



Newly appointed M & F Tractor Parts sells its first JCB

The everlasting value of learning at a father's knee, even in the case of selling tractor and implement parts, has held true for Bryan Taylor, owner of M & F Tractor Parts in Marburg, Port Shepstone's light industrial area on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast.

M & F Tractor Parts is a newly appointed dealer for Bell Equipment Forestry & Agriculture and JCB Agriculture and the excitement this has caused for this energetic entrepreneur is palpable as he recalls his life story thus far.

"I was born in Zambia where my dad, Keith, had worked for Massey Ferguson after qualifying as a mechanic in the United Kingdom where he and my mom hail from. My parents spent 16 years in Zambia and we moved to South Africa in the 1980s so that my brother and I could attend St. Andrews College in Grahamstown."

Keith Taylor had been transferred to Bizana in the Transkei where he ran a workshop fixing agricultural equipment. It was here that Bryan

started work after finishing school in 1996 and some two years later felt the urge to be self-employed.

"I told my parents that I wanted to run my own business and with their support, I started a small spares shop in Port Shepstone selling tractor and implement parts, which I was by now familiar with," Bryan tells us. "But those were tough years, and I can respectfully say to try and break the habits of farmers who had been buying spares from one place for years, is a tough nut to crack, but I hung in there."

Bryan says his business, named M & F Tractor Parts, grew slowly but steadily and when he moved to larger premises the business next door to his happened to be one selling agricultural

'knapsacks', the common term for back-mounted and hand-operated spray tanks used for spraying herbicides and pesticides.

"Being next door to the knapsack business suddenly produced more foot traffic into our business and we grew exponentially from there," Bryan says. "When the owner of the knapsack business retired we bought him out and still service, repair and sell new knapsack sprayers that we import from Brazil and Thailand. It's been a profitable venture for us."

In 2009, Bryan became a dealer for the Italian tractor brand, Landini, which he still is to this day. Along with that came the opportunity to sell and service agricultural mulchers and sprayers, the latter which he now designs and builds himself with the best components sourced locally and internationally. M & F Tractor Parts can custom-design and build a sprayer to fit the exact needs of a farmer rather than the farmer having to adjust his spray regimes to that of the implement.

"We service a wide community of farmers up to around 100km to the south, west and north of us, and we would have gone east had it not been for the Indian Ocean being in the way," Bryan says with

a chuckle. "We have three fulltime mechanics and also make use of two freelance mechanics for a lot of our field servicing and the latter have served us well for over 20 years with a good understanding of mutual loyalty that benefits our customers in the end."

M & F Tractor parts boasts 14 people in its workshop and another six working in the comprehensive parts department and administration.

We asked Bryan about his feelings and expectations now that his business is an official dealer for Bell Equipment Forestry & Agriculture and JCB Agriculture: "I can tell you that while we're over the moon about the appointment, we also realise that this is a huge opportunity for us which comes with a big responsibility representing strong brands like Bell and JCB. Then too, most farmers in our area who plant cane have Bell 125 Cane Loaders and we're confident that they will want to get

their consumable spares and service kits from us, which will mean that we should be well stocked and have our mechanics up to speed on training."

Knowing his local customer-base well by now and taking the initiative, Bryan had ordered a JCB 3DX Pro Backhoe Loader to have as a machine on display, but no sooner had it arrived when one of his loyal customers, local farmer Quentin Elliott, snapped it up with the favourable financial deal that JCB and the ABSA banking group offered, and M & F Tractor Parts had its first sale of a JCB machine in the bag.

"Quentin had an older, similar JCB Backhoe Loader that he had sold out of hand, and he was overjoyed at the joystick controls of the new machine, which he said was similar to those of an excavator he had on his macadamia farm," Bryan tells. "The JCB 3DX Pro with its 6-in-1 bucket will no doubt be used for

loading the nut husks into trucks and for a variety of other tasks that always seem to need prioritising on any farm.

"We're also keen to get a JCB 530-70 Loadall or similar as a demonstration machine for our local farmers and we believe that when the macadamia price stabilises, we'll get more enquiries about such equipment and its many uses," Bryan adds.

Bryan is ably assisted by Rory Elim and his Chief Mechanic, Johan Basson, who has had training on earthmoving equipment, and both are equally excited at the prospect learning about and servicing the yellow metal machines.

In future developments, Bryan's son, Declan, will be joining the business to get his trade and hopefully continue to grow the business.



Bryan Taylor, owner of M & F Tractor Parts in Port Shepstone.

