

# TIMBER TOWN TALK

## NEWSLETTER

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TIMBER MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND TRUST, 2337 State Highway One, Putaruru  
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*Van Dicks*



As the poet said, "only God can make a tree,"  
probably because it's so hard to figure out  
how to get the bark on.  
- Woody Allen

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### Thank You's

A big thank you to M & A Cross Ltd and their staff for helping load the Matai and Rimu logs from Galaxy Road. To the staff from ABB who spent their community day giving the old NZFP locomotive a facelift.

Audrey Cameron who donated two paintings to the Timber Museum Trust, they can be seen in the Club Run Building.



ABB workers on their Community Day giving the NZFP locomotive an "extreme makeover".

As many of you may know the Putaruru painting group meets on site on Wednesday from 10am-2pm, and one of its members Audrey Cameron from Matamata; recently donated two paintings to the Trust.

Audrey is pictured here standing in front of her picture painted of the 100 years ago weekend held three years ago at the museum. The weekend was part of the Putaruru Water Festival planned to coincide with the centenary celebrations of three of the Museum's original buildings "Yandle House (The Sawmill Café,) Hutton House and the TTT Order Office. Pictured in the painting is His Worship the Mayor Neil Sinclair who dressed as the riding MP for Matamata -Piako county talking to Mrs Judy Glucina of Tokoroa. Audrey's painting of a log hauler is alongside and another of her paintings hangs of Cobb & Co hangs inside the Sawmill Café.



### EXHIBITION

This month the Putaruru Woodcrafters have produced a special exhibition that will be running from April 4-May 4 in the Museum's meeting room in the Club Run building where the shop is housed. The Putaruru Painting Group's work will be on display in the Conference Room for the duration of the exhibition.



The Timber Museum of New Zealand Trust- wishes Jim Howland a very happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## The Jaymor Story

Established in Putaruru 1952



By Jack Moore Whangamata 2009

Anyone who has been inside a sawmill or timber re-sawing factory will have some idea of the importance of ensuring the end product is presented with a minimum of wastage and a maximum of accuracy be it from a log carriage, a re-saw, a board edger or any re-cutting machine. This can be done with great accuracy from a remote position by an operator seated in some cases in comparative comfort. This is done by means of set-works. What you have probably also noticed is that the sawmill is a very hostile environment for sophisticated electronic equipment with dirt, water, high pressure air to say nothing of the gigantic spikes of energy on the power system feeding the equipment. The fact that it works so well in spite of this is a credit to the development over the years. I feel privileged to have been involved in the early introduction of dimension controlling set-works and its evolution to the present stage of reliability as the result of my association with the Jaymor Company for many years.

It is to the credit of early leaders in the industry that they were prepared to let us experiment in their sawmills with our equipment until it performed to their satisfaction. Possibly one of the major contributors in this respect was the Timber Industries Training Centre in

Rotorua while under the competent administration of Knut Bergseng and his very able staff. They were always supportive and tolerant when we used their mill as a guinea pig for some of our new equipment. Their comments, criticisms and suggestions, often echoed by many others in the industry were always taken seriously and used to good advantage. When we were testing new equipment another great advantage to our company was that trainees at the Centre used our controls and became familiar with them. This was often an important factor in the future equipment decisions made by their employers.

My own involvement in the timber industry began in Putaruru in 1946 after WW2 when I was discharged from the Royal NZ Air Force. Here I was working as an industrial electrician mainly in existing and emerging sawmills and timber remanufacturing plants located anywhere from Putaruru to Taupo. By 1964 I was fairly well aware of the requirements of the industry when I was asked by engineer Ken Goudie of Putaruru Timber Yards to supply a set-works controller replacing a crude unit on a new European band-saw. As a result I designed the first Jaymor controller and built it up in the little spare time I had. It was built mainly from war assets ex airplane electrical and hydraulic components and was an instant success, providing accurate and reliable dimensions while being very operator friendly.

I set about designing a production model and commissioned machining drawings for all the manufactured components. I was then able to engage subcontractors to make a wide variety of these mechanical, electrical and hydraulic items. I was able to arrange mostly part

time assemblers to put the units together. These included a power board inspector and my own family. I had my electrical business to look after as that was paying the bills and feeding the kids. However we were able to produce set-works.

The basic control unit could be fitted to any re-saw and provided versatile and accurate settings from a remote position. The application of the Jaymor set-works to the venerable breast bench used in most sawmills was also an instant success and dozens were fitted throughout NZ. Here was a very unique and versatile sawing machine which had become too labour intensive with its three men. The Jaymor reduced this to two without reducing output to any extent. However in the early days local sales were fairly slow and strangely enough were very strong in Australia where the Jaymor was used extensively to control re-saws breaking down fir and redwood bulk timber from North America and Canada. A case in point of the "Prophet being not without honour except in his own country". Domestic sales soon increased and eclipsed those overseas although the latter were quite extensive to Australia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea.

It was a small step to modify the basic Jaymor to remote control a riderless log carriage enabling the sawyer to do his own dimension setting thus eliminating an extra man. Here I must pay tribute to the Tauranga firm of A.A.Edwards and Sons. We worked closely with them to fit a control unit on an Edwards log carriage to be installed at Permiltreat Sawmills in Hastings. This was very successful and the start of a long association between Edwards and Jaymor. The Hastings experiment became the for-runner of many Jaymor

log carriage set-works installed in N.Z. and overseas both on new and existing carriages. A great advantage of all Jaymor units was that they could be and were installed on many older machines thus upgrading the performance and versatility at a reasonable cost as opposed to replacing the entire machine. Most of these upgrades were carried out by Jaymor staff over weekends and had to be well organised to be up and running on the Monday morning without loss of production.

In addition to the re-saws and log carriages Jaymor set-works were fitted to log edgers, board edgers, horizontal re-saws, line bar re-saws and length cutting units. At one stage nearly every sawmill in N.Z. and many in Australia had at least one Jaymor unit installed. After 30 odd years many of these were still operating. I heard on the grapevine that one N.Z. entrepreneur was going round the country upgrading them by fitting some modern electronics; good luck to them. Some years ago the Australians paid us their greatest compliment; they started copying some of the new equipment we had sent over. They must have learned something from the Japanese.

In 1977 the basic Jaymor control unit was redesigned to utilise a manual pinboard programmable system. This increased the versatility while at the same time made dimension selection simpler for the operator. The first such unit was installed at Thames Sawmilling sawmill with considerable input from their technician, John Hogarty, again for us a case of experimenting.

In 1979 we engaged the services of one of N.Z. top electronic gurus, Dr Kevin Parkinson, to help us re-design the

controller using top technology with a computer to provide a digital approach and display. This was a winner and really brought Jaymor into the electronic age. Further progress has been made as new technology has become available enabling Jaymor to retain its leadership in this specialised field of control.

My own involvement with Jaymor ceased in 1986 and since then my very good friend, Norm Agnew has owned and controlled the firm. We worked together for 10 years with never a cross word or argument which shows a lot for his tolerance.

Our sales were dictated to a large degree by the economic climate of the timber industry at the time and as a result we had good and bad years as the industry did. However by diversifying and manufacturing other products such as cord switches, foot switches, metal detectors and crane controls we were able to weather the storms. It is said that, "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good" and that's often true. Sawmill fires were a frequent source of unexpected revenue for manufacturers of sawmill equipment thanks in most cases to the acetylene cutting torches used in mills. If it was not this the electrician or his work was usually blamed or failing that the sawdust burner.

I well remember going over the smouldering remains of Ellis and Burnand's Putaruru mill with an insurance assessor one Monday morning just one month after a similar task with him at the again smouldering remains of the P.T.Y. Western Bay mill at Te Hoi. They were both clients of ours and when I casually remarked that "we were pretty busy and this one was not supposed to go up until next month" his sense of humour was very strained. I

had been to Whangamata for the weekend and I am sure he checked that up later.

We placed great emphasis on servicing our set-works. With a comprehensive manual supplied it was often possible for the mill fitter or electrician to carry out repairs often via a phone to us. Failing this we would travel. I was fortunate to have my own aircraft and could fly to most places fast. I soon became familiar with many agricultural air strips near mills around the country. I have had no regrets since I retired in 1986. The best years of my life were spent in the timber industry. If I have made any contribution to it I am proud of the fact. My greatest gain from this has been the opportunity to associate with some wonderful people whose friendship I shall always remember. Their dedication and energy through the years has brought the forest industry to its present high standard throughout New Zealand, so much so that it is now a world leader in many fields.

A Jaymor log carriage operator



**Does anyone recognize this operator ? We think it is at E & B- but would welcome knowing for sure.**



TIMBER MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND TRUST



**SPECIAL EASTER OFFER ADMISSION VOUCHER**

This voucher entitles bearer to reduced entry \$5 Adults, \$3 seniors \$2 children, \$4 students, family groups 2 adults, 2 children \$12-from 9am Thursday 9 April 2009– 3.15pm 13 April 2009.

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**COMING EVENTS**

- 4 April -4 May Putaruru WoodCrafters Club** Exhibition, Meeting Room, Timber Museum.
- 5 April-** South Waikato Music Society Charlotte McKay Piano recital 2pm, Timber Museum Conference Lounge, Tickets -Members \$20, Non Members \$25, students under 18 Free.
- 9-13 April** Easter promotion reduced admission, Putaruru at Timber Museum of New Zealand Trust, 2337 State Highway One.
- 25 April-**Anzac Day Civic Parades: Putaruru, 9am The Plaza, Tokoroa 8.45am SWDC Offices Tokoroa, Tirau War Memorial Hall 10am.
- 8th May** - Pride In Putaruru, South Waikato District Council, Putaruru P.R.I.D.E. schools cleanup of the Oraka Walkway.

**Contributions to Timber Town Talk**

Contributions and feedback are welcome. Contributions must be received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, they can be received in hardcopy or e-mail. Please do not send original documents or photos. Our postal address is Timber Museum Of New Zealand Trust, PO BOX 103, PUTARURU.

If e-mailing photos they must be a minimum resolution of 200 dpi so they will not distort if we enlarge or shrink them. E-mail contributions are welcome please send to [timbermuseum@xtra.co.nz](mailto:timbermuseum@xtra.co.nz).

**A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.**

William Blake, *Proverbs of Hell*, 1790

**A man does not plant a tree for himself, he plants it for posterity.**

- Alexander Smith