

WA Bishop Transport thrilled with longevity and performance of Bell fleet

A sand supplier based in the picturesque town of Hermanus on the Western Cape's southern coast thought he had a sound machine replacement policy in place when his Bell L1204C Wheeled Loader reached ten thousand hours but then no one had told the machine that, and it just keeps going...and going and going.

And with this type of longevity, it comes as no surprise that this well-established family business has again turned to Bell Equipment to add to its earthmoving fleet.

WA Bishop Transport (Pty) Ltd has been around since William Arthur Bishop, the grandfather of the current Managing Director, Wiaan Bishop, started a transport business with an ox wagon, hauling milk and timber. "My grandfather brought the first commercial truck into the Voëlkop area in 1964, which is a neighbouring area to Hermanus," says Wiaan. "He progressed to selling and transporting sand for the local building industry and by 1982, asked my father, Jimmy, to leave the teaching profession and join him in the business. His older

brother, Allan, was also involved for a short period but was well qualified in accounting and moved to Paarl for a career change."

The father and son team also started a quarry at Afdakrivier, which lies between Hawston and Fishershaven. This operation has stood them in good stead as besides sand, the company supplies stone and aggregates from 14mm to 20mm as well as fill material obtained from demolitions.

"Hermanus is no longer the quiet seaside village it had been while I was growing up," Wiaan explains. "It still draws holidaymakers and is quite famous for its whale sightings but, during the

December peak season, holidaymakers shop with their eyes, identifying plots of land that they then buy with the aim of building homes and that's where we've added another set of services to our offerings."

According to Wiaan, they are called on to level land, dig foundations for new homes and services, do excavations for swimming pools and French drains and supply fill material and topsoil for new and existing gardens.

"Fortunately, we have the right equipment to undertake these tasks as my dad had first bought a new Bell L1204C Wheeled Loader back in the year 2000," he says. "Our machines average about 1 000 hours a year and this Bell L1204C has now just hit 19 000 hours and is still used every day."

WA Bishop Transport currently runs two Bell L1204Cs and one Bell L1204D, with the latter now having delivered 13 500 trouble-free hours. Sand is brought from the sand mine into the company's premises in the Hermanus industrial area and screened and stockpiled before being loaded onto trucks using the Bell Wheeled Loaders. Deliveries take place within a 60km radius from Hermanus and include Gansbaai, Pearly Beach and Betty's Bay.

"From around 2007, Hermanus underwent rapid development with especially secure housing complexes and retirement villages springing up and in 2008, my dad Jimmy bought our first Bell 315SJ Tractor Loader Backhoe (TLB) to serve this development and downstream construction market. I know he chose a Bell TLB on the strength

of the performance and longevity of our Bell Wheeled Loaders," Wiaan says. "We've seen rapid development of the Voëlkop area where older houses are demolished to be replaced by new multi-million Rand homes and our Bell TLBs are kept very busy levelling platforms, digging foundations, trenches and backfilling."

"Another reason for choosing a Bell TLB was that we saw many similar machines in the area, and that's always a sure sign of a good product, coupled with favourable comments from fellow owners regarding machine performance, availability and technical backup from the original equipment manufacturer."

WA Bishop Transport took delivery of a new Bell 315SL TLB in October 2019 and this machine is already proving popular on a limited plant hire basis. It was bought with a 12-month unlimited hours warranty and is returning average fuel consumption figures of between six and eight litres per hour.

"We decided not to trade in our older Bell machines as they are still running well and are handy to have as extra machines in times when there is pressure on our material supply and plant hire," Wiaan adds. "Our three Bell TLBs are by far our hardest working machines and are providing us with good income. We rely on Bell Equipment Cape Town for all our servicing and being able to speak directly to Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Clifton Roberts, and Product Support Representative, Ian Marais, is a real bonus as they understand our business and try to minimize any downtime on our machines."



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Clifton Roberts (left) with MD of Bishop Sand & Klip, Wiaan Bishop.