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BULLETIN - VOLUME 2 - 2024

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Dear Customers

These first eight months at the helm of Bell Equipment have been exceptionally busy as I've travelled extensively to connect with as many of our various operations as possible, including several Bell South Africa branches and, most importantly, our customers.

These visits have reinforced what I've always believed: our strength lies in the relationships we build and the trust we earn from those we serve. With this in mind, there is a focus on building our Bell relationships stronger by re-instilling our core values of honesty, integrity, respect, and unity. I have challenged our Bell Team to step up, contribute to a positive customer

experience, and operate with a sense of urgency because you, our customers, are the reason we exist, and we have a collective responsibility to ensure we exceed your expectations.

While the unprecedented demand of the past two years has started to normalise, we are excited by the growth opportunities ahead. The easing of global supply chains has improved product availability, which means we are better positioned to meet customer demands with efficiency and reliability.

Some of the highlights this year have been the launch of new and innovative products. The introduction of the new JCB 3CX Backhoe Loader has been met with enthusiasm, and we're equally thrilled about the Motor Grader, currently in the pre-production phase at our factory in Richards Bay, which is set to launch in 2025. These developments, alongside our Bell Equipment Trusted Alternative (BETA) Parts offering, underscore our commitment to providing comprehensive solutions that cater to every customer need.

In South Africa, we've witnessed a significant moment in our nation's history with the elections and the formation of the Government of National Unity. While cautious to express political views, we are optimistic that these developments will lead to meaningful changes that benefit our country, our economy and our people.

Looking ahead, I am filled with optimism. We are building on a solid foundation laid down over seven decades, and with the continued support of our dedicated team and you, our loyal customers, I am confident that we will continue to grow and thrive.

Here's to building an even stronger future together.


Ashley Bell
Group Chief Executive

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COVER PICTURE:

When engineering contracts dried up during the COVID-19 pandemic, Amos and Karabo Manaka, owners of Equinox Engineering Solutions, made the bold decision to change tack and try contract mining instead. Read all about their experience with Bell Equipment on **PAGE 4.**

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Bell fleet helps new mining contractor find its feet

When the COVID-19 pandemic all but shut down the world as we knew it, there was a lot of talk of small businesses, especially restaurants and 'mom and pop' stores, having to close. The same applied to performing artists who suddenly had no audiences.

But one should also spare a thought for the likes of self-employed engineers who, as professional people, suddenly couldn't rely on new contracts being issued and saw a dramatic drying up of income beyond their control.

Two such engineers are Amos and Karabo Manaka. Karabo, an electronics engineer, and her husband Amos, an industrial engineer with a postgraduate qualification in civil engineering, had worked for major petroleum, energy, and mining companies in planning, coal handling, and water purification. Their varied portfolio under their trading name of Equinox Engineering Solutions even includes paving and sidewalks in the City of Tshwane.



"We sat isolated at home and tossed around ideas of how to make a living in the future when the idea of contract mining arose," Karabo says. "With no new contracts being issued by our existing clients we were looking for alternatives which we needed rather urgently."

"There had been talk of a large platinum mine in the North West Province issuing contracts to emerging contractors for drilling, loading, and hauling of platinum ore and, although this was a totally foreign field to us, we thought that with our backgrounds we could learn to understand this industry and make a go of it," Amos says. "We therefore tendered on the load and haul segment of the contract thinking that we'd be able to raise finance and buy loading and haulage equipment on the used market to make a start."

But raising finance turned out to be far more challenging than the Manaka couple had hoped it would be and they were sent from pillar to post without so much as a cent or favourable interest rate being offered. And without finance, they could not begin to look at loading and haulage equipment, even on the used market.

But help was at hand as Karabo explains: "We had, through a mutual friend from our church, met Bruce Ndlela of Bell Equipment, and with Bruce's easy and affable manner, we felt comfortable to think that we could establish and develop a business relationship

with Bell Equipment where Bruce has the title of Director: Business and Public Sector Development."

"We subsequently also met Bell Sales Representative, Enock Mabaso, and immediately got the feeling that Bruce, Enock and their colleagues at Bell Equipment were not only listening to us but also fully appreciated our position, which other suppliers had not done," Amos adds.

Here Bruce Ndlela takes up the story. "I met Amos and Karabo Manaka of Equinox Engineering Solutions and, after listening to their business plan and the difficulties they had encountered with both equipment and financial services suppliers in the industry, immediately requested that given the long lead-time on machines, we sign an official purchase order for four new B45E Articulated Dump Trucks and a new Kobelco SK850LC-8 Excavator. To secure the order we installed an equal number of used units as we do with many customers to assist them in getting their contracts off the ground and generating cash flow which would in time create a win-win situation. This is done on a rental basis with an option to purchase that equipment (ROP)."

Bruce adds that having won the one load and haul tender at the particular platinum mine, Equinox Engineering Solutions, along with another company, became a preferred supplier to the mine and could rely on one of two five-year contracts.



Equinox Engineering Solutions COO, Amos Manaka, with the company's CEO, Karabo Manaka, and Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Enock Mabaso.

"We, as Bell Equipment, interacted with the mine as well and laid the foundation for Equinox Engineering Solutions to get started in a challenging but exciting new field. We recognised that as engineers Amos and Karabo are clear thinkers and solutions-driven professionals."

"We were happy to take delivery of the first used equipment in November 2022 when three Bell B40D Articulated Dump Trucks arrived along with the Kobelco SK850LC-8 Excavator," Amos says. "Then in the following month, we took delivery of two further used Bell ADTs, a B40E and B45E model, both of which have boosted our production."

"The Kobelco SK850LC-8 Excavator had clocked some 8 200 hours and the Bell B40D ADTs had done between 11 000 and 30 000 hours and this is a testament to Bell Equipment's legendary solid design and build to see that despite these high hours these Bell B40D ADTs still get the job done daily." The rental package also

includes a Bell Care Package that sees Bell mechanics from the Rustenburg branch attending to services every 500 hours and repairs when needed.

According to the contract with the platinum mine, Equinox Engineering Solutions has been tasked with a monthly target of moving 250 000 bank cubic metres (bcm) of overburden to a stockpile. To do this efficiently they had to appoint three teams of operators who all came from a village near to the mine.

"The applicants were all keen to learn and we were fortunate to be able to give them top-class training with the assistance of Bell Equipment Trainer, Temba Lucky," Karabo says. "Temba took his time while training the operators thoroughly and with his help, and that of the mine, the six months it took to train these operators properly is now paying off handsomely."

Karabo stresses that while operating a piece of mining equipment is merely the start, doing it safely during every hour of every shift is what counts, especially in a mine where there are many potential hazards.

"We're slowly ramping up to meet our monthly target and we believe that once we've concluded negotiations with lenders to fund the four new Bell B45E ADTs along with the equally new Kobelco SK850LC-8 Excavator, we'll be a competitive and

productive unit," Amos says. "We're eternally grateful to Bell Equipment for reaching out to us and assisting us in a steep learning curve of this contract mining industry along with its pitfalls, challenges, and rewards."

Amos adds that they appreciate the support they've had from their clients at the mine who realise contractors can only commit to capital expenditure



having a five-year contract in hand. The mine also assists them with access to a grader and a water bowser to maintain the haul roads that fall in their operational area.

Sales Representative, Enock Mabaso, has the last word when he says: "We started with Equinox Engineering Solutions from the ground up and we're positive that as our customers, their experience of Bell Equipment is that we strive to create a family-like atmosphere with our customers much the same as Bell Equipment started as a family-run business."



Production Foreman Dingaam Rampete, Site Manager Grant Luck, Production Foreman Patrick Diswai, Safety Officer Arnold Mogwe, and COO Amos Manaka.

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Kobelco Excavator fleet performing well on wind turbine project

When Stanley van der Burgh first bought a Bell Backhoe Loader in 1995 with the aim of offering limited plant hire to the mining industry in and around Witbank, little did he know that in less than three decades, he would be mining his own coal reserves using in excess of three hundred and fifty mining machines and thus becoming one of the largest coal miners in private ownership in South Africa.

When Stanley van der Burgh first bought a Bell Backhoe Loader in 1995 with the aim of offering limited plant hire to the mining industry in and around Witbank, little did he know that in less than three decades, he would be mining his own coal reserves using in excess of 350 mining machines and thus becoming one the largest coal miners in private ownership in South Africa.

Since selling Burgh Group Holdings (Pty) Ltd, of which Burgh Plant Hire was a subsidiary, Stanley and his son, Devan, have embarked on yet another exciting venture also involving mostly yellow and even some turquoise-coloured mining equipment.

Devan takes up the story: "My dad and I founded Inceku Mining in 2017 with Inceku being the isiZulu word for 'servant to God the king'. Our core business initially was to

offer plant hire to the mining and renewable energy industries and, more recently, we planned to once again mine our own coal reserves."

The Van der Burgh's started their new business with new machines and offered plant hire in the iron ore and chrome mining industries. They employ 450 people full-time and hire local people in areas where mining contracts take them. With hiring from local communities, training and upliftment is a given and even when contracts end Inceku Mining is comfortable with skills that are retained as a legacy of their time in a particular area.

With their moderately ambitious plans coming to fruition, they found that new mining equipment that suited their purposes was a scarce commodity in South Africa. These plans also included venturing into mining in Namibia and Zambia.

"In 2021 we realised that with mining our own coal resources becoming imminent as well as exploring potential value-added ventures in plant hire, we needed to find a fleet of new loading tools and haulage vehicles that would prove to be reliable.

With any contract, whether it be for a client or ourselves, positive production figures through sustainable uptime are key drivers," Devan explains. "We researched the market thoroughly, but Bell Equipment came up tops as the only supplier that could help us with what we initially needed, and that was supplying a fleet of 10 B45E Articulated Dump Trucks (ADTs)."

Referring to ventures in plant hire, in early 2023 Inceku Mining became aware of a contract that called for the use of excavators on a large wind turbine project between Matjiesfontein and Sutherland on the Western Cape and Northern Cape border.

"This renewable energy project will see the erection of 39 wind turbines. As it's spread out along some rocky ridges along which access roads must be carved out of the rocky Karoo soils, the project needed some hardy excavators that could carry out the grunt work before the turbines could be erected," Devan says. "As part of our joint venture contract we have with a subsidiary plant hire company, in which we have a vested interest, we needed to supply three 26-ton and two 30-ton excavators, and we've done this under our own banner of Inceku Green Projects."

Devan mentions that they once again approached Bell Equipment through the company's local Sales Representative for the Witbank and Middelburg area, Johnny Smit, to find out more about Kobelco Excavators after having researched the wider excavator market.

"We've come to rely on Johnny's excellent knowledge of Bell Equipment's comprehensive product range. Knowing that Kobelco Excavators have a proven reputation of being well-designed and built machines, especially in the challenging Karoo climate where it can be extremely hot or extremely cold, we felt comfortable in committing to buy three Kobelco SK260LC-10 and two Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavators, which were delivered directly to the site of the wind turbine project in June 2023."



Bell Sales Representative (left), Johnny Smit, with Devan van der Burgh, Director of Inceku Mining/ Inceku Green Projects.



Although they were delivered with general purpose buckets of 1,4 cubic-metres for the 26-ton and 1,7 cubic-metres capacities for the 30-ton machines, all five of the Kobelco Excavators have been fitted with hydraulic hammers from a third party. This is because they are being deployed to break up the stubborn Karoo shale surface where first the access roads are being built and later the huge foundations for the wind turbines will be constructed.

"We chose the Kobelco Excavators as we enjoy the Hino engines they have and my dad is a firm believer in specific component combinations working well together, which he has seen to be the case with Kobelco Excavators," Devan expands. "We further believe that Kobelco Excavators offer excellent value for money and should give us a solid return on our investment."

"We've also been pleasantly surprised that the average fuel burn of the Kobelco 30-ton machines is the same as the 26-ton Excavators at 13,2 litres an hour. Even though diesel fuel is supplied by our clients, we believe this is very economical fuel consumption considering the heavy work the machines are engaged in and attribute it to the excellent hydraulic flows the Kobelco Excavators are known for in many varied applications," Devan says. "We further ensured that the maintenance on the Kobelco Excavators would not be left to chance with a 12-month Bell Care Package from Bell Equipment with the company's mechanics driving up from Cape Town to conduct servicing."



Second Finlay 683 Screen doubles production for sand mining operation

The Western Cape Province, and more specifically the Cape Winelands, is seeing a lot of development in the construction market right now as more people want to live in these well-run municipalities.



Suppliers of building materials, especially sand, bemoan the fact that there is very little clean sand left in sand deposits. This has prompted a well-established sand and aggregate supplier in Wellington to make a plan involving market-leading technology.

Dirk Lochner started his transport company under his own name in 1968 with just one six-cubic metre tipper truck. He undertook sub-contract transport assignments for the then Cape Provincial Administration. When Dirk's son, Francois, finished school in 1995, he joined his father in the business and drove a second similar truck.

"During that same year we started selling building sand and stone aggregates, which caused our business to show steady growth until we established a Closed Corporation in 2006," Francois recalls. "My wife, Marinda, had joined the business in 2003 as the head of the financial section and we're lucky she's there to keep an eye on the numbers."

Dirk Lochner Transport currently mines its own sand from two mines situated at Perdeberg to the west of

Wellington and these operations commenced in 2015 with only one mine. Once processed into various sand products such as plaster, building, and concrete sand along with a coarser waste product, a now much larger fleet of tipper trucks distributes the various sand products as far afield as Stellenbosch, Franschhoek, Paarl, Wolseley, and Tulbagh.

"We had originally started with one sand mine in 2015 and realised from the outset that we'd have to screen the raw sand product to rid it of oversized particles and other impurities," Francois says. "We researched the market thoroughly and feel we were fortunate to learn that Bell Equipment was the South African distributor of Finlay crushing and screening equipment, which is where we first met Fiona Johnson, Bell Equipment's knowledgeable sales representative who still calls on us."

With Fiona's guidance, Dirk Lochner Transport became the proud owner of a Finlay 683 Incline Screen in 2015, which has subsequently given its owners 8 000 productive hours and many thousands of cubic metres of saleable product.



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson (left) with Francois Lochner, owner of Dirk Lochner Transport, and his wife, Marinda.

"The Finlay 683 Screen contributes much value to our business and the fact that it's mobile and relatively easily moved on a standard low bed trailer makes its use so versatile," Francois explains. "Our primary product, namely building sand, is delivered by the main belt with fine gravel to one side and nothing is wasted as even the coarse, oversized product that is deposited by a third belt at right angles, is much sought-after in our area for road construction and rehabilitation."

Francois goes on to tell us that at the sand mine, the sand is exposed once the topsoil has been removed and stockpiled for later rehabilitation of the mined area according to strict environmental laws his company must follow in keeping with stipulations of environmental impact assessments. "We find the correct sand layers at around one metre below the surface. We extract the sand using a 20-ton excavator, which loads our trucks for a short haul to where the sand is screened using the Finlay 683 Screen with a wheel loader feeding the screen's eight-cubic metre hopper," he says. "We had recently obtained a permit for a second sand mine and thought it prudent to buy yet another Finlay 683 Screen to double up on our production."

This new Finlay 683 Screen was delivered at the end of May 2023 and has since clocked some 750 hours. Average fuel burn of around 12 to 13 litres an hour fits the business plan nicely.

"As our two sand mines are relatively close together, we've placed the two Finlay 683 Screens next to each other at a central site to have one large production area that is fed from the two different sources, and in doing so streamline our production," he adds. "We aim to produce at least 500 cubic metres of saleable product in a day shift and on good days we've easily pushed this figure to 700 cubic metres."

"These Finlay 683 Screens are so ideally suited to what we need to do, and our older machine has only stood once in the eight years we've had it, while we waited for a part to be delivered, which goes to show that with the correct and diligent maintenance, these Finlay Screens don't often break down."

"This also proves the value of having mechanics from Bell Equipment handling the major services and repair with original branded parts as it brings about the longevity of the equipment which sustains production and a solid return on one's investment."



DKL Plant Hire & Civils grow its JCB Backhoe fleet to eight

A civil construction company head quartered in the picturesque Cape Winelands has found that its fleet of JCB Backhoe Loaders rarely stands idle as these versatile machines are in constant demand both on the company's own sites and to a select few plant hire customers.

DKL Plant Hire & Civils cc, founded in 2006 by Dirk Kampfer Lutz, started out as a plant hire concern based at Klipmuts, north of Cape Town. A current partner and Director of the company, Rossouw van der Merwe, joined the company in 2007 and helped to establish a civil construction arm that started making its mark by the following year.

"Since our beginnings as a plant hire company, the focus of our business has swung through 180 degrees to focus mainly on civil engineering construction as opposed to plant hire," Rossouw says. "Although

we've retained the original name of the company, the ownership has also changed and DKL Plant Hire & Civils cc is now owned by Elizma and Philip Botha, Eduan Naudé, Uhan Rossouw, and me."

The company focuses on supplying civil construction for services in township development including water and power reticulation, roads, and bulk earthworks. Working in the agricultural sector, DKL Plant Hire & Civils also creates infrastructure aimed at tourism on wine estates, which has become a popular sideline for those estates offering more than just wine tasting, such

as accommodation and hiking trails. Further services to the agricultural sector form a large part of the business with the construction of farm dams, pump stations, roads, and culverts. The extraction of older or established fruit trees, when a fickle market demands that new cultivars be planted, has added a new dimension to DKL Plant Hire & Civils' service offering.

Projects are undertaken throughout the Western Cape Province with brief forages into the neighbouring Northern and Eastern Cape.

"Working in civil engineering construction you'd appreciate that we would be mechanised and to this end we have built up a fleet of yellow machinery over the years comprising among others, excavators ranging from 8- to 21-tons, water trucks, 10-cubic metre tipper trucks, low beds for transporting machines, a roller and our stalwart equipment, backhoe loaders," Rossouw says. "We also have a wood-chipper and a mulcher for when we bush clear new land and take out the old fruit trees."

DKL Plant Hire & Civils ensures that its plant earns its keep by internally hiring equipment for specific projects. This ensures a solid return on investment and the knowledge that when a specific machine is replaced, it has earned its keep.

"We will run any piece of plant to a maximum of 8 000 hours and then sell it out of hand with a full service history," Rossouw explains. "We've built a reputation of selling well-maintained equipment, which means that with a few phone calls used equipment virtually sells itself."

The company first bought JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders some years ago and has since evolved to own four JCB 3CX Eco and another four JCB 3CX Global machines. "We've owned 11 of these machines within the space of 15 years and they have been simply superb," Rossouw says. "While we won't buy machines for a specific project, our order book has recently filled up substantially and we added two more JCB 3CX Global machines to now bring our fleet to number eight."



The most recent four JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders were bought in 2022 when Bell Equipment, the South African distributors for JCB equipment, offered a favourable financing deal with a leading bank. Rossouw and his partners made good use of this offer and the four JCB 3CX Global machines were delivered in November 2022.

"We've had dealings with Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Andre Jordaan, for many years and trust him implicitly to give us the correct advice on machine models that suit our business model," Rossouw explains. "Our construction teams don't feel complete without a JCB Backhoe Loader on site for

the versatility the machine offers in trenching, backfilling, levelling platforms, and loading building material or rubble into tipper trucks."

"We sometimes view our JCB Backhoe Loaders as an oversized 'site wheelbarrow' as you can load almost anything into it," Rossouw says with a smile. "And returning fuel burn of between six and eight litres an hour, depending on the application, really does not impact our bottom line negatively."

The versatility of one the company's new JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders fitted with a multi-use clamshell bucket was evident on a unique

construction site. A former wine farm in the Simondium area was being restored to resemble that of its 18th century heritage and the machine spread fill material to be compacted on a road and dug trenches for water reticulation.

"What we particularly enjoy about JCB, apart from the solid design and build of their Backhoe Loaders, is the wide range of different machines the company offers. And having a reputable company like Bell Equipment

offering competitive pricing, along with its legendary back-up service, really creates a win-win situation for all," Rossouw says. "We've bought our four new JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders with extended warranties to 4 000 hours on the wet drivetrains and this gives us the confidence that this equipment will deliver a decent return on investment."



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, André Jordaan, with DKL Plant Hire & Civils cc's Rossouw van der Merwe, a shareholder and Director, and Constant Teubes, Plant Manager.

Two 38-ton Kobelco Excavators impress at Raubex

Two thirty-eight-ton Kobelco Excavators are fast justifying their purchase by one of South Africa's most well-known multidisciplinary construction companies and, in doing so, they are proving their acquisition and subsequent application to be the correct decisions.

Raubex was established in 1974 and through steady growth listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in March 2007 as the Raubex Group Limited. The company is one of South Africa's leading infrastructure development and construction materials supply groups. It's a dynamic organisation that has moved with the times as its Level 1 B-BBEE rating shows and, with more than 8 000 employees, the company is focused on ensuring high levels of integrity, professionalism, and quality in all that it does and produces. Raubex operates throughout Southern Africa and Western Australia.

Raubex Construction is a major part of the Raubex Group and has the construction of roads and various infrastructure projects as its core business. This work includes new road construction, the rehabilitation of existing roads, bridges, dams, tailings dams for mines and many other challenging civil engineering projects.

Being a civil engineering concern, the company runs a substantial fleet of yellow machine equipment. Some 23 years ago, Raubex Construction established its mechanical workshops in Bethlehem in the Eastern Free State and it's here that we find Bennie Burger, the company's Senior Plant Manager.

"You may find it strange that we established our mechanical workshops here in Bethlehem and not in a major centre, but the thinking was that due to the relatively remote areas where we sometimes work, especially when working on road construction, Bethlehem is quite centrally situated and many of our projects are easily accessible from here," he says. "We employ 65 people in total which includes administrative staff, qualified diesel mechanics, people in the parts department, stores, and operators. The mechanics go out to render field servicing and repair when machines can't be brought to the workshop."

"When doing work on state contracts, wherever that may be, we generally have to hire equipment and labour to the value of 30% of the total contract value from local communities in the immediate vicinity of the project and this often sees the gap being filled for small plant like rollers and backhoe loaders."

Raubex's fleet of construction and earthmoving fleet is substantial and comprises graders, recyclers, dozers, wheel loaders, tipper- and water trucks, articulated dump trucks, rollers and excavators. The company believes in obtaining the maximum life out of any

piece of equipment and when that machine life is deemed to no longer be economically viable, the equipment is sold out of hand with a complete service history.

"We recently needed to add two machines to our excavator fleet in the 40-ton class and while researching the market we came across Kobelco Excavators, which we saw are distributed in South Africa by Bell Equipment," Bennie says. "Although our subsidiary company B & E International has run these and heavier Kobelco Excavators successfully, Raubex had never owned any models of this Japanese brand until we spoke to Chris Botha, the Bell Equipment Sales Representative who visits us diligently, and we found out more about this seemingly great brand of excavator."

Raubex Construction needed two excavators. One would be deployed on a major road rehabilitation project, which would see the machine loading blasted quarry rock for processing into aggregate and the other would be fitted with a hydraulic hammer on a bridge project of a further phase of the Highlands Water Project in Lesotho.



"Everything seemed right for us to choose the two Kobelco SK380XDL-10 Excavators as Bell Equipment had stock of the two machines at a competitive price and they had the correct hydraulic piping for us to fit a hydraulic hammer, albeit from a third party," Bennie explains. "We were also impressed with the reinforced undercarriage and buckets on the machines, which we then duly ordered and received in June 2023."

Bell Heavy Industries (BHI), Bell Equipment's contract manufacturing division, manufactures all medium and large excavator buckets for the Kobelco Excavators it sells locally. These buckets fit South African conditions given that the machines are often used to load dense and abrasive mined material and blasted rock.

Bennie mentions that since both machines started work on their respective sites, both have performed admirably with no reported downtime in their first 1 000 hours of service. An average fuel burn of 18,4 litres an hour has been a pleasant surprise and fits the business plan of both projects.

"While we acknowledge that our first two Kobelco SK380XDL-10 Excavators are still new, we'd like to imagine that given their present impressive performances with frugal fuel burn as a bonus, we'll be adding more of these machines in their distinctive turquoise livery to our fleet," Bennie says. "And knowing that Kobelco Excavators are backed up by Bell Equipment, a company with its own established wide national and cross-border footprint, trained personnel and proven parts holding, it will provide a winning combination that will be hard to beat."



Raubex's Senior Plant Manager, Bennie Burger (left) with Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Chris Botha.

Innovative adaption of a JCB Excavator wows W.O. Trackworks

Earthmoving equipment suppliers are generally not keen to entertain requests from customers to fit specialised equipment to standard machines that may require some 'out of the box' thinking and adaptation – all except one supplier, Bell Equipment.

This is the opinion of Gary Ollewagen, the youngest of three brothers who, together with their financial director, own and manage W.O. Trackworks (Pty) Ltd (WOT), a specialist company that will get involved at the inception stage of projects with prospective clients and, where applicable, manage the designs and undertake construction of new railway trackwork/ networks. Furthermore, WOT undertakes the maintenance of existing rail networks, and offers the design and manufacture of custom concrete products related to railway infrastructure.

"W.O. Trackworks was started by our father, Winston Ollewagen, in 1982 and currently me, my older brothers, Winston and Ian, and the Financial Director, Raynard Weyers, manage the company," says Gary.

"Our father is a platelayer by trade, which to the layman is a person who regularly inspects the section of railway track that he is responsible for from an operational safety perspective, checking for geometrical deviations, wear on the rails, sleepers and fastenings, and the general safety of the surrounding area as well."

Gary and Winston draw on their extensive experience in civil engineering and mechanised on track plant, with Ian in support and focusing on construction and concrete products and the installation thereof. WOT has an impressive resume with projects undertaken successfully on four continents, including large parts of Africa (including South Africa), the Middle East, and even as far as Vietnam and Mexico.



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, André Jordaan (left) with two of the W.O. Trackworks Directors, Gary and Ian Ollewagen.

"Approximately 12 years ago we decided to investigate the opportunity to introduce a more mechanised system in our industry by using standard earthmoving equipment that we would then adapt to better suit our purposes. We subsequently grew our skills set tremendously, which enabled us to tender and be awarded higher value, and more complex contracts," Gary adds.

"We bought our first JCB JS140 Excavator in 2017 and the adaptability of the machine with our special attachments, coupled with its reliability, prompted us to expand our fleet of JCB equipment in 2022 by purchasing additional units, i.e. JCB 3DX Backhoe Loaders and a JCB JS205 Excavator. These transactions were concluded with the advice and assistance of Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, André Jordaan."

"An interesting fact is that not all suppliers of such equipment are keen to take on the additional work of adapting a standard machine to our needs. Bell Equipment, as the South African supplier of JCB, however, agreed to partner with us, which in turn led W.O. Trackworks to become a loyal customer going forward."

Gary explains that although the attachments may be readily available in the Northern Hemisphere, the foreign exchange and importation costs make this option very prohibitive. WOT supplies their own design of bespoke attachments and then request Bell Equipment to fit these attachments to standard 20-ton JCB JS205 Excavators.

"We require Bell Equipment to remove the bucket and decrease the hydraulic flows on the JCB JS205 Excavator. They then mount a switching panel in the cab that will control the increased three auxiliary functions that we need for our specific tasks, namely

to grab five sleepers and place them, grab five sleepers and place them to exact spacing of predetermined widths, and finally grab and place two sections of rail of 18-metre lengths weighing more than two tons and place them accurately."

The fact that Bell Equipment, as the supplier of the equipment, does the post-market conversion, ensures that the warranty on the JCB JS205 Excavator is not affected, which is a huge advantage for WOT.

Gary has designed a cam-lock system which, when attached to the boom of the JCB JS205 Excavator, allows for two 18-metre lengths of rail to be safely lifted simultaneously and placed in position on the concrete sleepers.

By using these attachments efficiently, a team of only three people can place 940 meters of concrete track sleepers in a seven-hour shift while another team, also consisting of only three people, can lay 40 pairs of 18-metre rail track in the same timeframe. This makes for reduced labour, faster turnaround times and improved safety on a site, the latter being a huge plus factor for clients that consider safety and risk paramount.

"These attachments have worked so well for us and the reduced hydraulic flows on the JCB JS205 Excavator makes it the ideal machine for our purposes," Gary says.

"Proof of this is the two more similar machines we bought in March and June 2023 which we believe will be with us for a long time to come. Furthermore, with our specialised, and to a certain extent, limited usage, the JCB Excavators won't run up large hours at all." "This is also the reason we don't take extended warranties as we believe the JCB JS205 Excavators are solidly designed and built," he says.

"Fuel consumption is not that important to us due to the short periods for which the machines are used, but our experience has taught us that, once again, the reduced hydraulic flows do cut down on fuel consumption as the engines do not run hard."

WOT's JCB 3DX Backhoe Loaders are used for their projects on internal hires to fulfill housekeeping duties and keep the sites tidy. "To say that we are pleased with our purchases of the JCB JS205 Excavators would almost be an understatement as the machines fulfill a very important role in our company by decreasing labour input, whilst still completing the job efficiently, safely and to the client's satisfaction," Gary says.

He adds that pivotal to their satisfaction is the fact that "Bell Equipment was prepared to listen to our needs, think innovatively, and is true to our company's own nature. This makes it a market leader as much as we, W.O. Trackworks, would like to think we are too."





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Composting is no longer backbreaking work with JCB Backhoe fleet

Imagine having to deliver one-thousand cubic metres of organic compost to a client's strawberry farm under contract using only a small utility truck with a capacity of one cubic metre, offloading by hand, and completing it successfully.

That's one of the challenges Michael du Plessis, founder and owner of Grow Green Organics in George had to overcome when starting out in his chosen field of making and selling organic compost. But let's allow Michael to take us back to where it all started: "I grew up on our family's dairy farm in the Western Cape and when the farm was sold, I went to work on dairy farms in the USA," he says. "I was also a long-distance truck driver for a while before returning to South Africa. An old friend then suggested I try my hand at making organic compost."

Starting his company, Grow Green Organics, in 2007 with manual labour and one delivery bakkie, Michael concentrated on producing organic compost for nurseries in and around George. That's when a local strawberry farm realised that this organic product

would add sweetness to its strawberries and Michael personally delivered 1 000 cubic metres in 1 000 individual deliveries, offloading with a shovel.

"By 2010 demand for our various gardening products had grown so much that we had to load and blend the base material mechanically. I took over the payments on a backhoe loader from the machine's owner who no longer needed the machine," Michael says. "This went against the grain of my business model as for the first time I had debt, which I hate having."

But before long Michael had bought another similar machine, two trucks, and even a mechanical rotary drum screen. The latter bought with borrowed money which made him work even harder to cancel out this new debt.



The Grow Green Organics father and sons team of MC (left), Michael and Timothy du Plessis (right) with their Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson (second from right).



"Hard work paid dividends as by now we started getting fixed supply contracts from nurseries and other large-scale users," he recalls. "Our products were now also going out in bags which we were loading and sealing by hand. This was a slow and cumbersome process, but in time we imported a packaging machine from Ireland along with two mobile screens that improved the manufacturing speed."

The year 2014 saw a paradigm shift in Grow Green Organics' mechanisation drive as that was the year that Michael bought their first JCB 3DX Backhoe Loader. "I'd heard a lot said about JCB Backhoe Loaders and their rugged design and build. It was all true and we could now at last plan to run a new Backhoe Loader to 16 000 hours, which meant that we'd get a decent return on our investment through productivity as well as a positively good resale price."

"Having started this business with almost nothing, I found it hard to part with older equipment but realised over time that it was for the best and getting especially older Backhoe Loaders replaced with newer JCB machines made the emotional wrench a bit easier."

Michael, who was awarded the George Businessman of the Year for 2016/17, has two sons. His elder son, MC, joined the business in 2017 as the fleet manager, and his younger son, Timothy, joined in 2022. Today the company produces 25 different products that are distributed in bulk and in bags.

"We've found that the JCB Backhoe Loaders have really good resale value with whatever hours they've completed. This adds to the machine's attraction and we're sure its vast following worldwide," MC says. "The

machine's value is evident in the solid design and build and it delivers a solid return on one's investment."

"We run a total fleet of 60 vehicles and machines in our fleet that comprises 12 JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders, a JCB VMT 260-120 Tandem Roller that has proved very popular in plant hire, and many trucks from tipplers to interlinked tautliners and trucks with 'walking floor' trailers," MC adds. "But in our entire fleet, our 12 JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders are undoubtedly the stars and when we don't use them all, they are sought-after as plant hire machines."

MC mentions that they keep one or two of the JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders at the timber producers where they are used to load bark as an essential ingredient in their compost mixes. The machines' versatility was also

shown when two new models, bought in December 2022 to replace older machines, demonstrated how effectively they can be used to blend the base material of the organic compost mix. Grow Green Organics has found that their JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loaders return an average fuel consumption of nine litres an hour.

"We were pleased when Bell Equipment was appointed as the official distributor for JCB equipment and we've enjoyed dealing with the company's supportive Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson," MC says. "We can confidently say that we have one of the largest fleets of JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders in the Southern Cape region and the reason for that is clear – we value high-quality machines as much as our client base values the high-quality products that these machines help us produce."

Lucor Construction loads up on JCB and Kobelco machines

Struisbaai on the Southern Cape coast is said to be one of the fastest growing coastal resorts in South Africa and here two energetic young men, involved in a dynamic partnership, are fast making their mark in the competitive world of civil construction.

Lucor Construction, headquartered in Bredasdorp and close to Struisbaai, is made up of Luwald Giliomee and Cornel Uys. Both hail from Bredasdorp and have garnered extensive experience in the civil and pipeline construction fields while working for other companies.

"In 2014, we decided to formalise our individual skill sets into a partnership and so Lucor Construction, a name made up of our first names, came into being," Luwald says. "We have been focusing our business on the construction of specialised concrete works such as that for warehouse floors and silo construction, steelwork for these warehouses, retail shopping centres, and a variety of civil construction services to the agricultural sector."

The implication that a civil construction company will be mechanised holds true as Lucor Construction boasts a substantial fleet of haulage and yellow metal

machines comprising tipper trucks, excavators, backhoe loaders, wheel loaders, skid steer loaders, volumetric concrete mixers, and a mobile screen.

Lucor Construction also produces and sells sand from its own sand mine to a variety of end-users in the local construction industry and farming community.

"During the first eight years of our company's existence we bought only used equipment on a cash basis, but you will appreciate that often we got downtime-causing issues along with the seemingly good cash price on a machine," Luwald says. "That's why in 2022, when we needed a reliable excavator for our sand mine, we changed tactics and bought a new machine that has really proved its worth."

The machine in question is a Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator bought from Bell Equipment in Cape Town with Sales Representative, André Jordaan, doing the honours. "We've had dealings with André before and respect him for his sound advice and product knowledge," Luwald adds. "Bell Equipment, as the official distributor for Kobelco Excavators, made the offer to purchase almost irresistible with a great price and a longer-than-usual warranty of three years or 5 000 hours."

"Kobelco Excavators are known for their excellent fuel consumption and, given the type of constant production this machine delivers in our sand mine, we've been mightily impressed with its performance and frugal fuel burn of 11,5 litres an hour."

Lucor Construction's Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavator has at times been fitted with a hydraulic hammer and hired out on a plant hire basis where it has delivered sustained uptime on demolition projects.

The partners' newfound faith in new but financed earthmoving equipment seems to sit quite well with them as in August 2023 they took delivery of yet another new piece of equipment, a JCB 3CX Global Backhoe Loader. Lucor Construction currently owns a fleet of three Backhoe Loaders of which only one is a JCB.

When asked why they chose to change brands, Luwald explains: "Cornel owns a JCB 4DX Backhoe Loader in another company he has, which is separate to our construction company, and that machine has more than proved its worth with sustained uptime and clearly shows why the JCB brand is considered the market-leading Backhoe Loader. So, we decided to back this proven reliability by buying a new JCB 3DX Global Backhoe Loader for its versatility of uses on our building projects where it does general site work, loads and unloads material, and digs and backfills trenches for foundations and services."



Luwald mentions that the deal on the JCB 3DX Global Backhoe Loader was further enhanced by the financial assistance Bell Equipment offered through a local bank.

"We've recently noticed an uptick in demand for more specialised equipment in the plant hire market, especially in demolition work," Luwald says. "We have for some years owned a small Kobelco SK40SR-5 Excavator, which had been brought into the country by its owners, whom we bought it from. It has given us such good service that we're replacing it with a similar but slightly heavier Kobelco SK55SRX model."

"Our thinking is that this machine, fitted with either a bucket or a hydraulic hammer and rented out with a five-ton tipper truck as a package, will be sought after in the demolition and agricultural market where the Kobelco Excavator can knock down structures that

need to be demolished using the hydraulic hammer and dig and load with the bucket attachment into the tipper truck."

Luwald adds that their dealings with Bell Equipment's Cape Town branch, from the sales experience to the servicing, have been more than pleasant. When called to conduct services under warranty, the company's responses have been quick with technicians arriving promptly with the correct service kits and consumable spares.

"We're excited at the prospect of receiving the new Kobelco SK55SRX Excavator and seeing it add value to our plant hire offering as our other two new machines from Bell Equipment have done. Buying new equipment is definitely the way forward as we strive to be leaders in our field locally," Luwald says happily.



The dynamic business duo of Luwald Giliomee and Cornel Uys with their Bell Sales Representative, André Jordaan.



Umbilo Express upsizes its fleet with JCB large plant

Bell Equipment and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) have made a dream a reality for Nolly Khowa, the effervescent and ambitious owner of Umbilo Express Plant Hire in eThekweni, who is the proud new owner of a trio of new JCB machines.

Nolly's story is an uplifting one that speaks to the power of perseverance, hard work, and the kindness of mankind. After finishing school in 2007, she was employed as a hire desk controller for a well-known plant hire company. However, about a year later, when her mother passed away, she had to leave to take care of business at home and found work in the hotel industry as a barmaid, where she worked herself up the ladder until she reached her ceiling and wanted something more.

"That was in 2014," recalls Nolly, "and I went back to the plant hire industry, this time as a sales rep for the same plant hire company, but sales didn't gel with me. I'm stronger on the administration side, so I took the first position that became available at their hire desk. Later I was promoted to manage my own branch in Umbilo and in 2018 an opportunity arose to buy that same branch, which I did. I bought it with the aid of my previous boss (in the hotel industry), who signed surety for me.



"The business has been hiring out small plant since 2018 and cross-hiring larger equipment when we needed to. The ache for our own large plant started with an incident when we unknowingly hired a backhoe loader without a tracking device which got stolen on site. We decided that we needed our own large plant that we could manage and be responsible for rather than take a risk each time we hire," she adds.

Nolly decided on a skid steer, backhoe loader, and roller by monitoring the requests which came through in the form of hire enquiries and seeing which machines had been outsourcing the most. They believe that owning their own will give their business a competitive edge: "A lot of customers first request large plant to open and prepare sites. We usually miss out on this phase so we're hoping we can supply to them from inception with now having the JCB Skid Steer and JCB Backhoe Loader," Nolly explains.

They turned to Bell as their preferred equipment supplier because they have "always known the brand" from experience where they had outsourced Bell machines. "We also did research with existing customers and saw what brands of equipment they have of their own. We decided Bell is the best because we see it most often on sites and with our customers."

After speaking with Bell Equipment's experienced Sales Representative, Blake Phillips, Nolly settled on a JCB 155HD Skid Steer, a JCB 3DX Plus 4x4 Backhoe Loader, and a JCB CT260-120 Roller. The equipment was purchased through SEFA at a favourable interest rate.



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Blake Phillips, congratulates Nolly Khowa, the owner of Umbilo Express Plant Hire, on acquiring a JCB Backhoe Loader, JCB Roller, and JCB Skid Steer, while her Sales Representative, Sitembiso Mbulwa (left) looks on.

A condition of the agreement – one that Nolly was only too happy to comply with – is that the machines are fitted with a tracking device. In the case of the Backhoe Loader and Roller, this is JCB's LiveLink telematics system.

Nolly anticipates strong demand for her trio. "I'm very excited for what the future holds because customers are currently paying high site establishment costs to hire machines from Pinetown and Durban North to work in our area, so having these machines available locally should be an advantage to us, especially for sites in the vicinity."

The young business owner prides herself on the level of service customers receive from Umbilo Express Plant Hire. "Many people look at our new logo and think we're a courier company and I say if that's the impression you are getting that's good because we deliver," she laughs. "We are known for our excellent service and strive to maintain this reputation when growing our equipment offering."

A testament to this claim is her experience after registering a new profile on Google Maps. "We sent a message to some of our customers and in one day we had 37 people gladly commenting and giving five-star ratings, which shows the good relationship we have with our customers, and how happy they are with our service. We might not have had the newest machinery in the market, but we were always right behind that equipment while on hire to ensure minimal to no downtime."

Umbilo Express Plant Hire serves Durban and the surrounding areas and employs twelve people, including Nolly. Three are the operators for the new JCB machines, who are employed on an ad hoc basis for now.

Whatever the future holds, there is an air of excitement and hope at Umbilo Express. Nolly is in an exciting phase of business development where she is being incubated for 18 months by the SAB Foundation's Tholoana Enterprise Programme. "This is incredibly valuable. It's a fantastic experience and we appreciate now having a mentor to guide us."

Tugela Steel chooses Bell as preferred telehandler supplier

Tugela Steel and Bell Equipment are both family-owned businesses that had humble beginnings on a farm. They are also specialists in adding value to steel, but where Bell produces earthmoving equipment, Tugela Steel is a leading manufacturer in the Southern Hemisphere of standard size portal frame structures.

Tugela Steel is privately owned by Knut Haug who founded the business 40 years ago and has since been joined by his two sons, Bjorn, and Kristian. The company's head office is in La Lucia Ridge, Durban and the production facility is based on the family farm, King's Valley Farms, in Colenso.

Knut was four years old when he arrived in South African from Norway with his parents after World War II. His father, Theodore Haug, found employment at the Norwegian whaling station in Durban and later took a share in The Nest Hotel in the Drakensburg in 1963, which he ran successfully for 16 years.

During this time Knut started a supermarket in Loskop, in the Central Drakensburg, and wholesaled steel to the building trade. He closed the supermarket to focus on wholesaling steel, opening branches in Winterton and Harrismith. When a national steel manufacturer and distributor bought out the business Knut changed tack and used his knowledge and expertise to manufacture steel structures instead.

Tugela Steel was established in 1984 in a small workshop in Winterton and moved to Colenso in 1987 when Knut bought King's Valley Farms. Today the family's farming operation includes a 1 500-hectare game farm that has a focus on game breeding and a stud herd of disease-free buffalo, and 430 hectares of irrigated land under wheat, soyabeans, and yellow maize.

However, Tugela Steel is the cornerstone of their commercial endeavours. Although mass producing standard size portal frame structures in the 9m to 45m span range is its core business, it offers the whole spectrum of structural steel for the local market and exports into Africa, Australia, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Madagascar.

The family employs about 130 staff, which includes four fully equipped erection crews who travel throughout South Africa and the SADC (Southern African Development Communities) region erecting steel structures such as warehouses and assembly plants for clients in the mining, agriculture, retail, logistics, and aviation sectors. As one of Bell Equipment's preferred vendors for steel structures, they have erected several structures at the Richards Bay factory.

Knut's elder son, Bjorn, credits his family's business success to the fact that he, his father, and brother are hands on in all departments and "live and breathe by the principles of producing a quality product with the utmost integrity, and providing the highest level of service".

"We're very competitive in the market because of how the business is structured," he says. "We're the only business of this kind in the industry that keeps over 150 buildings in stock. In addition, we keep 4 000 to 6 000t of raw material in our stores at any one time, which reduces lead times and gives us better control over pricing."

Steel is both locally sourced and imported from reputable mills around the world, especially the longer, larger beams, which are not always readily available in South Africa.

As with most businesses, productivity is key, and Tugela Steel has a fleet of nine telehandlers that keeps their operation running like clockwork. "Some keep the production facility going by feeding the welding and component shops. Others are in the painting division where the steel is cleaned and painted, and some are dedicated to loading and offloading trucks, and loading containers.



"Without the telehandlers this place doesn't run. All our steel gets moved by telehandlers." The four newest machines are all JCB 560-80 Telehandlers – two purchased in 2020 and two in 2023.

Each have each clocked between 300 and 2 000 hours. Says Bjorn: "We only moved across to JCB once Bell became the dealer. We had an existing relationship with Bell and their Sales Representative, Keith Milne, and

knew that they are strong on backup. We're production-orientated and downtime is costly, so backup is important to us, especially being so remote. We also relate to Bell Equipment and like the relationship-based way they do business. Besides that, JCB as a brand is renowned around the world for its telehandler."

Tugela Steel does its own earthworks and construction and its relationship with Bell dates to 2015 when the company bought a B18E Articulated Dump Truck and an 11m³ dump trailer. The ADT has only worked 2 000 hours, but its service is invaluable building dams and platforms, maintaining roads on the property, and the district road.

The company has owned multiple brands of four-ton telehandlers but the JCB 560-80s are its first six-ton machines. Bjorn adds: "We custom ordered these machines from the UK to suit our specific purpose because we wanted the versatility. We chose the top-of-the-range agricultural machine because of its greater capability and speed. It's got superior lift (6 tons) and reach (7,9m) and we like the operator comfort and ease of use."

With the way the machines quietly purr around the plant it is no surprise that the new generation JCB EcoMAX engine, the hydraulics, and fuel economy have impressed.

The machines work a standard day shift, but the Telehandlers are fitted with premium lighting to enable them to offload trucks that arrive late or load containers afterhours to meet shipping deadlines when the need arises. Furthermore, they are used for farm tasks like moving hay bales and loading and offloading fertiliser. The added illumination is handy during night-time planting operations to load fertiliser into planters.

According to Bjorn the greater capacity has improved efficiencies. "We can now stack our steel higher in our storage facilities, and the Telehandlers can carry the full weight of a bundle of steel and place it in storage. We unload up to 18 trucks on a busy day, so this is a huge advantage as with our smaller machines we need to split the bundle and sometimes use two machines to offload."

While JCB LiveLink is not used to its full capacity, Bjorn appreciates that the software gives Bell technicians remote access to diagnose any issues, and his managers are able to book services and order spare parts. Bell Pietermaritzburg carries out services during the warranty period and the company is happy with the service and parts availability.

Looking to the future, the Haugs intend to own a fleet of eight JCB Telehandlers and would like Tugela Steel to become a trusted household brand in South Africa synonymous with steel structures. "When people think of steel structures, they should think of Tugela Steel much the same way people associate ADTs with Bell Equipment," says Bjorn.

Tugela Steel's JCB Telehandler operators (from left): Alfred Mazibuko, Gaga Buthelezi, Fanilo Buthelezi, and Bovan Mchunu with Bjorn Haug of Tugela Steel (second from right) and Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Keith Milne.

New Kobelco SK380XDLC-10s fit seamlessly into West Reef's operation

When a young and newlywed Anton Weststrate and his bride, Joke, visited South Africa in 1979, little could they know that the country that they would fall in love with on that memorable trip would become their permanent home with a successful business to match.

After emigrating from the Netherlands in 1980, Anton Sr started a family in South Africa followed by his own business in 1993, with a single bulldozer.

"My dad had developed a love for bulldozers, especially the heavier classes, but he soon realised that an excavator, albeit a used one, could also add value to his fledgling business, which was hiring plant to companies working in the gold mining and construction industries," Anton Weststrate(Jnr) says.

"Our company West Reef Plant Hire, with the name derived from our surname, built its reputation hiring equipment to companies involved in the construction of roads and big commercial projects as well as the tailings deposits on gold mines."

Anton Junior joined his father in the business in 2011 after completing tertiary studies in Mining Engineering. Since then, their company's client base has swung to approximately 80% being involved in mining. Their fleet of yellow machines consists of dozers, articulated dump trucks (ADTs), graders, wheel loaders, backhoe loaders, and excavators.

"My dad taught me that preventative maintenance is a key factor in ensuring the longevity of equipment. To complement this we have a large maintenance team, who apart from regular maintenance and repair, oversee the refurbishment of our equipment to extract second and even third lives from selected machines," Anton says. "We don't have a fixed policy on machine replacement but will judge any machine on its merit and replace it when we feel it is due."



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Ebrahim Astree, (left) with Anton Weststrate (Jnr), Operational Manager West Reef Plant Hire.

As luck would have it, the Weststrates were in the market for two new excavators in the 40-ton class when Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Ebrahim Astree, and his colleague, Product Support Representative, Refiloe Mokone, visited the company at its Heidelberg head office in January 2023. "We were very impressed with the product knowledge of both Ebrahim and Refiloe on the merits of the Kobelco SK380XDLC-10 Excavators and having had the experience of this well-known Japanese brand, going back to 2009 when we owned some of their 20-ton machines, it made the decision easy for us," Anton adds. "A client of ours also sang the brand's praises and we duly committed to two new Kobelco SK380XDLC-10 machines, which were delivered in July 2023."

"We ultimately chose the Kobelco SK380XDLC-10 Excavator for a number of reasons, which include the right price, proven reliability, and low cost of ownership in the long run," Anton continues. "As our business model sees us extract a long life from any machine such as the Kobelco with its simple yet rugged design, we have enough confidence in the brand to believe that these two machines will still be giving us a solid return on our investment over 10 to 15 years' time. Knowing we have the likes of Bell Equipment offering technical support and genuine parts, increases our confidence and fully justifies our decision."

The two new Kobelco SK380XDLC-10 Excavators have been deployed at two different sites with the first being a large industrial plant where it is used to build an ash deposit. At the second site, situated in the Vaal Triangle, the machine is used to mine sand near a river and load trucks that fetch the product from a large sand screening operation.

"We're pleased to say that our seasoned operators took to the new Kobelco SK380XDLC-10 Excavators seamlessly and report that the controls are smooth and responsive while the cabs offer real comfort and good all-around visibility," Anton says. "While we work on dry rates without the challenges of fuel cap limits, we've been able to confidently assure our clients of at least a 15% saving on fuel as these Kobelcos just seem to purr along while still delivering more than adequate hydraulic flows."

The pair of Kobelco Excavators have been bought with standard warranties of 12 months or 2 500 hours as, according to Anton, they prefer doing their own maintenance once the warranties have run their course and are geared for the task with trained staff and a large well-equipped workshop.

"We're pleased that a solid company such as Bell Equipment distributes and backs a great brand such as Kobelco as we already have an established relationship with Bell Equipment from the six Bell B40D ADTs we have running on a coal mine near Middelburg," Anton mentions.



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JCB Wheel Loader keeps production going at Much Asphalt Gqeberha

The 'just in time' concept is often used in industry as a cost-saving method to cut down on keeping large inventory, but in the asphalt industry it is the norm that demands that all components from raw materials to mechanical tools create a synergy without which there would be no product to sell.



Asphalt is made when mixing raw aggregates, supplied by quarries, with bitumen, a by-product of the fuel refining industry. At the Much Asphalt plant in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth), the company's Maintenance Supervisor of some 34 years, Louis Blume, tells us more: "We're a major supplier of asphalt to SANRAL (the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited), a host of district and local municipalities, private contractors, and even smaller customers like plumbers who all work with asphalt in one way or another.

We have 10 different mixes that we make up and these each contain different sizes of dry aggregates that we receive from various quarries in our area. The different aggregates are stockpiled in separate concrete compartments."

The other raw product, bitumen, is obtained from fuel refineries where it is pumped into road tankers at 120°C and then kept hot during transit to arrive at Much Asphalt's plant in Gqeberha at a temperature of around 150°C to maintain and improve its viscosity.

"We receive our orders for the following day's delivery during the afternoon and then plan our production," Louis adds. "We use a wheel loader to load the bins with the various aggregates from where the exact amounts are weighed to be mixed with the hot bitumen."

The machine in this case is a JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader with a standard 2,6 cubic metre bucket. Much Asphalt took delivery of it in May 2022 after their previous loader was moved to another branch.



Louis Blume, Much Asphalt's Maintenance Supervisor at the Gqeberha plant.

"Having the new JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader has boosted our confidence to keep delivering the quality product that we're known for, as given the tight timeframes we work to we simply cannot afford to have equipment go down in our production cycles," Louis explains. "Our JCB Wheel Loader would normally be active for around 10 hours in a regular day shift but when we're under pressure and work extended shifts, that number could increase to anything between 13 to 19 hours in a 24-hour cycle."

Louis adds that during a normal day shift, their JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader would load 1 000 tons of dry aggregates into the bins and has other duties too like stockpiling the aggregates that are delivered to ensure easier loading. Working on a concrete base, the JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader's bucket is fitted with a half-arrow cutting edge.

"We chose the JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader after lengthy consultations with Bell Equipment's Sales Representative in our area, Tom Swartz, who advised us on the similarity of the machine's features and capabilities compared to our previous model," Louis adds. "These criteria included its power, breakout force and bucket size, and we're well pleased with our eventual choice."

The JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader boasts a Cummins 685,9 engine which produces 132kW of gross power and 786Nm of torque at 1 300 rpm. Its breakout force of 147kN allows it to easily handle the dry but abrasive aggregate loads it constantly feeds into the asphalt plant. The operator enjoys good visibility from the ROPS/FOPS certified cab where air-conditioning and a reverse camera help to keep his attention on working efficiently and safely. An automatic reverse fan and turbo pre-cleaner take care of the engine's health.

Much Asphalt's new JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader had just passed the 1 000-hour mark when we saw it. The machine was bought with an extended warranty to 6 000 hours or 36 months on its wet drivetrain and a Bell Care Package to the same limits, which will see mechanics from Bell Equipment, as the official South African distributor for JCB equipment, service the machine.

"Our city, Gqeberha, is not known as the 'windy city' for nothing and due to the swirling and penetrating dust we experience when working with the aggregates on windy days, we've asked Bell Equipment to schedule intermittent services at 250 and 750 hours as well, which we're happy to pay for," Louis says.

"As we're intent on running this JCB 436ZX Wheel Loader to high hours, experience has taught us that preventative maintenance is key in achieving this."

Louis has high praise for Bell Equipment's personnel in the local Gqeberha branch. "We've had the pleasure of having Bell service our previous loader and I quite frankly won't work with any other equipment supplier as the levels of service and care we get from these chaps is off the scale. From Gert Nelson the Branch Manager to Tom Swartz in sales and not forgetting the mechanics, Daniel van der Walt and Kenneth Meiring, who will always give us a call after doing a service or repair to find out whether everything was to our satisfaction.

"All these gentlemen are great ambassadors for the Bell and JCB brands," he says.

Kobelco Excavators prove their worth at Premium Plant Hire & Civils

South Africa's northernmost province Limpopo is blessed with an abundance of mineral, cultural and agricultural wealth. On the agricultural side, the jewel in this green crown is undoubtedly the area around Tzaneen and here the locals will tell you that they love everything that's green, from young bananas to especially avocados and mangoes for these point to sustainable job creation and a thriving local economy.

But now there's a new shade of blue-green or turquoise in the area that is causing some hearts to beat faster while also benefitting the local economy.

Local resident, Renier Reyneke, had worked in insurance for many years when he realised that local fruit and vegetable producers around Tzaneen needed to get their fresh produce to the larger markets in Gauteng. "In 2003, I bought an eight-ton truck with which we transported the local fresh produce to those larger, more demanding markets. In time the demand for reliable transport grew so much that we sold our insurance brokerage to concentrate on this business, and so our company Premium Trucking was born," he says. "We're proud to say that we now run a fleet of 34 refrigerated and tautliner trucks and the latter are often loaded with essential supplies like cement on the return journeys from Gauteng."

In 2011, Renier saw a gap in the local market for the supply of sand and stone for the construction industry and, with two small wheeled loaders bought from the Tzaneen branch of Bell Equipment, he started supplying sand and stone.

"We use Finlay 683 Screens to separate the materials into sand and aggregates and currently own two such machines with one bought from Bell Equipment and the other on the used market," he says. "This side of our business, Premium Sand and Stone, is now run by our daughter, Renette du Preez, who trained as a teacher but is thriving in this role."

Renier and his wife, Annette, also have a son, Renier Jnr, who with two commerce degrees also works within the group. "When Renier Jnr joined the business, we decided to grow our plant hire offering coupled with small civil works and Premium Plant Hire & Civils now has earthmoving equipment working all over Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Gauteng," Renier continues. "During recent droughts we saw support from many farmers wanting to build dams on their farms."

The Premium Group has grown to now consist of four divisions namely Premium Trucking, Sand and Stone, Plant Hire & Civils and Premium Readymix. The latter has two concrete ready-mix plants in Tzaneen, one in Hoedspruit and another in Thohoyandou.





Renier Reyneke Jnr, Renier Reyneke Snr and Renette du Preez with Charl Coertse, Bell Tzaneen's Sales Representative.

"As far as I can remember, we've always had yellow equipment from Bell Equipment and apart from the excellent products, we've enjoyed the company's technical support as well," says Renier Jnr. "Over time we've owned 12 machines bought from Bell Equipment in Tzaneen and these include the aforementioned Wheeled Loaders, the Finlay Screens, a Grader, Backhoe Loaders and some Rollers. "We also own a Bell B25B Articulated Dump Truck (ADT) that we use in the aggregates division, and despite its age, it still works every day," he says.

Renier Jnr has grown Premium Plant Hire & Civils into a company with a solid reputation for delivering projects on time and on budget, and has expanded its offering to include bulk earthworks and the construction of platforms for large civil construction projects like shopping malls in Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Gauteng. On the agricultural side, the company does de-bushing and land preparation that involves creating earthen ridges for the planting of macadamia and avocado orchards.

"In 2020 we needed a new excavator to replace an older machine and after thoroughly researching the wider excavator market and receiving information on hydraulic oil flows in Kobelco Excavators from Bell Equipment, we settled on a Kobelco SK210LC-10

Excavator, which has proved to be a revelation for us in the way it has performed," Renier Jnr says. "Knowing what these machines cost, the Kobelco SK210LC-10 machine's price was extremely competitive and its performance over the past 5 000 trouble-free hours has been remarkable."

Renier Jnr mentions the speed with which the machine builds ridges in especially agricultural applications making it a sought-after piece of equipment amongst the company's farming clients. Whether the machine is working with G5 aggregates or de-bushing Eucalyptus trees, an average fuel burn of 13 litres an hour seems to satisfy all the company's clients.

"We've subsequently bought two new, Kobelco SK220XD-10 Excavators and plan to slowly replace our fleet of 10 excavators with Kobelco Excavators," adds Renier Snr. "We're happy with the machine's standard warranty of three years or 5 000 hours as these machines just don't break down."

"We just love these quiet turquoise Kobelco Excavators for their ease of operation, speed and sustained performance and we look forward to the time when our entire excavator fleet is one colour," the father and son duo echo.

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.

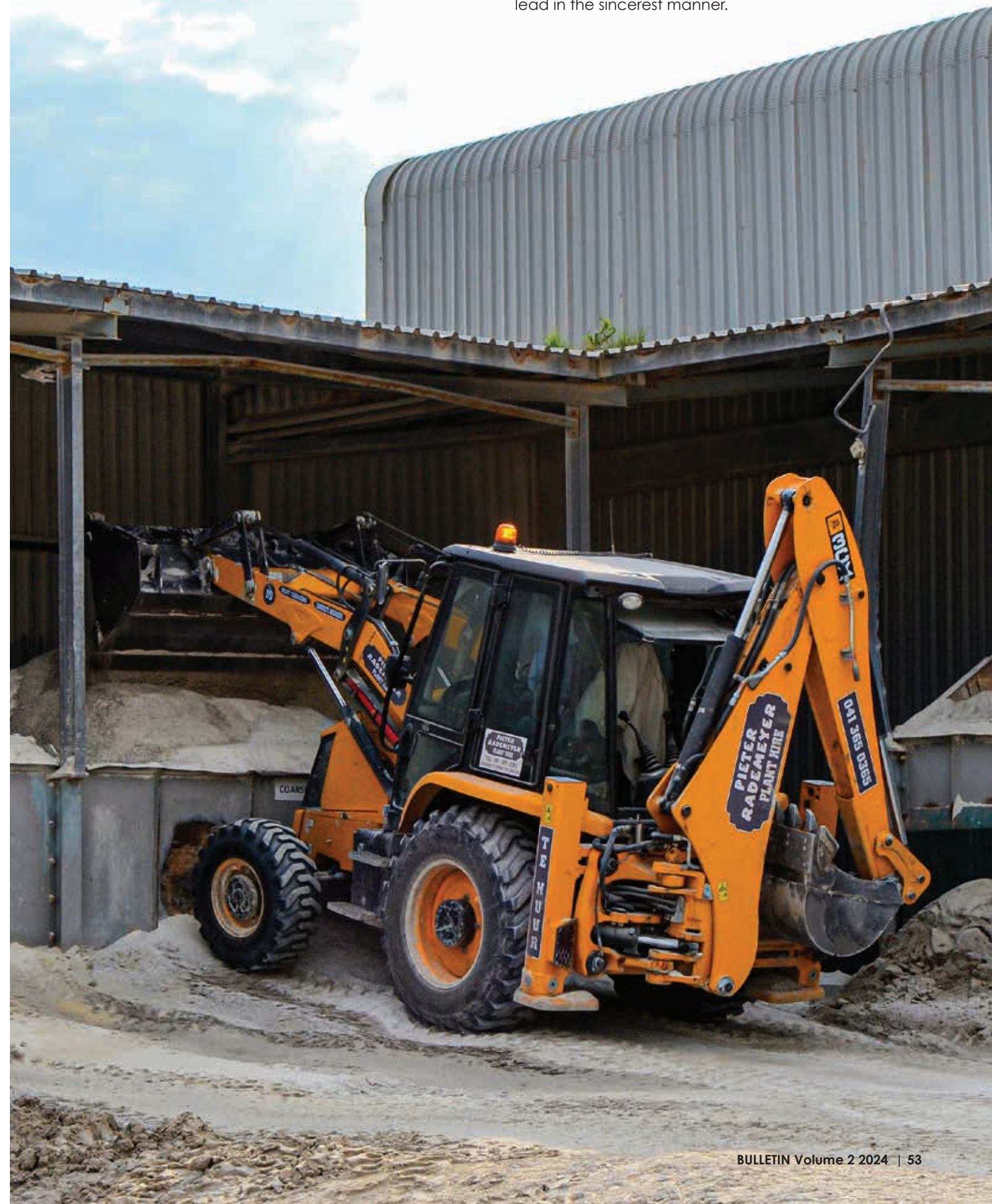
"We were very pleased to hear that a strong South African company like Bell Equipment had been appointed as the local distributor for the JCB brand and in March 2023, we contacted Tom Swartz, the Bell Equipment Sales Representative, to talk about replacement machines for our fleet," Pieter says. "Bell 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 framed 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.



Jetteson Timbers invests in four new Bell Loggers

Nestled in the picturesque KwaZulu-Natal Midlands area of Karkloof is Jetteson Timbers, a quintessential family-owned and operated business. At the helm is Brendon Raw, who is living proof that hard work creates opportunity and you don't have to be booksmart to be successful.

Brendon grew up in Karkloof, outside Howick, where his parents owned 90 hectares of land with a trading store. He had always been drawn to the practicalities of life rather than scholarly pursuits, so after completing school and his army conscription, he was eager to start working. He began running the family trading store with Ninette, whom he had met during his time in the army, and later married.

The partnership has been incredibly fruitful as they have grown an impressive business while raising a family. Their daughter, Justine, now lives in the Cape and works as a marketer in the wine industry. Hayden, their son, is completing a BCom Business Management degree and has recently moved home to work as a Junior Manager at Jetteson Timbers.

Brendon recalls that an opportunity to fell wattle for two farmers got him involved in timber contracting, starting out with only a chainsaw and tractor. "We grew from there into a reasonable contracting business that, at one stage, was harvesting 10 000t of timber per month, running a day and a night shift, seven days a week. It was nightmare stuff.



"Then I started sawmilling in a small way about 20 years ago, and that grew and overtook the contracting business. We phased out contracting and started buying blocks of timber and harvesting for our own sawmill."

Today, the company employs about 130 people and does everything in-house, including transporting their own timber and finished products. Controlling every aspect of the business simplifies life, which Brendon says is "challenging enough with everything we do". The harvesting business still supplies the sawmill, but Jetteson Timbers now owns about 2 500 hectares of land and grows its own timber on 1 000 hectares of gum and pine plantations. This comprises Tweefontein farm in the Karkloof area and two farms further away in the Kamberg.

The mill processes about 65 cubic metres of pine per day, which includes both structural and industrial pine. All the timber is kiln dried and the industrial timber for pallets is sold in Pietermaritzburg, Cato Ridge and, to a lesser degree, Durban. About 80% of the structural timber products are sold to Timber Solutions in Howick, which Brendon started 12 years ago and later sold to his nephew, who has built up the business. Gum is sold to a veneer plant in Estcourt.

Brendon's relationship with Bell goes way back. "It's probably been 25 years since I bought my first Bell Tri-Wheeler for timber contracting," he says. "For a long time now, we've had nine in our fleet and that just works for us. Four of them work at the sawmill and five are on the farms."

The four new Bell 225F Loggers were purchased to replace old A-series machines that were around 15 to 18 years old and had clocked between 15 000 to 30 000 hours. The first machine was delivered to Tweefontein in June 2023, the second and third units went to the Kamberg and the mill respectively in July and August, and the fourth machine also went to the Kamberg in February 2024. The machines were supplied with anti-siphon devices in the diesel tanks to guard against fuel theft.

"We put two new machines in the Kamberg because it's so far away and I know for the next five years, at least, I'm not going to have problems with those machines like pipes bursting and breakdowns," Brendon explains.

The Loggers on the farms generally work seven to eight hours per day pulling trees to a central site, sorting, stacking, and loading trucks. They handle about 50t of timber per day, which can be 5,2m or 2,5m lengths depending on market needs at the time. Brendon is full of praise for his old workhorses: "Those old Loggers with the Vickers pumps were the best Loggers Bell have ever made in my mind. So easy to fix; you can fix a wheel motor or a pump in two to three hours. You don't need a specialist, and you can fix it in the plantation, wherever, it's easy."



However, he is grateful for the improvements on the F-series: "There are so many advantages with these new ones. The big thing is safety, and I bought the 225Fs with operator doors for that reason."

Brendon appreciates the lower centre of gravity, due to the weight transfer with the diesel tank positioning and the wider wheelbase, as further safety improvements making the machine more stable. And, with an average fuel burn of 4,5 to 5 litres and hour, the new F-series machines run on about a litre an hour less fuel than their A-series counterparts, and much quieter due to the water-cooled engine.

"They are a lot more complicated, but I have faith that they will last just as long," he says. The longevity of his old machines he attributes to servicing every 250 hours. "All those that we sold were still fine, they weren't losing oil. The key is servicing. Oil and filters are cheap; it's just the time."

Bell will service the new Loggers every 500 hours in the warranty period, and this aligns with Jetteson Timbers, which now services their machines every 500 hours after switching to semi-synthetic oil. "We've done that across the board for every vehicle we own because with these new oils you can service every 500 hours with no problem. The semi-synthetic oil isn't that much

more expensive but you're saving yourself all that time for servicing, the cost of oil and filters, and the mechanic's time. It's made a huge difference from a mechanic that is servicing madly every 250 hours to now being able to do other things."

As the company continues to develop, Brendon remains focused on simplifying operations and maximising sustainability, which includes responsible forestry practices to preserve the soil for future generations. This dedication to quality and self-reliance is sure to see Jetteson Timbers grow to be as enduring as the trees themselves.

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Kirsten & Tulleken 'digs' its SK300LC-10 Kobelco Excavator

As industry leaders in the supply of building materials to construction companies and farmers alike in the greater Southern Cape, Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer is known for the distinct red colour of their tipper truck bins.



And when recently, they needed a new loading tool for a quarry they own, they consulted with their yellow machine supplier of choice to supply them with a turquoise-coloured excavator.

Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer was founded in George in 1984. Since then, the company has built a solid reputation as a supplier of quality sand, stone aggregate, and ready-mix concrete. Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer has a fleet of 26 trucks in various tonnages that deliver material as far as Knysna to the north of George, Meiringspoort inland and Mossel Bay to the town's south.

"We've been fortunate to not be restricted to only building contractors in our client base but also serve the substantial farming community in our area," says Herman Lamprecht, Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer's Fleet Manager. "Our agricultural sector spans traditional beef and mutton farming but also hops, strawberries, fruit and vegetables and so many of these farms require decent building material when maintaining their infrastructure."

Adding to their value-chain, Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer in 2018 established a quarry for road construction gravel and fill material to the southwest of the town. "As we dug deeper down, we found the material getting harder and harder and while we're now going through the process of obtaining a blasting ticket to properly loosen the material, we decided in 2022 that

a larger excavator with greater breakout force was needed to both dig and load the gravel," Herman says. "We researched the wider excavator market where there really is a wide choice of machines on offer. In the end we chose a Kobelco SK300LC-10 machine supplied to us by Bell Equipment, through that company's knowledgeable Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, who has been looking after so much of our yellow equipment needs for a long time."

Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer received its Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator in late 2022 and the machine has since clocked a little over 1 000 hours working daytime shifts only.

"The gravel we load is very abrasive and we've swapped out the Kobelco SK300LC-10's standard bucket of 1,7-cubic metre capacity for a rock bucket of around 1,4-cubic metres," Herman adds. "Our operators though, having cut their teeth on 20-ton excavators speak highly of the Kobelco's smooth controls and delivering much more power which in turn leads to lower levels of operator fatigue."

"We chose the Kobelco for several reasons. Price and availability were important but having the assurance of the proven Hino drivetrain delivering greater breakout force and knowing that we have Bell Equipment's technical support made the choice so much easier."



Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer's Fleet Manager, Herman Lamprecht, with Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson.



Herman reports average fuel consumption of 14 to 18 litres per hour depending on whether the Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator is loading the loose material or digging it with the latter demanding higher hydraulic flows from the engine.

Kirsten & Tulleken Vervoer has financed their Kobelco SK300LC-10 Excavator over 36 months and, while it has a 12-month/2 500-hour warranty, Bell Equipment will still undertake all servicing during the finance period.

"The reassurance that we get from Bell Equipment servicing the machine beyond its warranty period is good for us as all the equipment we've bought from Bell Equipment gets special care from the likes of Koos

Matthee and Teon Bosch working out of the Bell Equipment branch here in George," Herman says. "The same care is lavished on our older Bell and newer JCB machines and we're well pleased with Bell Equipment's response times and parts and service kits holdings."

"It's often said that the care that one machine gets leads to the sale of another and we can tell you that as the material in the bottom of our quarry becomes more challenging to extract, we'll be looking to buy an even heavier excavator for that purpose and turquoise seems to have become our favourite colour."

New JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders range packed with new features

The highly anticipated range of updated JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders arrived on South African shores in July and promises to build on the brand's popularity with new features designed to provide improved comfort, versatility, and productivity, and ultimately reduce costs and increase efficiency.

Bell Equipment Sales Product Manager for JCB products, Massyn Jansen Van Vuuren says: "This new model range replaces the existing JCB 3CX Eco, 3DX and 3CX Global product lineup. The new cab makeover is the most noticeable change and is bound to impress. The striking new design uses high quality moulded plastics, and the pillars and roof are light grey in colour to give a lighter and more spacious feel.

He continues: "Most importantly the new cab places a huge focus on operator safety, comfort, and ease of operation. For example, the loader lever has been simplified to operate like a wheel loader. The 3CX range now has a single lever loader control incorporating an F-N-R directional switch so an operator can control the loader and transmission with one hand. In addition, there is a proportional switch on

the side of the lever to operate the 6-in-1 bucket, which further reduces the effort needed to operate the machine."

The new EasyShift transmission with 'kick down' is standard across the range and simplifies gear changing, which is done by rotating the F-N-R directional lever next to the steering wheel. The kick down switch is located on the floor and allows the operator to drop from second to first gear when extra push power is needed for loading or site stripping. Massyn continues: "All cabs are ROPS/FOPS certified and the seat rotation area is larger to give the operator more room, which together with improved cab sealing to keep out water and dust, creates a cleaner and more pleasant workspace. There is also improved visibility to the working area behind the machine."



The spacious interior of the new JCB 3CX Pro places a huge focus on operator safety, comfort, and ease of operation.

In addition, the 3CX Plus model features a new high performance HVAC air conditioning system with 21 adjustable air vents strategically positioned around the front console, 'B' pillar and rear of the machine to direct air flow to maximise comfort and demisting performance. The 3CX has a fan mounted on the B pillar as standard.

Under the bonnet, the JCB 3CX range benefits from improved efficiency in the hydraulics thanks to new variable displacement piston pumps that are standard across all models. The larger pump provides 150lpm, a 39% increase over the previous model. This allows the engine speed to be reduced whilst maintaining productivity effectively reducing fuel consumption. Furthermore, the variable flow pump only provides flow on demand and backs-off the flow when not required, to reduce load on the engine and improve fuel consumption.

The Plus and Pro models have a Smooth Ride System for improved roading as standard and can be provided with a 6-in-1 shovel with the option of flip over forks for added versatility. "The 6-in-1 shovel can be used for dozing, loading, digging, grabbing, spreading, and grading while the optional flip over forks are ideal for machines that will double up as a forklift for pick and place activities around the work



Inside the JCB 3CX Pro: all cabs are ROPS/FOPS certified with improved cab sealing.

site and to unload vehicles," he adds. Lighting has been improved with six LED work lights instead of halogen lights. Two adjustable LEDs are fitted on the front and four on the rear, of which two can be adjusted. During night-time operations, the operator will be able to safely exit both the machine and worksite by aid of a 'guide me home' light system that keeps the work lights illuminated for 30 seconds after the ignition has been turned off.

Other useful standard features include an in-cab boom lock, front and rear wash/wiper functions, Return To Dig function, electronic throttle control, Bluetooth radio and USB ports, front and side LCD

display, an adjustable steering column, and a battery isolator key, which allows the operator to isolate the machine's electrics while carrying out machine maintenance.

"All in all, the new 3CX range has a machine to suit all requirements and we expect these new machines to add real value and strengthen JCB's position as the world's leading brand of Backhoe Loaders. We have a fleet of units that will be used across the country to familiarise customers with the new range and the improvements, so we encourage customers to contact their nearest Bell dealer and experience the machines for themselves," says Massyn.

THE JCB 3CX RANGE FEATURES:		
3CX	3CX PLUS	3CX PRO
55kW naturally aspirated engine	68.6kW turbo engine	68.6kW turbo engine
Manual controls	Manual controls	Seat mounted servo controls
Front general purpose (GP) bucket	Front general purpose (GP) bucket	Front 6-in-1 bucket
Optional: flip over forks	Optional: 6-in-1 bucket Optional: flip over forks	Optional: general purpose (GP) bucket Optional: flip over forks
Fixed dipper	Fixed dipper Optional: 'extradig' dipper	Fixed dipper Optional: 'extradig' dipper
Rear 600mm bucket with optional trenching bucket	Rear 600mm bucket with optional trenching bucket	Rear 600mm bucket with optional trenching bucket
	Optional: Rear auxiliary hammer pipework	Rear auxiliary bi-directional circuit
Fan only	Standard HVAC	Standard HVAC
	Various other attachments available on request	Various other attachments available on request



The new range of JCB 3CX Backhoe Loaders promises to build on the brand popularity with features designed to provide improved comfort, versatility, and productivity.

Bell expands BETA Parts range and footprint

Less than a year after launching its Bell Equipment Trusted Alternative (BETA) Parts offering, Bell Equipment has expanded its footprint of South Africa, and Zambia to include the major articulated dump truck markets of the European and United States dealer network.



Bell Equipment Director of Aftermarket and Product Support, Meltus Badenhorst.



BETA Parts provides Bell ADT, Tractor, and Tri-Wheeler customers with a wider range of options to suit their specific needs.

Bell Equipment Director of Aftermarket and Product Support, Meltus Badenhorst, said: "We introduced BETA Parts after identifying the need to give customers a convenient and competitive parts alternative, endorsed by Bell, for their more mature machines, or for those looking for cost effective solutions. We have been pleased with the interest shown by our African-based customers and their acceptance of the range and are now ready to offer BETA Parts in other regions.

"Our team is also constantly looking at opportunities to grow the range and has supplemented the pilot range of alternators and starters with turbos, V-belts and ground-engaging teeth for buckets."

According to Meltus, BETA Parts bridges the gap between Original Bell Parts, the company's premium quality parts that are designed to OEM specifications and used in production, and Bell ReMan, which are major components that have been remanufactured to meet OEM specification. Original Bell Parts and Bell ReMan have a one-year/unlimited hours warranty while BETA Parts carry a six-month/1000-hour warranty.

At the other end of the scale, Bell Used Parts, which are available in the South African dealer network are also available but do not carry a warranty. He says: "It's about giving our customers choices and so that we can fully support their needs throughout their Bell ownership experience. Our premium Original Bell Parts is our 'alpha' or leading parts brand, and BETA Parts is the next best alternative giving customers more cost-effective parts that have less risk than other cheaper parts because they are endorsed by Bell and covered by a Bell warranty.

"Choosing BETA Parts also simplifies the purchasing process, offering a one-stop-shop experience that eliminates the need for customers to search and compare prices from multiple suppliers in their quest for savings."

By offering BETA Parts, Bell Equipment ensures that Bell ADT, Tractor, and Tri-Wheeler customers have a wider range of options to suit their specific needs, as well as the convenience and assurance of dealing directly with Bell Equipment's extensive dealer network in regions where BETA Parts are available.



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SK210LC

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**BELL
LEATHER
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BLACK

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**BELL
VELDSKOEN**

TAN
SIZE: 6-13

INCL. VAT

R1 000⁰⁰

NO STEEL CAP



**JCB 8855
SLIP ON
BOOTS**

BROWN
SIZE: 6-13

INCL. VAT

R1 300⁰⁰

NO STEEL CAP



**JCB 8844
LACE UP
BOOTS**

BROWN
SIZE: 6 - 13

INCL. VAT

R1 300⁰⁰

NO STEEL CAP



**BELL ADT
B45E SCALE
MODEL**

INCL. VAT

R1 600⁰⁰



**BELL ADT
B60E SCALE
MODEL**

INCL. VAT

R1 800⁰⁰



**JCB 3CX
BACKHOE SCALE
MODEL**

INCL. VAT

R1 800⁰⁰

BELL
PROMO SHOP

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