

# Gqeberha plant hire company updates fleet with six new JCB 3CX Global Backhoes

When Pieter Rademeyer does things, it's never by half measures, and the year 1976 was a huge one for this former loose-forward who played Currie Cup rugby for Eastern Province. In that tumultuous year, after qualifying as a plumber, he started his own business and topped it all by marrying his high school sweetheart, Betsie, who was a teacher at that time before joining the business and is still at his side.

"Soon after qualifying as a plumber in Port Elizabeth (now Gqeberha), I realised there were real opportunities for larger volume plumbing work in the housing and townhouse construction markets. I landed my first big project of 1 800 toilet structures, which was followed up by another large one. This was the beginning of the plant hire business as there was a shortage of machines for hire and we decided to buy our first machine. The urge to enter the construction world had also taken hold of me and I started planning to do that next."

The townhouse boom of the 1980s was in full swing and Pieter initially built a small complex of seven units and named it Pieter Park after his one son, Pieter.

The next complex was 60 units, which he named Karilze after his two daughters, Karien and Ilze. The following 60 units were called Jabeth, named after his other son, Jaco, and his wife, Betsie. Thereafter 30 units were built on an old nursery he had bought and were named Radé after the family name.

"We had now grown to develop and built a retail centre on the site where I had grown up and soon embarked on developing and building warehouses and office space that we rent out. I found my niche when we embarked on developing and building 'life rights' retirement villages. We are presently busy with our fourth retirement village."





**Bell Equipment Gqeberha Branch Manager, Gert Nelson (left), with Managing Director of the Pieter Rademeyer Group, Pieter Rademeyer.**

By the 2000s, the Pieter Rademeyer Group as a brand name was firmly established and had evolved into four divisions namely: Pieter Rademeyer Plumbers, Pieter Rademeyer Developers, Pieter Rademeyer Ensure and Pieter Rademeyer Plant Hire. The Plant Hire division experienced a watershed year in 2014 when it changed its chosen brand of backhoe loader buying 14 JCB 3CX Eco machines.

"I had been convinced to try out the JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders and our Plant Manager, Gerrie du Preez, was very impressed with the durable design and build of these machines that proved their mettle to both our construction teams on internal plant hire and the broader public on conventional plant hire," Pieter says.

Pieter Rademeyer Plant Hire's JCB 3CX Eco Backhoe Loaders are rented out as far as Kirkwood, Hankey, Jeffreys Bay and surrounding areas and are used extensively on internal hire to the Development division's construction teams. Of the 14 bought in 2014, only two have remained with the balance having been sold out of hand as they are highly sought after on the pre-owned market.

"We were very pleased to hear that a strong South African company like Bell Equipment had been appointed as the local distributor for the JCB brand and in March 2023, we contacted Tom Swartz, the Bell Equipment Sales Representative, to talk about replacement machines for our fleet," Pieter says. "Bell Equipment's special offer through a local bank [ABSA JCB Finance] was also enticing."

Six JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders were delivered in April 2023 and Pieter expands on the deal saying that all six machines were bought with extended warranties to 36 months or 6 000 hours on the wet drive-train due mainly to the fact that the machines are trammed between sites. Two of the JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders have got forks attached and two others have been piped for attaching hydraulic hammers on their booms should that be required.

"We got to see some of the newer JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders working on different sites, from digging trenches, breaking concrete, loading trucks, and clearing plots."

"We receive great service from Gert Nelson and his team of mechanics and those in the parts division at Bell Equipment in Gqeberha," Pieter says. "Their response times are good, and parts availability is never a problem."

Bell Equipment has undertaken to rebrand some of Pieter Rademeyer Plant Hire's vehicles to display the Bell and JCB brand names as well as proudly display the company's advertising slogan of "Follow the leader in TLB hire". The latter should be easy to do as the Pieter Rademeyer Group certainly knows how to lead in the sincerest manner.

