



  
**White's Diesels** **25**  
 Truck & Bus Parts YEARS

# ANNIVERSARY BOOKLET

The passion of the people –  
 doing what drives us for  
**25 years**





# INTRODUCTION



Passion is a powerful, compelling emotion. In context at Whites Diesels, it's the unbridled enthusiasm we have for what we do. It's what's driven us for 25 years. Some people may find that hard to understand... after all, we 'just' supply spare parts, right? Yep... but what they don't get is that being in the automotive industry flows through our company's system like blood through our veins... like diesel through a Benz.

We take great pride in sourcing and supplying top quality genuine bus and truck parts and delivering service above and beyond the call of duty. We've been doing it since 1991. And while the parts we supply might not have the vehicle manufacturer logos on them, each and every one is made to vehicle manufacturer specifications. All top quality too.

We've maintained this fervour for what we do for a quarter of a century now... and that's why we decided to publish this special anniversary book. We want to share with others just how proud we are of the work we do... and let you know that we intend doing it for another 25 years and beyond.

So you'll read stories in this book about one of our Founders and other Whites Diesels staff... about their passion, mostly for motor vehicles outside business hours. But the book isn't just about us... it's about you too.

You see, at Whites Diesels, we not only like to hire people who share our passion for the industry, we like to work with them as well. And so within the pages of this book, you'll also read the stories of some of our customers and suppliers whose zeal and ardour for motor vehicles – whether cars, bikes, trucks or buses - matches our own. We may all be a little crazy... but would you have it any other way?

**Thanks for being part of our story. Enjoy!**



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# A COWBOY AND HIS INDIANS

**Darryl White**  
Founder

**Darryl White - classic Aussie character, successful businessman and museum owner!** Darryl's always loved pulling apart old vehicles and recovering parts he can use again. He's been doing that "forever". *"I've been a collector since I was a kid... and one of the things I most liked collecting was secondhand parts... particularly from motorcycles."*

And nothing much seems to have changed. Darryl still loves to tear apart old trucks and motorcycles and discover gold. *"In fact, what was once a hobby, became more serious and then got out of control!"* says Darryl. *"Apart from my 'real job', I now own and operate The Indian Motorcycle Museum of Australia. I just love those bikes."*

Darryl first became interested in Indians over 25 years ago... and not just the motorcycles themselves, but all the great memorabilia that surrounds them. The first Indian he owned was a 1922 Powerplus but two years later it made way for a 1944 Chief, a motorcycle Darryl still owns and rides today.

*"There's just something about these motorcycles",* says Darryl. *"They just take your eye. I have two of them on display at the Bracken Ridge Tavern (20 minutes north of Brisbane) and people just stare at them for ages. They've been used by police forces, the fire brigade... even the US Army in WWII. Such a history!"*

Quite a history indeed... originally manufactured in 1901, the Indian factory team took the first three places in the 1911 Isle of Man Tourist Trophy and during that decade, Indian became the largest manufacturer of motorcycles in the world.





The range of collectors' items Darryl's gathered in his museum in the north Brisbane suburb of Geebung is nothing short of amazing. There are motorcycles from the early 1900's including an Indian 8-Valve Racer from 1914... there are post-war models from board racers and hill climb bikes to a rare USA Fire Department sidecar - fascinating bikes that helped shape everyday life for generations and have left their indelible mark in history.

And then there's the associated memorabilia – from leather jackets to medals worn like war tributes to belt buckles and period Indian pocket watches. There's a 1916 program of the '14th Annual Meet' of the Federation of American Motorcyclists. Period advertisements and posters from famous race meetings adorn the walls. And of course, there's the famous Indian logo on signs of all description.

There's even an Indian-branded pigskin football from a gridiron game of decades past and an Indian Fire Patrol helmet. And of course there are parts... thousands of them!

Darryl's passion has taken him all over the world and helped him forge lifelong friendships... he's that kind of character.

The museum's Facebook page has more than 17,000 'Likes' and in his own words: *"We've been privileged to host a number international Indian Motorcycle enthusiasts from the USA, New Zealand, Italy, Sweden and the UK to name just a few points of origin."*

It's this passion that led Darryl to his chosen career and has guided him throughout. He founded the business that would become Whites Diesels 25 years ago in 1991. In a move that would define the company's entire future, he flew to Germany and sourced all his own parts suppliers.

Darryl was originally the CEO, but as recently as July 2015, he stood down from this position to *"do what I do best"* ... so he's now in charge of Whites' Secondhand Division. He still loves dismantling vehicles and recovering and selling parts. He's still that kid who loves collecting.

# India

World

*"Apart from my 'real job', I now own and operate The Indian Motorcycle Museum of Australia. I just love those bikes."*





# Indian Scout

World's most popular Motorcycle





# “I LIKE TO GO FAST... IN ANYTHING!”

**Adam Betts**  
Regents Park Truck Alignment

**Adam Betts has been around trucks since he was 2.** At that tender age, he used to travel to and from work with his ‘old man’ and end up ‘covered in grease’. *“My dad was a boilermaker and mechanic, so I’d say his interest in mucking about with old cars has had a fairly good pull on my life”,* says Adam.

Adam’s been involved in the automotive industry, literally all his working life. In fact, he left school on a Friday and started work as an apprentice at Regents Park Truck Alignment the following Monday... and he’s never left!

*“Yep... I started work as an apprentice”,* said Adam, *“... worked my way up to become a Manager and when the boss decided to retire, he asked if I’d like to take over. So I now own the company I started with as a kid!”*

Adam’s been a customer of Whites Diesels for some 10 years, buying parts like shocks, shackles and kingpins to use for the steering repairs and wheel alignments he undertakes. He’s also a member of the

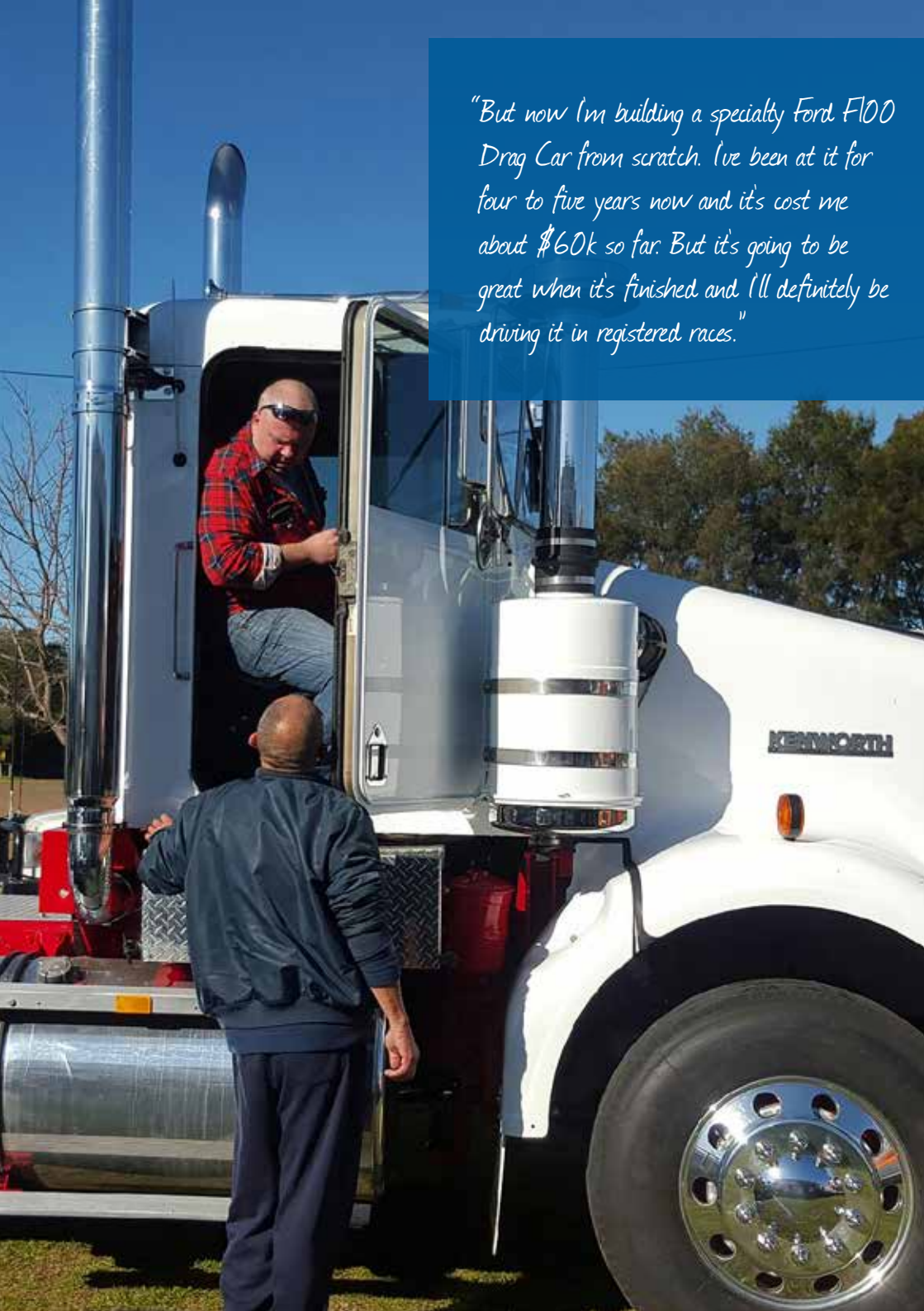
same Truck Club as Whites staffer Garry Houghton... the rather grandly named ‘Pioneer Timber Cutters Machinery Club’. There are about 75 members in the club who regularly drive to meeting places in their old trucks and then go on runs to towns where Truck Shows are being held. They love joining other “buffs, collectors and historians” as Adam calls them and chewing the fat over a cold one or two.

All of which sounds rather slow and sedentary... but Adam assures me there’s another side to him. *“I actually just love going fast”,* he says. *“That’s why I’m into Drag Racing. I started by driving old XY Falcons in street meets alongside my brother in his blown and injected Cortina. (We still practice in that one.)”*

*“But now I’m building a specialty Ford F100 Drag Car from scratch. I’ve been at it for four to five years now and it’s cost me about \$60k so far. But it’s going to be great when it’s finished and I’ll definitely be driving it in registered races.”*

I carefully asked Adam his age, to which he proudly answered: *“I’m only 42... and this is my passion! Besides which... it keeps me out of the pub, doesn’t it?”*

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“I MET MY FUTURE HUSBAND AT  
A RALLY CAR CLUB IN 1979 AND  
BECAME HIS NAVIGATOR...  
I’VE BEEN POINTING HIM IN THE  
RIGHT DIRECTION EVER SINCE!”

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**Caroline Sparkes**  
Financial Accounting Manager  
ZF Services Australia

**Caroline’s passion for motorsport was undoubtedly sparked by her dad, who raced motorbikes back in the 1940s.**

Growing up, she helped him pull apart and put together again all sorts of engines, from that of the family ski boat to Caroline’s first car – a Holden Torana 1200.

*“And then of course, there was the family ritual of watching the ‘Bathurst 500’ as it was called back in the ‘60s”, says Caroline. “The TV went on as soon as the broadcast started and the whole family sat in front of it all day!”*

So when it came to starting her career, it was a fair bet she’d follow her passion. Caroline has spent almost her whole working life in the automotive industry. Her first job ever was as a secretary at Wynn’s Australia – still a leading manufacturer of automotive products.

She achieved her financial services qualifications and progressed at Wynn’s from secretary to accountant. All of which eventually led to a job at ZF Group, which she has now held for 16 years. ZF is a German company that manufactures parts for cars and commercial vehicles, along with specialist plant equipment. It’s also involved in the rail, marine, defence and aviation industries.



Whites Diesels has been supplying high quality ZF products to its customers for many years - everything from shock absorbers to steering and transmission systems for their fleets of buses and trucks. Caroline is now the Financial Accounting Manager at ZF and has worked with Whites since her days in the After Market Trading and Sales & Service departments (since combined).

But when she leaves work at the end of a busy week, Caroline follows her passion into the weekend. *"I'd always loved watching car races, but my first experience of rallying was in 1978 when my sister took me to Canberra to see the Castrol International Rally. That experience, standing in a dark forest, seeing the lights of a rally car winding through the trees and gradually getting closer... and then hearing the scream of a BDA Escort as it flew past before disappearing into the night... I was hooked for life!"*

Caroline became a Lap Scorer for circuit events held at Amaroo Park Raceway, leading to a position with the Australian Racing Drivers Club working at the 1978 and '79 Bathurst 1000. Of course, there's only one place to go from being trackside and that was into the cars... and so from watching famous drivers like Australian greats Colin Bond and Ross Dunkerton and the flying Finn Ari Vatanen, she joined the North Shore Sporting Car Club – one of the most active rallying clubs in NSW – and got behind the wheel.

That proved to be a fateful move. At the end of 1979 she met a fellow rally tragic named John... she started navigating for him in rallies and less than two years later they were married. *"Our wedding cars were three Datsun 1600 Rally Cars",* says Caroline... *"... and part of our Honeymoon was spent surveying the forest roads of Batemans Bay for the upcoming State Championship. I've been in cars with him for a long time now and he's still driving me round the bend,"* she says with a laugh.

By 1980 she was driving her own machine – first a Ford Escort road car and later a yellow Datsun 1600 rally car, which her dad had helped she and John prepare for racing. She continued navigating for John in State Championship and Clubman rallies, while the roles were reversed when Caroline drove in Group 7 events. She considers her best result a 2nd placing as Group B Driver in the 1985 Group 7 Championship.

*“There’s just something special about rally driving”, says Caroline. “There’s no one else around to endanger you, so it’s probably safer than driving on Sydney roads. And as you’re competing against the clock, it really comes down to driver skill.”*

Both Caroline and John became involved organising events and in the 1990s, Caroline was made a Life Member of the North Shore Sporting Car Club in recognition of her contribution to the club. She and John had four children, two of whom share their parents’ interest in cars and racing. But while John still hits the trail on weekends, Caroline is a bit more cautious these days. In her words:

*“While our children were growing up I didn’t have as much time to spend on Motorsport... but now I’m getting involved again and this year I was appointed a member of the CAMS NSW Rally Panel, which oversees all CAMS rallies and rally sprints in the state. I may take more of a back seat rather than driving these days, but my passion’s never waned. Motorsport has given me so many years of enjoyment and friendships that will last a lifetime.*

*“So come October, I’ll be cheering the boys round Mount Panorama as loudly as ever.”*  
That’s the passion we’re talking about!





*"I'd always loved watching car races, but my first experience of rallying was in 1978 when my sister took me to Canberra to see the Castrol International Rally. That experience, standing in a dark forest, seeing the lights of a rally car winding through the trees and gradually getting closer... and then hearing the scream of a BDA Escort as it flew past before disappearing into the night... I was hooked for life!"*



# “FROM THE TIME MY DAD RESTORED A 1927 CHEVY IN THE LATE ‘60S, I WAS HOOKED!”

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## Garry Houghton

Purchasing & Procurement Manager  
Whites Diesels

**As with Caroline Sparkes’ story, the seed for Garry’s motor vehicle passion was sewn by his father.** Way back in 1967 when The Beatles were telling us ‘All You Need Is Love’, Garry’s dad was pouring his heart into the restoration of a 1927 Chevy (with a little help from his very young son). It was his pride and joy.

The family was living on a farm in the country at the time, but even after moving to the city, his dad soon bought another old car to restore... then another... and another!

Garry loved the whole process and at just 16 years of age, he bought and restored his own first car – an old Morris Major. That car had an interesting, if very brief, re-birth. On completion of the restoration, Garry (not yet old enough to have a license) sold it to a girl at his school, desperate for her first car. Having finally got his ‘P Plates’, he bought the car back from his friend... but it lasted just three days.

Garry turned the wrong way up a one-way street, swerved to avoid an oncoming car and ended up wrapped around a telegraph pole. No-one was injured, but the car was a write-off.

It was a while before Garry ventured back into restoring old cars but his passion remained undimmed. His career was always going to involve motor vehicles and it led him to Whites Diesels in 1998. He served in Sales until just last year before moving into





Purchasing & Procurement (with product development on the horizon). But back to that first love...

In 1989, after returning from a wonderfully restorative holiday in Europe, he bought an old Ford Ute, which this time lasted him 27 years! (He only sold it about three years ago.)

Like his dad before him, he couldn't be without a project and given he had a mate around the corner who owned a trucking company, Garry went right out and bought an old truck – a 1952 International L160. He talked two more mates into restoring their own trucks and before you knew it, the four of them were heading out together on 'Truck Runs' (think rallies for single 'truck tragics'. Not surprisingly, this was before Garry was married.)

A 'truck run' consists of travelling in convoy to venues all over the state - from Bathurst to Bargo and Penrith to Gundagai - and then attending events like 'The Dubbo Vintage Truck, Tractor & Quilt Show'. For two or three

days, they'd take their time soaking up the sights (often historic vehicles) and surviving on a diet of bacon, eggs and beer... and then drive home again. "It's about the adventure", says Garry.

The frequency of these trips naturally decreased after Garry married his beautiful wife Sumalinee in 2012, but the boys are still allowed to get together and plan trips away. Last year three of them made it all the way to The Alice! As Garry tells it:

*"One bloke didn't make it, as he didn't finish restoring his truck in time... in fact, it's still not finished! But I drove an old beauty that was literally in pieces when I bought it from Ed Lewis at Lewis Marina in Tarren Point. All the parts were there and in pretty good nick – the chassis, the cab... I just had to put them all together, buy a new bumper bar, a few door handles and the hood ornament. So this year we're off to Dubbo for some more fun."*



And when not restoring old trucks or looking after purchasing and procurement for Whites, how does Garry spend his spare time? *“Well, my wife’s from the north-east of Thailand, towards the border with Laos, so we make regular trips back there to see her family. It’s a beautiful place... just too hot! Right now we’re building a house in Thailand for Sumalinee’s mum, so we’ll have a bigger place to stay when we visit.”*

Will he keep restoring old trucks?  
*“Absolutely! They’re very sentimental things you know... although it can be an expensive hobby. One of my mates has spent the best part of \$100k on his latest project. The cab alone cost him \$24k... the interior another \$7k... the further he went, the more rust he found and the more he had to spend. But it’s now a beautiful truck.”*

It’d want to be Garry! If you want to deal with passionate people in the automotive industry, you’ll certainly find them at Whites!





*"One bloke didn't make it, as he didn't finish restoring his truck in time... in fact, it's still not finished!"*



# “I HAVE TWO HOBBIES IN RETIREMENT... MY CATTLE FARM AND COLLECTING OLD TRUCKS. I ONLY HAVE 12 AT THE MOMENT!”

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## **Robert Handley** Truck Tragic

**Robert Handley has been a motor vehicle enthusiast since he was a kid.**

*“I grew up on a farm and my dad had an earth moving business”, says Robert. “So I always loved the old trucks and other farm vehicles. I bought my first truck when I was just 19.”*



*“But funnily enough, my passion for actually collecting vehicles started with cars. At one stage I had a hundred of them... seriously!”*

Robert always worked in the motor trade. For over 25 years he worked in a business repairing and replacing windscreens on all sorts of vehicles... but because he could, he decided to retire at just 55 and enjoy life, following his passions.

For Robert, that meant buying a cattle farm in Taralga, a small farming community of only 300 people or so, just north of Goulburn, New South Wales... and getting back to his love of old trucks.

*“When I retired, I decided to sell all 100 of the cars I’d collected. So I held a big auction at Gray’s Online and got rid of the lot of them. That gave me the funds to begin over again and so I bought my first International.*

*“For some reason, my dad liked Austin trucks... but I was never a fan. My first truck was an International and now I have 11 of them, all manufactured between 1950 and 1980. But my real love at the moment is my 12th truck... a 1978 model 1419 Benz.*



*"She was in good nick when I bought her... still registered. She just needed a good tidy up, which I've now provided." And that was the purchase that led to Robert's association with Whites Diesels. He needed to buy some parts to 'tidy up' his beloved vehicle and a mate of his recommended Whites. "They had just what I needed and the parts did the trick."*

The pride of Robert's fleet is in fact a Tip Truck with a 22 foot body and a double sleeper cab. He drives it to wherever good old trucks are on offer – often to clearing sales on farms. He drives there, sleeps in the truck overnight, checks out the sale and if he buys another truck, he simply loads it onto the Benz and heads for home!

*"It's a great truck the Benz. If anything, it's over-engineered. You could never wear it out."* Along with his truck, Robert is a member of the 'Southern Tablelands Vintage Farm Machinery Club'... he has been for 12 years. Every year the club holds a rally in Taralga, so Robert doesn't need to travel far

for that one. He and the Benz do get around though... *"Just this week I took a quick trip to Cowra to get a load of hay for a neighbor... and next weekend we're off to Dubbo for a Truck Rally."* (Any excuse!)

Robert and his Benz (along with Rob's six grandchildren!) actually made the news this year, featuring on the front page of the Goulburn Post in a story about the Haulin' the Hume – an event for old trucks that runs along the Highway 31 route (the old Hume Highway) from Hawkesbury Showground all the way to Yass to raise funds for Autism Spectrum Australia. That's Rob's Benz behind him in the photo, with another truck on the back.

And what does his long-suffering wife make of Robert's passion? *"Ah, she's used to it by now. She knows it's part of who I am. She doesn't mind... too much."*

Aah... passion!



“I’M WITH A COMPANY  
THAT ALLOWS ME TO  
FOLLOW MY PASSIONS.”

**Jordan Greer**  
1st apprentice hired by  
Whites Diesels

**Jordan Greer has always been passionate about cars and bikes... and now he’s getting into trucks!**

Jordan was the first apprentice at Whites Diesels. It was 2013 and Jordan had just turned 20.

This was not company policy... it’s just that the business is usually in need of experienced sales personnel. However the company’s management team considers it a privilege to have brought Jordan on board at a young age and trained him in all facets of the business.

*“I’ve always been passionate about vehicles, spending all my spare time as a teenager driving cars and bikes”, said Jordan. “I’m someone who believes that you should be passionate about your career too, so it made sense to me to combine my love of all things automotive with my job.”*

That’s why Jordan’s first job was with Super Cheap Autos, but he then applied for and was accepted by Whites Diesels as our first ever apprentice. While formerly a fan of smaller vehicles only, Jordan fast gained an appreciation for commercial vehicles and their many component parts. He quickly set about learning the business from the ground up. He started in the warehouse and Dispatch Department and was then taught Customer Service. Along the way, he was always acquiring a sound knowledge of parts.





*"I love learning", says Jordan. "The things we learn impact on everything we do, every day. Without my drive and desire to learn I would never have started discovering what makes a vehicle tick... and I would never have been interested in discovering the rest of the world.*

*"That's my other great passion – Travel. Another thing I love about working here is that the company has been really flexible in allowing me to explore this other hunger of mine. In the last three years I've travelled on short trips to Thailand, Vanuatu and Bali... and later this year I'm heading to Europe!*

*"I'd certainly encourage other young people to consider an apprenticeship. You learn so much and it's a great confidence builder. The knowledge and experience you gain provide you with a great basis for a future career.*

*"I know I want to stay with Whites Diesels for as long as possible – I'd love to be here for life! My goal is to keep moving up within the organisation and my next target is to become a Sales Representative."*

You heard it here first people... if you're young and love the auto industry, come and knock on our door. If you know someone who'd make a good apprentice, please let us know... what we're looking for is passion.





# “I BOUGHT MY FIRST MOTOR SCOOTER WHILE I WAS STILL AT HIGH SCHOOL IN GERMANY.”

**Stefan Kisser**  
Product Manager SOE  
Hella Australia

**As a teenager, Stefan Kisser loved cars... but with very little disposable income, the first vehicle he was ever able to own was a Vespa motor scooter.** That purchase back in Germany sparked a lifelong passion. He graduated from that first Vespa to larger motor bikes and finally to a car in the mid-1990s. At that time, Stefan thought he'd left two wheel vehicles behind him for good... until he came to Australia.

Stefan is a mechanical engineer by trade and has always worked in the automotive industry. He started as an apprentice, processing plastic and rubber molds in a German tyre manufacturing company. He was there for 17 years. But in 2010 he decided to come to Australia... and he's never left.

He considers himself lucky to have landed a job with Hella Australia, a company born in Germany in 1899. (What were the chances... a German national finding a job in a German company, in Melbourne Australia?!!) Hella is most famous for manufacturing car headlights. However they've now evolved into a global organisation manufacturing all types of vehicle lighting as well as high performance electronics and more... and they also distribute parts for many renowned Original Equipment manufacturers.

Stefan quickly worked his way up to the position of Product Manager for one of those O.E. products – Mann Filters. They're made by an outfit called... (wait for it)... Mann + Hummell... yep – another company founded in Germany. In this position, Stefan was in charge of product management for key accounts... like Whites Diesels, with whom he formed a sound and friendly relationship that he still maintains even though his role at Hella has now changed somewhat.







But back to his passion for vintage scooters... soon after arriving in Australia, Stefan happened to come across an online ad. Someone was selling a *Vespa Super 150 from 1968*. Stefan thought about it for all of a minute before deciding to check it out. It was in good condition and as soon as he heard that typical two stroke engine sound, he fell in love with scooters all over again.

He bought that machine and within no time was enrolled as a member of the *Vespa Club of Melbourne* – a group of like-minded fans who meet regularly and organise rides and other events. He's now risen to the role of official Club Scrutineer, reviewing bikes and their documentation for registration with VicRoads as Historical or Modified classic motor cycles. And he now owns two Vespas himself – one the requisite vintage of more than 25 years old and so eligible for the Club Permit Scheme allowing him up to 90 days of riding per year – and the other a more recent White Vespa 200cc model with full registration for daily driving.

For good measure, two years ago he also bought what he tacitly calls “*my German project*” – a machine that had been used as a ‘Donor’ to help restore other scooters and therefore didn't have the original handlebar of the Heinkel Tourist 103 A0. The chrome handlebar and the original speedo and clock from that model are very hard to find these days. Both had been replaced on Stefan's purchase with components of the ‘later’ 1957 A1 model.

In April this year, less than a month after finishing the restoration, Stefan took his Heinkel on a Tasmanian scooter trip with the Vintage European Scooter Club of Melbourne. As he tells the story: “*I had only done about 200km on the Heinkel when I headed to Port Melbourne to get on board the ferry to Tasmania together with 11 other riders from Melbourne and Adelaide.*”



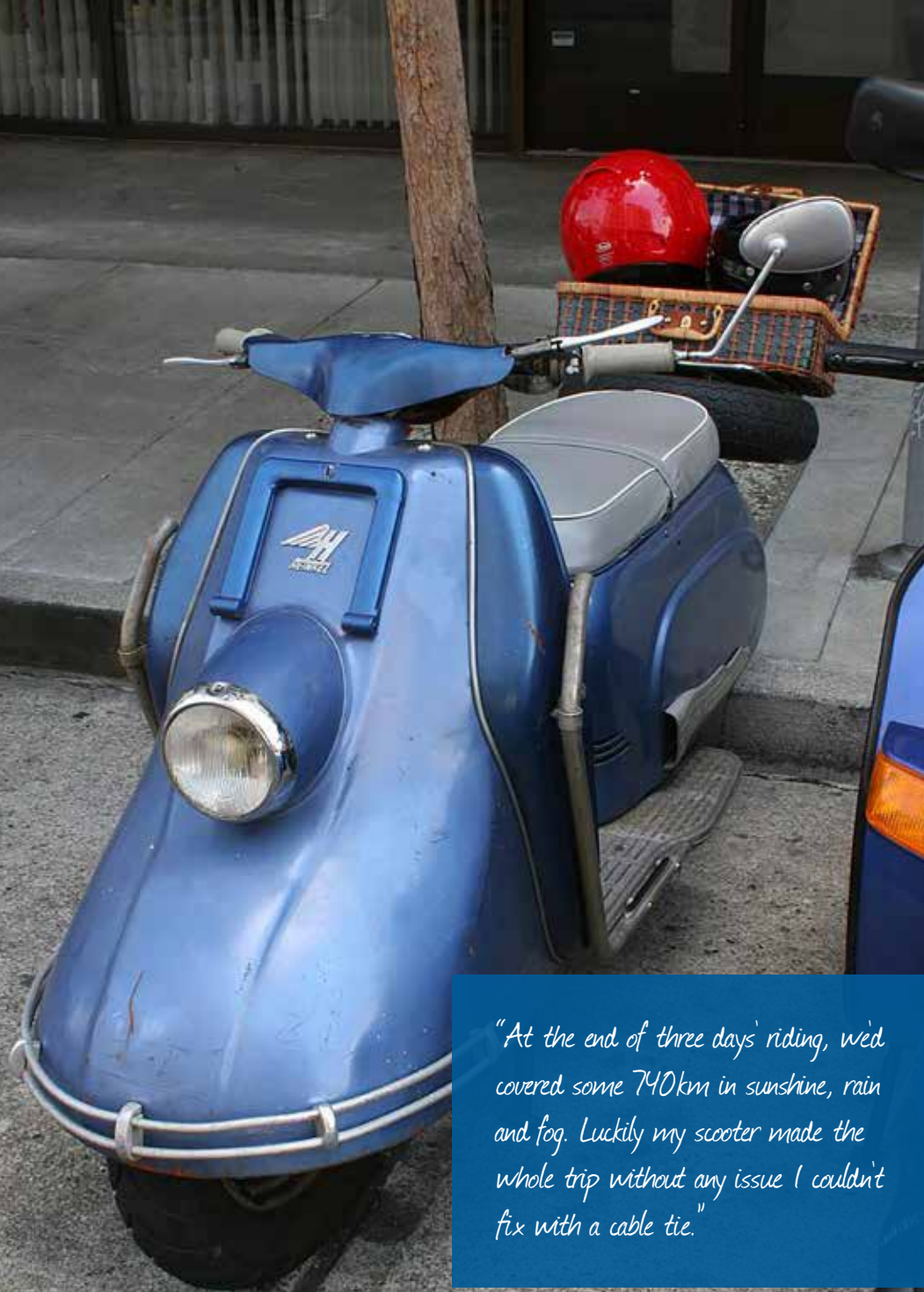
*"We drove for over 740km in sunshine, rain and fog. At one stage I took a wrong turn and lost the group. I was on my own for kilometers, the 60 year old headlights on my Heinkel giving me a maximum of 20 metres visibility through the mist. Luckily my scooter made the whole trip without any issues other than those I could fix with a cable tie. (I wasn't confident enough at the beginning to have predicted that!)"*

Most of the other scooters made it without major issues as well, but unfortunately two ended up on the back of a tow truck for the last 50km due to breakdowns that couldn't be fixed roadside. It was a brilliant trip on these vintage machines that I'll never forget."

So, was our scooter-loving mechanical engineer ever a 'Mod'?

*"No... even though that famous fad was revived in both England and Germany decades after the original Mods made Italian scooters notorious, I tend to wear Gortex, not parkers, when I ride. I probably listen to the wrong music too and I don't have 250 mirrors festooned all over my Vespas", he says with a smile. "But do I share their passion for vintage scooters? Absolutely!"*





*"At the end of three days' riding, we'd covered some 740km in sunshine, rain and fog. Luckily my scooter made the whole trip without any issue I couldn't fix with a cable tie."*



# HE FELL IN LOVE WITH A TRACTOR AT 8 YEARS OF AGE

**Doug Peterkin**

Founder, Doug Peterkin Diesels

***“The smell of the exhaust on a country road from that Fordson Major with its P6 Perkins Diesel must have got into my system.”*** That’s how Doug Peterkin describes the start of his lifelong love affair with old vehicles... he was 8 years old and walking to school in country Victoria, just outside of Ballarat, when he fell in love with that old English-made tractor. *“The smell of the exhaust... the sound it made... it just got to me”,* says Doug.

From that time on, he collected model vehicles, read automotive magazines and only ever wanted to become a mechanic. When he first left school he couldn’t immediately take the course he required to become a diesel mechanic, so he served a five-year apprenticeship with the railways. That smoothed his acceptance at Gordon Institute in Geelong where he was able to study the course he craved.

Doug achieved his childhood goal and graduated as a qualified Diesel Mechanic. His first job was with what was then called the Country Roads Board - the government authority responsible for the construction and maintenance of all main roads in the State of Victoria, between 1913 and 1983 (now ‘VicRoads’). He then applied for a job closer to home in Ballarat with the local paper mill as the Foreman in charge of all machinery.

After getting married and having two children, he finally got the opportunity to take a job in the role he’d always sought... only one slight problem – it was in Antarctica! It was only a 12-month contract with Australian Antarctic Division, but women weren’t welcomed at that time, so he set off solo and remembers arriving at Casey Base





Antarctica in the southernmost continent, not wanting to leave the ship and thinking, “*What have I done?!!*”

It was 1971, Doug was 32 years old and he’d moved from chilly Ballarat to the freezing south where one day he can remembers the temperature hitting minus 42 deg. C.! But he was officially a Diesel Mechanic at last. Of course, doing his job on a daily basis wasn’t that easy. As Doug explains it: “*You’d put down a spanner and a second later it had disappeared! I was looking for a thief, when I realised that, because I’d been holding the spanner, it was warm and when I put it down, it just melted through the snow.*”

“*You could hold a flexible hose in your hands and it would stiffen to the point it stretched straight out in front of you. I was told when I first got there that if I had to pee, walk backwards as I was doing so, then crack off the frozen stream with a stick! (That wasn’t actually true by the way.)*”

That was a tough 12 months for Doug and his family, but they made it through and when Doug returned home, he decided he wouldn’t go chasing jobs any more, but instead start his own business... so Doug Peterkin Diesels was established

in Warrenheip, just outside of Ballarat, exclusively selling and servicing Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicles.

“*We started in early 1973 and were named Mercedes-Benz ‘Dealer of the Year’ in ‘81. We started working with Whites Diesels almost from the day Darryl started the business in ‘91. I had a great relationship with ‘Ron’ who worked for Whites out of Melbourne... (you know, I never used or knew his surname?). He had such an excellent knowledge of parts, understanding exactly what we could substitute for what for the best result.*”

“*I met Darryl about 15 years ago too and we got along really well. Any little snags I ever came across with Whites were soon smoothed over and we’ve had a long and mutually beneficial relationship over many decades.*”

Running his own business, Doug’s passion for old vehicles evolved from that first tractor that inspired him so, to the Mercedes 1418 model – a 210 horsepower single-drive prime mover. It was the vehicle that put Mercedes-Benz on the commercial map. It simply out-lasted and out-performed all its competitors. As happened with that old



Fordson tractor, Doug fell in love with the 1418 and when they stopped being made, were succeeded by the V-Series and so many were going to the scrapheap, Doug just had to have one.

He found a truck that had been *“battered to death, carting sheep and God knows what else”*... it had over a million kilometres on the clock! He bought it, restored it and still owns it today!

He loves almost all the Mercedes-Benz trucks... *“The 22-28 models in the V series were bullet-proof. Farmers and others just couldn’t wreck them. I sold and serviced them for years. Then the SK Series came along and they were good too. Of course, they’re all gone now and the Actros have taken their place. Good trucks still, but a little too complicated for ‘the average Joe’... too many electrics. You can’t really service them yourself... you have to take them back to the workshop for even minor fixes.”*

Doug Peterkin is now 74 and ‘semi-retired’. He still restores and sells old vehicles, but mainly for the fun of it. Doug typifies the automotive passion that drives us here at Whites Diesels and is shared by so many of our suppliers and customers. Keep on truckin’ Doug!



*"We started in early 1973 and were named Mercedes-Benz 'Dealer of the Year' in '81. We started working with Whites Diesels almost from the day Darryl started the business in '91."*





# GREEN MINDSET... GREEN THUMB... LOVES HIS TRUCKS AND BUSES!

## Michael Haydock hates cars.

As far as he's concerned, they're no more than a necessary evil in this country. "All they do is clog up the roads and consume. If road transport was better organised, (which it never will be, no matter what Government's in power), we could get rid of half the cars on our roads!" ... Michael's own words.



## Michael Haydock

Branch Manager,  
Whites Diesels Australia,  
Gold Coast

Buses and Trucks on the other hand, he loves - particularly those once produced by the British Motor Corporation under the famous Leyland AEC and Albion brand.

"Those Leylands were just built to last", says Michael. "I remember the Boxer trucks (or 'box of shit' as they were referred to) sold to the old Castlemaine Perkins Brewery in Milton. They were built to hold eight tonnes (but were definitely asked to carry heavier loads)... and those 115 horsepower engines ran 24 hours a day from Finchley Street to the bond store in Park Road."

"The road from Wandoan to Taroom was built with a fleet of Albion Reivers... the potholes were so big, a Mini could be lost in there for days!"

"I know of one old 8-wheeler Hippo (built in the 1950s) that's still working on a feedlot in Toowoomba and has only ever had minor work done on it. They're damn near indestructible!"

And Michael should know... in one of only three places he's ever worked, he spent 12 years at Leyland Truck & Bus from the early 1970s into the '80s. "It was a great place back then... we worked hard – across 3 shifts a day – but we played hard too!"





Michael sold all the classic Leyland Buses – models like the Nationals, Tigers and Panthers... in fact he sold the last 40 Leyland Panthers ever bought by Brisbane Council and remembers them claiming it was the best warranty they ever got! (10 years after that sale, they claimed on parts and Michael made sure they received replacements under warranty, even though the original agreement had long expired.)

He spent the next 15 years of his career selling spare parts for Leyland Truck and Buses. It was here he first worked with Darryl White (after knowing Darryl's dad and older brother since 1969). Of course 25 years ago, on May 1st 1991, Darryl bought out the division of that company and founded what would become 'Whites Diesels'. Michael joined in 2005 and has been there ever since.

He runs a small team of five and they're so busy they all "wear a lot of hats". The WDA Team on the Gold Coast commonly puts in full-day shifts, starting at 7am and sometimes not finishing 'til 6pm. When asked if he'd been busy today, Michael replied: *"The phone hasn't stopped ringing. Maybe you can tell the Boss that..."*

Michael Haydock is obviously very good at what he does, but he's also a devoted family man with five grandkids and is starting to plan for a life after spare parts in which he can fully indulge his other passion... gardening!

He grows his own vegetables including his prize achievement this year – his first ever Queensland Blue Pumpkin. *"That may not mean a lot to you", says Michael, "but do you know how hard they are to grow? I've tried a few times without luck, but I've now harvested my first and have four more on the way!"*

He had a few chickens at home too, but the last one literally fell off the perch recently, which he took as a sign that retirement for himself is not far away. *"When the time comes, I'll move up to a 50 acre farm near Cooroy, where my grandkids can come and stay. I'll raise a few head of cattle and grow my veggies... especially those Queensland Blues!"*



# “I LIKE MY BUSES, BUT MY PET PROJECT RIGHT NOW IS A 1926 CHEVY.”

**Sean Bray**  
Director, Ulladulla Buses

**Sean Bray started restoring old machines as a teenager... not motor vehicles, but Victor 18 Lawnmowers.**

He was so good at it, that as a 16 and 17 year old, he had a thriving business, doing up old lawn mowers and selling them to willing buyers.

*“I started work as an apprentice”, said Sean, “but always had this little business on the side. My Victors not only looked good, they did a great job cutting grass too!”*

Over the years, his passion grew to encompass old cars and then buses, which no doubt led to him working in the business his dad founded - Ulladulla Buses, which launched some 45 years ago.

*“I took over from Dad and have been running the show for more than 30 years now. We do school transfers, charters, tours and more. At one stage, we had a big fleet that included old Bedfords, Mercedes, Scania, Volvos”, says Sean. “We still have 21 vehicles in service – mainly Volvos (15 of them) plus four Scantias, one Merc and a Denning.”*

Sean was born and bred in Ulladulla and says he wouldn't want to live, or work, anywhere else. *“There's no better place in the world”, says Sean. “Life on the south coast is stress-free and of course, the scenery is stunning.”*





For over 25 years of the 32 he's been in charge of Ulladulla Buses, Sean has been a customer of Whites Diesels. "I first knew Rodney when I was dealing with Mercedes Commercial Vehicles and he was working there", says Sean. "Then by accident, a short time later I was looking to buy some spare parts, stumbled into Whites and there was Rodney again!"

*"I have nothing but good things to say about the company. When it comes to parts, Gary is a walking encyclopedia... and everyone at Whites is so friendly. Nothing's ever a drama. I can ring up and say 'I need these parts yesterday' and even if it's after hours or on a weekend, they'll take those parts with them and let me pick them up at their own homes!"*

*"And any time I'm in Sydney, I know I can walk into their offices, even if it's just to say hi and have a coffee. I don't have to be buying anything at all!"*

Sean is still active in the business, though with a young family and five acres to look after, he considers himself time-poor these days. But does he still enjoy tinkering and restoring old vehicles?

*"Naturally... it's a passion that never leaves you. I can still fix a lawnmower if I need to, but right now I have a new project just waiting for me to start. I'm about to restore a 1926 Chevrolet Series V Superior\*. That should make a stir when I start driving it around town!"*

\* N.B. Back in 1926, the Ford Motor Company was struggling to keep up within the industry. It insisted its re-styled 1926 Model T was "totally new", but in fact, the utterly obsolete design was on its last legs, awaiting to be overtaken by a completely different car scheduled for release in 1928.

Chevrolet, meanwhile, posted a \$50 million profit in 1926 (even though a Series V touring car started at a sales price of around just \$510; a coach or coupe cost \$645; while the costliest 1926 Chevrolet at \$765, was the new Series V Landau sedan, which flaunted fake landau irons and a fabric top). In 1926, Chevrolet stood ready to grasp the top spot in sales - a feat viewed as inconceivable just a few years earlier.



# THE PASSIONATE PEOPLE

Doing what drives  
them for up to  
25 Years

**As we said at the start, there's something about the people who work at Whites Diesels... an underlying passion for what they do, each and every day.**

Our employees have played a huge role in the fabric of our company... some from Day One, some for more than a decade. Some have moved on, while most remain at Whites, but we take this opportunity to thank them all for their service to our company and more importantly, to our customers. The people listed here have more than 10 years' service with Whites Diesels and so now appear on our 'Long Service Honours Board'.

## **Long Service Staff and still flying the flag after more than 10 years with Whites Diesels**

First Name	Surname	Yrs
Darryl	White	25
Henry	Pickering	20
Rodney	Hemaridis	18
Garry	Houghton	18
Dave	Morgan	18
Donna	White	15
Paul	Davies	11
Michael	Haydock	11
Gary	Hemaridis	11
Colin	Moses	10

## **Former Valued Staff who worked with Whites Diesels for more than 10 years**

First Name	Surname	Yrs
Les	Hathaway	11
Ron	Ford	11
Ned	Mehinagic	11



### **Henry Pickering - 20 years of service**

Darryl White congratulates Henry Pickering for 20 years of dedicated service with Whites Diesels.

In Darryl's words:

*"It only seems like yesterday that Henry started with our company. Not only has Henry been a truly loyal company worker, but we have also been good friends for all this time.*

*"Over those many years we've regularly shared a small joke together... 'Only 50 more engines before you retire', we'd say. Well there must have been hundreds of engines since then. Henry's talent is second to none. He's truly a very talented mechanic. And in all those 20 years, we have never had an argument or a disagreement between us... (well, apart from him asking everyone "Where are my engine parts?")."*

*"So thank you Henry for your skill, expertise and dedication. I hope we continue to work together for a long time to come."*







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