

# B40Es are the best choice for BB Transport

**The current boom in the coal mining industry has seen established coal mining companies extend the lives of their existing mines in somewhat innovative ways, often turning old underground works into opencast operations.**

To do this safely they need experienced contractors who appreciate this sometimes hazardous environment and one such contractor is steadily earning a reputation for completing projects on time and on budget.

BB Transport is headquartered in Emalahleni but it wasn't always so. The company had started life as a furniture removals business in KwaZulu-Natal's Glencoe region in 1970 and was founded by the Munro family. This energetic family soon ventured into civil construction, bulk earthworks and quarrying and from there specialised in rehabilitating coal mine discard dumps during mine closures all over northern KwaZulu-Natal, until that work dried up.

"In 2005 the Munro family landed its first contract in the Mpumalanga coalfields when they were tasked with the rehabilitation of old dumps," says Gerbrandt Alberts, BB Transport's Managing Director. "These old coal discard dumps get shaped according to a strict design and, once they are covered in lime and topsoil, grass is planted with the aim of incorporating the dump into the existing topography."

The Munro family's representation now extends to the third generation with Operations Director Alex Munro Jnr, a qualified civil engineer, working with fellow directors, Gerhard Munro (Mechanical), Colly Meintjes (Financial) and Ntombi Mazubane (Non-Executive). Ntombi is a qualified mining engineer.

"By the time I got to know the founders and later generations of this company, BB Transport, in 2006 they had forged themselves into a solid unit with a growing reputation in the Mpumalanga coalfields of integrity and dependable delivery and I was proud to join them," Gerbrandt adds. "It was also around this time that we first bought haulage machines from Bell Equipment when we took delivery of two new Bell B25D Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs) with tailgates that we used for cleaning slurry dams and containing spills before they could damage the environment."

According to Gerbrandt, they chose Bell B25D ADTs for their robust design and build, facts which have fully justified their competitive purchase price with each ADT now boasting around 20 000 hours of service while still in daily use.

"Our field of expertise has placed us in somewhat of a niche market but to maintain that special place we rely heavily on our vast fleet of yellow machines, which includes excavators from 20 to 120 tons, ADTs, wheeled loaders, dozers, graders, rollers and water carts," Gerbrandt explains. "With our current contract for one of the largest coal mining companies, we've been tasked with rehabilitating areas where potential sinkholes could occur due to former underground board and pillar mining methods."



Gerbrandt explains that this type of operation demands that many cubic metres of topsoil be stripped, hauled and live-placed according to specific procedures before treating sinkholes and stabilising areas where sinkholes could form. This is also necessary because of the underground conditions which apply everywhere that new infrastructure is planned to be constructed to extend the life of the mine.

"When we landed this current contract in 2018, we knew it was time to invest in and deploy new haulage trucks and after receiving very positive pricing from Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Carel Venter, we felt more than confident in buying four new Bell B40E ADTs. We also knew that due to the speed with which our clients wanted the work completed, we'd be relying heavily on

high utilisation from these new Bell B40E ADTs and we have not been disappointed. Despite some minor technical glitches that were quickly fixed by Bell Equipment, we've enjoyed sustained production from these known workhorses in the Bell stable."

"Unlike most other contracts, here we operate on wet rates and I can say that we've been very impressed by the fuel burn of between 15 and 16 litres of diesel per hour by the Bell B40E ADTs," he enthuses. "Besides the sinkhole rehabilitation, we also construct haul roads, strip and place topsoil, truck and shovel the pre-strip as well as assisting with creating a new box cut. Our Bell B40E ADTs run with large heaped loads of topsoil which is often wet, making this frugal fuel burn all the more pleasing."

BB Transport's fleet of Bell ADTs are serviced by trained personnel from the Bell Equipment Customer Service Centre in Middelburg while under warranty. According to Gerbrandt, Bell Equipment's wide footprint adds to his company's confidence in the marque and spares availability and quick response times makes for a standout feature in dealing with the OEM.

"Coal is such an important commodity right now in terms of both its domestic use as well as earning our country valuable foreign currency when exported. When we consider that we're playing a part in extending the production capabilities of our clients, we're proud to do that, although we rely heavily on earthmoving equipment that delivers as our new Bell B40E ADTs do."

**"...we felt more than confident in buying four new Bell B40E ADTs."**

*Gerhard Munro*



**On site are (from left): Alex Munro (Operations Director), Ntombi Mazubane (Non-Executive Director), Gerbrandt Alberts (Managing Director), Gerhard Munro Snr (Mechanical Director) and Gerhard Munro Jnr (Project Foreman).**