



# Gardening Time

Pottering about in the garden wasn't good enough for the Burdett family. Its landscape supplies, sand and quarry business in Frankston just flew its first Eagle



**B**ill and Pearl Burdett probably never thought their family landscape supplies business would escalate over 35 years to become one of the largest operations of its type in the Melbourne suburbs. But the company grew progressively as the family expanded into quarry and sand excavation which formed a comfortable companion to the general business of supplying local gardeners with all their needs.

One common thread through the 35 years was the presentation of the family's truck fleet with the immaculate presentation of vehicles being considered an important way of advertising the company. And it's no different

today for the 20 vehicles operating in the fleet.

In the mid 1970s Burdett's operated International S-Line 1830A trucks and the fleet subsequently expanded with the acquisition of Volvos, Macks and Kenworths.

The aim these days for managing director Andrew Burdett, son of the founder, is to achieve maximum loadings of 100 cubic metres with rigid trucks and quad dog trailers.

Various makes and models have attempted this efficiency and consequently the company has experience of operating T401 Kenworths powered by Cat C12s, Volvo FM 420s and the bonneted NH 460 plus the Cummins powered

**This new International Eagle has to be one of the highest spec trucks used by a landscape supplies company..**

FH and more recently a Freightliner Argosy powered by a Cat 550 hauling a semi-trailer with a walking floor system by Matilda.

Interestingly, when comparing overall cost analysis between a Hino rigid and a Kenworth, both operating at maximum GVM with four axle trailers, Andrew found the Kenworth considerably more expensive to operate thanks to the requirement of a full in-chassis rebuild. "The Hino was one tonne heavier on tare weight but never missed a beat whereas the \$20,000



rebuild of the Kenworth put an expensive dent in the running expenses.

"Hino's at higher weights don't get the street credibility or acceptance amongst the drivers which is about their only disadvantage in this type of work," said Andrew.

Eagles configured for rigid and quad dog work. The set forward front axle provides an excellent turning circle and we have also ordered a further two Eagles for use in 19metre B-double work at 55 tonnes carrying quarry products," said Andrew.

5510mm wheelbase to produce a GVM of 24.35 tonnes and a GCM of 90 tonnes. ABS braking systems are standard. The same wheelbase for on-highway, linehaul work as a B-double produces a 32 pallet configuration. Gaining additional deck length to carry a 34 pallet load would mean a move to the 9200i Eagle to remain within 26 metres.

As you can tell from the photography there has been no holding back when it comes to optioning up the basic specification for regular Eagle driver Rodney Loyer.

Local accessory company Truckers Toy Stores in Sunshine added a full dash kit and steering wheel for the interior of the cab that includes some very upmarket switches that glow purple and also put a lot of effort into the exterior with extensive amber LED lighting down the sides, across the underside of the bullbar and also on the air intakes. At the time we caught up with the Eagle, Chad from Truckers Toy Stores was also in the process of fabricating a stainless steel sun visor that would be fitted to the truck in time for the Trucks in Action display.

Bodywork for the new Eagle was completed by Hamelex who also got the job of making a matching four axle trailer and further new equipment for the B-doubles will be manufactured by both Hamelex and Hercules.

All trucks are satellite tracked by Minor Planet with real time location read-outs every ten minutes. It also provides route directions to the drivers if they are looking for a location. ●

## High specification, great visual appearance, satellite tracking and good customer service brings high recognition for Burdett's in the local community.

Hino's are proving their reliability for the daily round of local deliveries with FM models working alongside three Ranger Pro rigid trucks powered by the 267hp engine.

"We had our problems with the Cummins Signature which had piston failure in a 565 hp engine at just 400,000 kms. That was the only Cummins in the fleet," said Andrew.

With Cat engines already a well known quantity in the front end loader and dozer fleet it was a natural decision for Burdett's to concentrate on Cat power for its heavy duty fleet that carries sand and gravel from the company quarries.

"Our latest acquisitions are two International

Power for the Eagles is not surprisingly by Cat C15 with initial ratings of 500 hp (373kW) with the option of re-rating them upwards to 550 hp (410 kW) at 2100 rpm with the same torque rating of 1850 lbs ft (2508Nm).

The transmission for the new Eagles is the Eaton 18-speed RTLO-20918B and it runs with Dana front axles and Meritor RT46-160P rear axles with diff ratios of 4.30:1.

The decision to fit Hendrickson Primaax Pax 460 suspension results in the axle articulation providing up to 200mm of wheel travel when compared to the standard 13mm of the previous HAS air bag system.

In day cab tipper trim the Eagle runs with a