOURCE
MANAGER

are all exceptionally talented sports stars! In the little time available after that, Jo also enjoys gardening and farm duties. In a previous life (pre-children), Jo's passion was horses and was a fine exponent of the noble art of dressage, participating in events across Victoria, mainly with her favourite horse "Ollie".

With the Forestry team growing, Jo has been able to utilise her technical, practical, and personal skills she has developed with AKD, to manage and mentor and to pass that knowledge on to others. Jo was always my first response to take on the leadership responsibilities in my absence.

Jo is a prime example of someone, not just making the most of their opportunities, but actually creating opportunities for advancement, for personal and AKD benefit.

Congratulations and thank you Jo on your 30 amazing years with AKD!

30 Rodney Sutton YEARS AT TUMUT



I started in July 1992 (seriously doesn't seem 30 years ago), and I am a Wood Machinist by trade, completing my apprenticeship at IFP in Canberra, received apprentice of the year in 1984. I have worked across various roles at Tumut from Grinding room team leader, to shift leader, to forklift driver, planer operator, to my current role of EHSR Advisor.

During this time I have completed certificates in Training and Assessment and OHS, and training in Mental Health First Aid, Lead internal audit and ICAM investigation.

I love the variety at AKD - no two days are the same, specially when working with some real characters.

When asked what had been the highlight on my time at Tumut - my first response was 'making it to 30 years without being sacked'. But in all honesty, it's been witnessing all the improvements on site, not only around safety but environmentally as well, that's looking after our town for generations to come.

What's your least favourite food?

I'd have to say beetroot, its rubbish, because its purple.

How do you like to spend your time outside of work?

love all things outdoors, like camping, fishing, motorbike riding etc all that good stuff and most importantly spending quality time with my family.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I have had motorbikes since I was a kid, I wanted to be a motorbike mechanic as I loved working on them. I can remember Dad saying if it isn't broke don't fix it, in other words stop pulling things apart. As I got a bit older, I wanted to be a motorcycle cop riding around on a road bike all day would be a dream.

What's something that recently made you smile?

My wife reading the Yoda saying on Facebook, she ends up in tears.

If you could swap your life with someone else's, who would it be and why?

Wouldn't swap with anyone, but they say everyone needs a hero so if you ask me who mine is, I will have to say my wife. She has put up with me for 26 years of married bliss.

What's something no-one would know about you?

I used to have long blonde hair, yep and it was a mullet, my sister sent my photo into the footy show as a Peter Sterling look alike, that's my 2 mins of fame on the TV.

**editor note: we did try and find this photo but no success.*

"Sutto has been a member of the maintenance teams for many years. His trade background, site and industry knowledge has made him a valuable contributing member of the teams at both Tumut and Gilmore. He has shown an interest in the Environment and Asset Protection parts of the business and is a willing contributor in these important areas. I congratulate Sutto and his family for reaching this milestone achievement of 30 years"

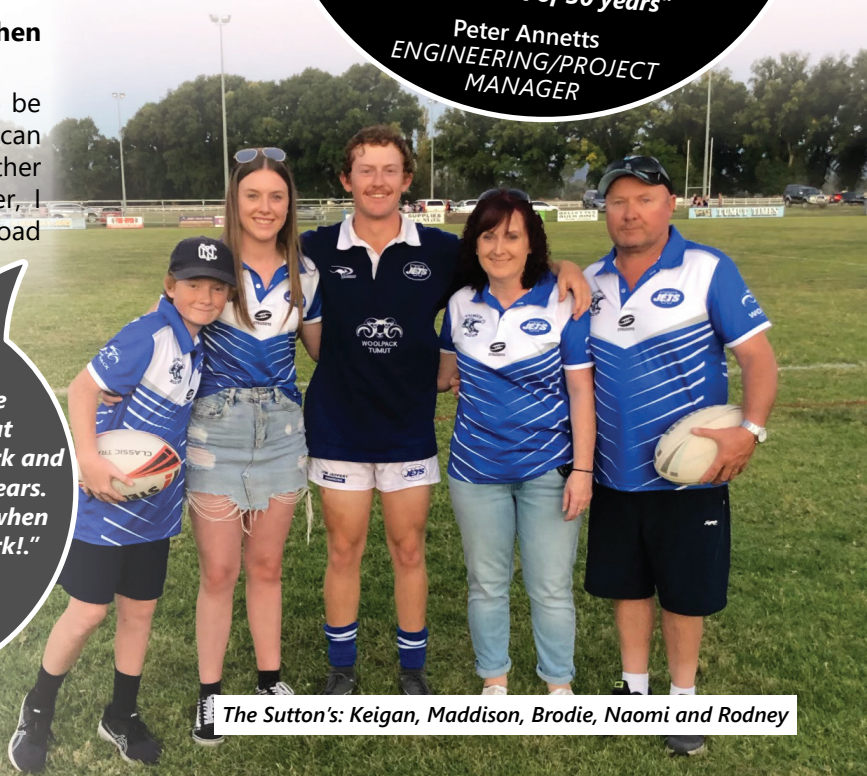
Peter Annetts
ENGINEERING/PROJECT
MANAGER

"Congrats Sutto on your 30-year service anniversary - a great achievement of hard work and dedication over these years. Well done! Time flies when you're doing great work!"

Janice McDonald
PAYROLL OFFICER

"Rod is very much a quite achiever in his EHSR Advisor role onsite. 30 years in the industry over multiple roles is a true milestone. Congratulations Rod."

Mick Caddis
EIC AND PROJECTS



The Sutton's: Keigan, Maddison, Brodie, Naomi and Rodney

15 Frazer Osborne YEARS AT COLAC



Tell us about your journey at AKD.

I started in 2008 at Irrewarra before moving to dayshift in the Colac Greenmill. I worked on the Stacker when packing out 50 packs for the shift was a 'big day' - now they push over 100 a shift. I also spent some time in the saw shop with 'Furr' and 'Snail' and got to learn a different aspect of milling.

It's thanks to working at AKD, that I've made a long-time friend with Des (Deson Belan) and ended up marrying his Niece.

I've seen a lot of changes at the stacker through my 15 years including the install of the new main line.

What's your least favourite food?

Seafood in general, cannot stand the smell of it.

How do you like to spend your time outside of work?

Spending time with family, I love playing guitar, listening to music and playing video games .

"Congratulation Fraze on your 15 years' service what a great milestone. You have great respect from your peers and your care and compassion shines brightly, Thanks for your reliability and commitment"

Justin Hickey - GREENMILL PRODUCTION MANAGER

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A pilot of commercial airlines.

If you could swap your life with someone else's, who would it be and why?

Elon Musk, For the cash \$\$\$

10 Dan Merch YEARS AT TUMUT



Tell us about your journey at AKD.

Started in August 2013 and have worked on the roles bins, QC, FLT and Stacker operator - Self proclaimed 'the best operator in the planer mill.'

What is your favorite part of your job?

Making new friends and having jokes with the olds that I get to work with.

What's your least favourite food?

Eggs - too eggy.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I always wanted to be a Sniper.

If you could swap your life with someone else's, who would it be and why?

Daniel Brandon Bilzerian an Armenian-American poker player, businessman, and social media influencer.

"I have known Daniel for 18 years and I have work with him for ten of them. He is a bit of hot head - eg. does not like getting beaten at any game, especially Texas hold'em.

Daniel is very very insanely passionate about Manly Rugby League and his golf"

Jason French - SHIFT SUPERVISOR

"Congratulation Daniel for past 10 years' service, certainly a valued member of the Dry mill team I have always appreciated you sharing your opinion on the world according to the Mech. Awesome work on your achievement Dan"

Raymond Lucas - DRY PROCESSING MANAGER

"I have known Daniel for approximately 10yrs, he is a passionate Manly supporter, plays union and a keen golfer. Whilst on golf, I think he wants to cut our friendship because he is sick of me taking money and beers off him after we play a round."

Lenny Felds - PLANER OPERATOR

10 Tom Emosi YEARS AT TUMUT



Tell us about your journey at AKD.

Started in 2013 and worked across strapper, stacker, PI, Bins Psaw and FLT.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Working and meeting new friends.

What's your least favourite food?

Vegemite don't like it.

Describe your perfect day?

Sitting on the beach with a couple of beers enjoying the sunset view.

If you could swap your life with someone else's, who would it be and why?

Richie McCaw. He is my favourite rugby player because he plays his heart out and leaves everything on the field.

What's something no-one would know about you?

I enjoy spear fishing.

"What can I say Tom Emosi 10yrs, the quiet man of the shift, Tom doesn't have to say much but the big smile lets you know it's all good. Congratulations on your 10yrs Tom, let's hope there are many more left in the tank!"

Steven Beaven - TEAM LEADER

"I have been friends with Tommy for over 10 years. We played rugby together and I have even coached him. He is the easiest person to get along with because he doesn't say much, with made coaching a hell of a lot easier LOL"

Daniel Mech - MILL HAND

"Well done Tom on being an important and active member of the team for past 10 years, a real quiet achiever of the crew doing everything with smile. Congratulation mate"

Raymond Lucas - DRY PROCESSING MANAGER

10 Martin Rees YEARS AT SALES NSW

I joined in 2013 as a Key Account Manager based in the NSW Central Coast office and over the years have looked after a wide portfolio of accounts. I like to think of myself as the quiet achiever who doesn't actively seek out recognition but just gets on with it, asking questions where necessary and usually having a relevant opinion on issues.

Born and bred in Wales, I came to live in Australia 17 years ago, my wife is a native of Sydney's Northern Beaches, and after the world went mad in 2008 (otherwise known as the GFC) we decided to make this country our home.

We live on the Central Coast with my wife of 24 years Amanda, our young adult daughters Rhiannon and Lowri, who occasionally live with us whilst not travelling or at Uni, and our two insane Labradors.

Being Welsh I will support them playing anything and any team that is playing against England. I'm a massive Liverpool FC, Manly Warringah Sea Eagles and Central Coast Mariners fan. I like to spend time with the family, exploring the country in the caravan, cooking, beach and bush walks, still play football / soccer, cricket umpire and coach (playing days are long gone), and attempt to do CrossFit. When time allows, I do enjoy the odd craft beer or cab sav!



"Martin's passion for all things sports flows through strongly in his work life. In the NSW team Martin is a great all rounder and has developed strong skills to cover most spots on the field when needed. An "odd craft beer" is probably understated verse his Welsh heritage."

Matt Taylor - NSW SALES MANAGER

10 Lee Midgley YEARS AT CABOOLTURE

written by Nathan Calder

QLD Sales Manager

Congratulations to Lee on his 10-year milestone. Outside of work, Lee has many passions but is currently fascinated by the limitless potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and online AI functions. So, we thought we would give AI a crack at writing Lee's service recognition:

"In the dynamic world of timber sales, Lee orchestrates symphonies of success with every client interaction. With a decade of industry experience serving AKD, he's not just a Timber Account Sales Manager; he's a trailblazer, setting new benchmarks and fostering unbreakable customer relationships.

Lee's innate ability to understand clients' needs and deliver solutions with pinpoint precision has propelled him to a league of his own. The echo of his successes resounds in the high notes of his timber sales, an orchestra of achievements that dance to the rhythm of his expertise.

10 years in the industry is a testament to Lee's unwavering commitment to excellence. He's not merely grown timber accounts; he's cultivated partnerships, nurturing growth and prosperity at every turn.

Beyond the boardroom, Lee's zest for life is a beacon of inspiration. Off the clock, he steps onto the rugby league field as a coach, infusing his team with the same motivation that fuels his professional triumphs. His family and the thrill of motorbikes and boats form the backdrop of a life richly lived.

But what truly sets Lee apart is his unshakable confidence and boundless positivity. In a role that demands resilience, he not only stays confident but thrives. His secret? A contagious passion for his craft, an unyielding motivation that fuels his every endeavour, and an unbreakable spirit that radiates happiness even in the face of challenges.

His journey is a living testament to the power of dedication, authenticity, and an indomitable spirit. So, let the symphony of success continue, as Lee conducts the orchestra of his illustrious 10-year journey, leaving a legacy of excellence and motivation in his wake."

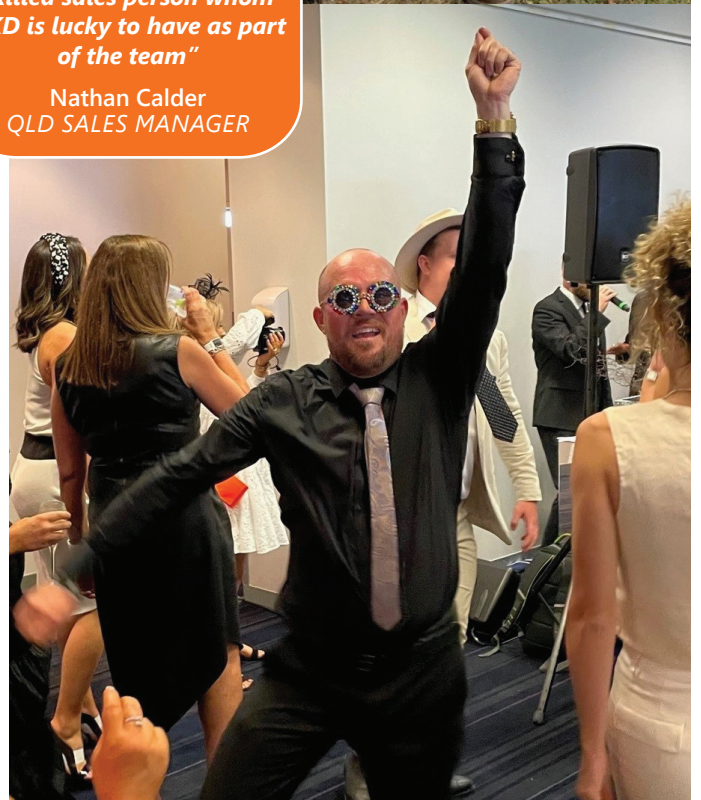
Not bad! Not sure about the orchestrating though, those of you who know Lee will appreciate he prefers to be on the dance floor rather than conducting.

In all seriousness, Lee is a leader and valued member of the sales team who has made a significant contribution to the success and culture of AKD. Lee has built a strong network of relationships in the market which allows him to work at pace in an often-dynamic market.



"Lee has an infectious and bubbly personality and is a skilled sales person whom AKD is lucky to have as part of the team"

Nathan Calder
QLD SALES MANAGER





AKD welcomed these new employees in July-August and encourages everyone to make them feel welcome and work together to keep them safe.



AIDAN THOMAS
PLANER MILL
TUMUT



ALEXANDER WALLACE
DRY MILL
COLAC



ANDREW SHARROCK
POST & PEELER
PORTLAND



BARRY MARTIN
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



BARRY MOORE
DRYMILL
PORTLAND



CHRISTOPHER FLETCHER
LOG - CABOOLTURE



CIARA WINTON
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



DEAN HILLMAN
DRYMILL
COLAC



DECLAN BOULTON
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



DECLAN MULHALL
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE



DYLAN CHISTIAKOFF
SUPPLY CHAIN
CABOOLTURE



GREGORY RUSSELL
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE



HARAM KWON
DRYMILL
COLAC



HEMI HIKU
DRYMILL
COLAC



JARMAN PAGET
POST & PEELER
PORTLAND



JORDAN BOUSFIELD
PLANER MILL
TUMUT



JOSEPH HORVATH
DRYMILL
COLAC



KATTIE HUGHES
DRYMILL
COLAC



KLAY GOLDSWORTHY
DRYMILL
COLAC



KYAH DRISCOLL
MAINTENANCE
TUMUT



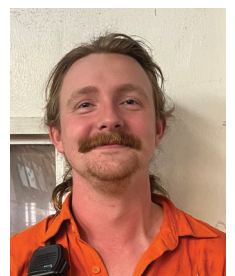
MICHAEL ELOVARIS
DRYMILL
COLAC



NATHAN BEAUMONT
POST & PEELER
PORTLAND



NEIL ZUIDEMA
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE



NIKITA CHOPPIN
MAINTENANCE
CABOOLTURE

Welcome to
the **TEAM**

CONTINUED...

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



OASIS TAPARA
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



PETER SYKES
DRYMILL
YARRAM



PHILLIP JONES
GREENMILL
TUMUT



RACHAEL WOOD
GREENMILL
CABOOLTURE



SAM CHISHOLM
GREENMILL
YARRAM



SAMANTHA DALE
GREENMILL
YARRAM



SARAH ADAMS
INHOUSE COUNSEL
NATIONAL



TARA VALERIUS
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



TYISON WILLIAMSON
DRYMILL
COLAC



WESLEY MCMILAN
DRYMILL
CABOOLTURE



ZOE MARTIN
DRYMILL
COLAC

NAME	YRS	DEPT.	SITE
Clive Sexton	35	TREATMENT	GIL
Steven Beaven	35	DRYMILL	TUM
Tony Watts	35	GREENMILL	CAB
Jo Foster	30	FORESTRY	COL
Phillip Creevey	30	TREATMENT	CAB
Rodney Sutton	30	SAFETY	TUM
Frazer Osborne	15	GREENMILL	COL
Neil Mitchell	15	MAINTENANCE	TUM
Daniel Mech	10	DRYMILL	TUM
Lee Midgley	10	SALES	CAB
Tomasi Emosi	10	DRYMILL	TUM
Wesley Wombwell	10	MAINTENANCE	PPP
Alexander Pryor	5	LOG	YAR
Benjamin Grimshaw	5	LOG	CAB
Caleb Lucas	5	KILN	TUM
Christ Luscombe	5	MAINTENANCE	CAB
David Barnes	5	KILN	CAB
David Speirs	5	MAINTENANCE	COL
Joel McInnes	5	MAINTENANCE	COL
Matthew May	5	TREATMENT	PPP
Rosanne Mollenhagen	5	FINANCE	CAB
Ross Meulman	5	MAINTENANCE	COL
Thomas Leishman	5	ELECTRICAL	COL

Connect with us
on social media



Welcome to
the **TEAM**

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL AKD FAMILIES
AND THEIR NEW BUNDLES OF JOY!

To celebrate these special moments with us,
please reach out to your Splinter Representative.

B A B I E S



Max Mackay Piper

Born: 23/03/23 Parents: Mitch and Mikayla
Time: 10:57am
Weight: 3.97kg Site: Tumut
Brother for Halle Dept: Maintenance



Ronnie Annie Greenhalgh

Born: 14/04/23 Parents: Mitch and Chloe
Time: 10:57am Site: Tumut
Weight: 8lb 3oz Site: Tumut
Long: 51cm Dept: Maintenance
A sister for Colt, Millie and Lyra.



Lincoln Billy Kelvin West

Born: 07/08/23 Parents: Billy and Mikayla
Time: 1:24pm Site: Portland Pine
Weight: 3.31kg Dept: Loader Driver
Height: 50cm



Axel Charles Blundell

Born: 08/08/23 Parents: Aaron and Jess
Time: 4:59am Site: Gilmore
Weight: 3.16kg
Height: 48.5cm



AKD Paid Parental Leave Policy

AKD Paid Parental Leave Policy was created to support your family during this important life event. We recognise the importance of taking leave to care for your newborn and creating the balance between work and family life. Speak to your Site HR Manager for further details.

The Wrap-up



In New Zealand on most rugby fields in most towns mid-week you will find twilight social "touch rugby" competitions with work teams, family groups and mates playing together. A lot of fun, serious banter with mixed teams, purely social teams, and hard-core elite serious teams. One of the teams I used to play for was sponsored by a local company and our shirts had their "tagline" on our shirts. **"Be Staunch, Walk Tall"**.

I used to think it just meant be proud, but I found the old T shirt the other day and thinking about it, it is so much more than that. If I break it down "Be Staunch" is about being loyal, being committed in attitude and a definition is "to have or be of a strong or firm construction". Even the word "Be", is a word of action, make a decision, "Be Staunch", choose to be loyal, choose to be committed, choose to be firm.

Then there is "Walk Tall", which I think is clearly to walk or behave in a way that shows you feel proud and confident. So put this back together, "Be Staunch, Walk Tall" really means "choose to be loyal, committed, and resolute and then behave in a way that shows confidence and pride.

That's a fantastic ambition for us at AKD, how I would love for all of our people to think, feel and behave in this way about our business and about our team.

So I have had the joy of working with people that exhibit this behaviour. There is a tree species called a "Kauri", usually recognised as one of the giants of the Forest. Neil Harris is one of those individuals who has demonstrated a "Be Staunch, Walk Tall" value set and in my mind is one of the Kauris of our business, who we are saying farewell to as he retires.

Neil and Sue Harris are moving into retirement, and I would like to take a moment to recognise Neil's significant contribution to AKD, there is a great article inside the Splinter that goes into much greater detail. AKD today has a 12,000-hectare plantation estate which I believe was closer to 2000 hectares when Neil began in the 90s. Neil has also been at the forefront of many log negotiations through many years, providing the log agreements that not only supplied our ongoing business but supported our growth.

However, my thoughts about Neil are more than what his role was or what he did, it is the way he conducted himself that will stick with me. Neil is a person of principles who was "staunch and walked tall".

Neil leaves behind a legacy that he also grew in conjunction with others, but it's not just trees but also careers he grew. Sue also provided technical Forestry support to AKD over many years. thank you, Sue. I want to wish Neil and Sue all the best in their retirement. I still have Neil's phone number and email address and he only lives 30 mins away from Colac, so I am sure he will be back for a sneaky project or two (Sorry Sue!!).

One of the careers that Neil influenced is Jo Foster who has also just completed 30 years at AKD. Jo is our Harvesting Manager in the Forestry Team and is also our current leader of the "Gender Diversity Committee". Jo is one of our key leaders in our organisation who has continued to challenge herself by owning and pursuing her development opportunities, taking on additional responsibilities, completing her degree, working full time at the same time as being a mum of a young family. Jo is another one of our Kauris, is staunch and walks tall.

I would also like to recognise and congratulate Steven Beaven from Tumut and Clive Sexton, from Gilmore, on their 35 years

of service. Two absolute gentlemen who are committed to their families but who are also loyal and committed to their AKD teams. Their dedication and positive attitudes clearly make their work environment more enjoyable for everyone around them. They have both contributed to keeping their teammates safe. A couple of Kauris there, who are both staunch and walk tall. Thank you for your continued service, guys!

Rodney Sutton has also just completed 30 years, the quiet achiever, the proud family man loyal to the Tumut community and to the Tumut team. I can recall quizzing Rab about the various Tumut leaders 4-5 years ago, and how much Rab appreciated Rod's focus and determination on employee wellbeing and safety. When you go to Tumut, as I did recently with three shareholder groups who were impressed if not "blown away" by the team culture, the team ethos, and the focus on safety. Rod like many of the Tumut team have every right to be staunch and walk tall for what you do and what you have collectively achieved.

Ross Maw another great example of a person in our business who is a staunch, loyal, hardworking, and committed employee. The pride Ross shows in his truck and trailer, for his family and the respectful way he treats other people makes Ross a Kauri. Ross in this edition of the Splinter is recognised for a Driver Salute Award from the Victorian Transport Association, and it is fantastic that he gets the recognition externally for what we also see internally.

In the past two weeks, Ben Baily has talked to me about Ross' hard work, working away from home for six weeks helping us move product from Jelfor to Morwell with a real positive can do attitude. Unprompted Tony Peluso (owner of City Timber) one of our key customers told me last week about how good a job Ross does representing our business and how City Timber "Forkies" absolutely love Ross, the gentlemen truck driver. Finally, Rachel Scilley talked about Ross and his conscientious approach to his responsibilities his integrity and care for others and pride for his trucks. Ross being staunch and walking tall.

As per those important words "it's not what you say but how you make people feel that is remembered" At AKD we have such a great collection of people, our team who are committed and who contribute so much to make us a better company. After reading this edition of the Splinter I wanted to recognise and celebrate the fantastic people who work here and thank you. I find myself feeling that I can "Be Staunch and Walk Tall" as I am so proud to work for AKD with all these amazing people, our Kauris.

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well. As to the last words on the last page. Be a Kauri, be staunch, walk tall, and remember your safety matters.

Kia Koha

Shane Vicary
CEO

