

Bell TLBs rock for Bellrock Construction

A solid working knowledge of soil, timber harvesting and plant hire, has enabled a Mooi River businessman to find a niche market in this picturesque part of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands.

Neill Veenstra hails from farming stock in the area. His father, Linze had farmed dairy and potatoes and for a while Neill did the same on the family farm. The urge to be independent saw him doing sub-contracting in the silviculture division of a major multinational forestry and paper group, which was followed by some timber harvesting, transport and plant hire within the forestry industry.

"I would at times buy a whole block of timber, harvest it and sell it on," Neill says. "Understanding the industry stood me in good stead later on when I started doing bush-clearing and deforestation for the right of way of the new NMPP fuel pipeline being built between Durban and the Reef."

As a result of his experience gained as a sub-contractor, Neill and his small company were soon doing small civil construction tasks as well and his company, Bellrock Construction, established itself as a serious player in bush-clearing, civil construction and plant hire in the Mooi River and Rosetta area.

Neill Veenstra (left) with Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Ralph Wortmann.



Asked where the company's name of Bellrock stems from he explains: "While working on the NMPP pipeline project one day, I stood watching a Bell Excavator load big rocks onto Bell Articulated Dump Trucks," he smiles. "It suddenly struck me then that Bell machines and rocks go well together and thus a name for my company was born."

Although Neill had, over the years, hired in various bits of earthmoving equipment for projects that he undertook, the year 2011 stands out as that was when he bought his first Bell 315SJ 4x4 Tractor Loader Backhoe (TLB). With some assistance from Bell Finance, this versatile workhorse was delivered to him in April 2011.

"I had always liked the look and feel of machines made by Bell Equipment so my choice of TLB was an easy one," he says. "Coupled to the fact that Ralph Wortmann, the Bell Equipment Sales Representative from Pietermaritzburg walked the extra mile to make the deal happen and the assurance of solid backup service nearby, you can see why I bought a second similar machine a mere few months after the first one."

According to Neill, his two Bell 315SJ TLBs have been in big demand in the area. His clients range from those involved in low-cost housing, laying fibre-optic cables and even the construction of a large dam at neighbouring Rosetta.

"I'm the first to admit that we've been lucky in the high demand for our machines," Neill adds. "The Springrove Dam that is currently being built on the Little Mooi River has a long construction period and our machines have been kept very busy there as well."

Fitted with standard buckets, Bellrock's Bell TLBs are hired out on dry rates but with their own operators. High mechanical availabilities and frugal fuel burn of around 8 litres per hour are factors that Neill believes add to their demand. The machines also compliment his fleet of three 10-cubic metre tipper trucks.

"You can see by the hours that our Bell TLBs have clocked up in their first year of operation that they work hard but thanks to Bell Equipment's servicing throughout the warranty periods, these powerful machines are keeping our clients and me very happy," Neill says. "If I had my way, I'd buy ten more right now and I'm sure I could keep them all busy - such is the demand for reliable plant delivering maximum uptime such as these machines are."

Neill's says his next piece of earthmoving equipment will probably be an excavator and for this he will again look to Bell Equipment. "Ask me why and I'll tell you, Bell rocks," he says.

