

MiTek®

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FAB NEWS



SAPPHIRE™ Management

For many MiTek fabricators the thought of running their plants with anything less than SAPPHIRE™ is inconceivable. They've grown to rely on it for their day-to-day operations and prefabricated solutions. SAPPHIRE™ Management is just a part of the overall SAPPHIRE™ Suite – but it's impact on production efficiencies and communication between the plant's office, workstations, despatch... and customers has set the benchmark for prefabrication operations.

In April 2015, MiTek organised a demonstration of SAPPHIRE™ Management to the team at AAA Advanced Truss in Hallam (an outer, south-eastern suburb of Melbourne).

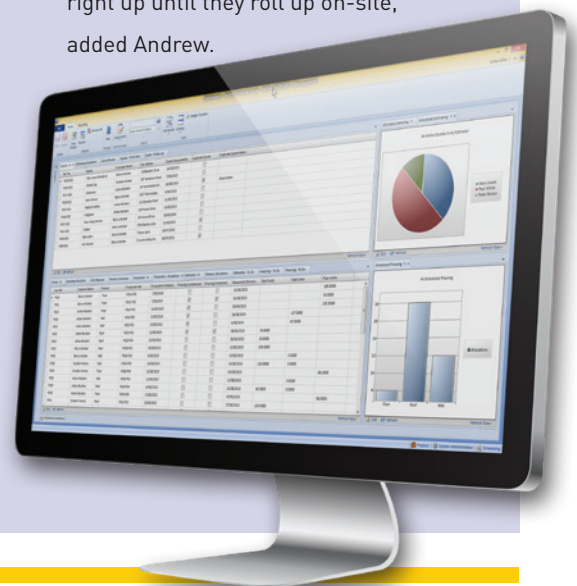
At this time SAPPHIRE™ Management was quite new to both MiTek Australia and our fabricators and unproven for large businesses with multiple sites. The AAA team could see the potential and decided to become an early adopter of SAPPHIRE™ Management. The implementation proved to be an exciting journey determining if the functionality was sufficient for the business requirements.

Andrew Clements, Chief Executive Officer at AAA knows first-hand just how beneficial a program like SAPPHIRE™ Management is to their business. 'Since implementing SAPPHIRE™ Management in January 2016 we have found several advantages: First, our work-flow has become a lot easier to manage,' said Andrew. With advanced Management tools including workflow AAA's entire operation can be viewed on custom dashboards showing at what stage a job is at for those that need to know.

Another feature Andrew wanted to highlight was: 'the ability to get reports quickly and easily.' The levels of customisation of SAPPHIRE™ Management allow AAA to make it work how they work – using custom tracking points and having great tools like automated email notifications that

can be sent to customers or internally to staff to really automate systems and procedures. Automated reports serve up KPI's for the business at certain times to again keep the key stakeholders fully informed with what's going on. These are vital systems for any organisation to ensure procedures are adhered to and run as efficiently as possible.

Being able to tailor the program to their specific systems has proven a huge advantage. AAA have invested the time to learn the SAPPHIRE™ Management functionality and now make most of their changes in-house. This includes adding delivery scheduling into their day-to-day operations. 'We can keep an eye on everything...move jobs around seamlessly to accommodate any last-minute orders and keep track of them right up until they roll up on-site,' added Andrew.



SAPPHIRE™ MANAGEMENT cont'd...

'Control over productivity is essential. Having multiple work sites, SAPHIRE™ Management has made communication between our scheduling department and production teams easy.' Automated production systems offer paperless production, real time management recording and analysis systems providing quality feedback to AAA about equipment and workflows. Just-in-time manufacturing, where software and equipment work together with minimal involvement from Fabrication staff, are the future for

sustainable timber prefabrication businesses. Using essential tools like SAPHIRE™ Management in conjunction with the latest advances in computerised saws, materials handling and production streamlining can help companies run better, smarter and more profitable.

**For more information about
MiTek SAPHIRE™ Management,
visit: mitek.com.au**



NRL Footy Tipping for 2019

MiTek NSW Fabricator NRL Tipping for 2019

The winners of the popular and hotly contested MiTek NSW NRL Footy Tipping competition for this last season were:



1ST PRIZE

Chris Stafford
The Truss & Frame Factory

2ND PRIZE

David Mellish
Bay Timber & Building Supplies

3RD PRIZE

Mick Rindfleish
Betaframe & Truss

Last Place

Richard Moulton
MiTek Australia

HAVING a BALL at the GALA!



Everyone loves a Gala night. And MiTek's NSW Gala night was no exception! The ladies went to great lengths to glam up and the blokes – well they might be more comfortable in jeans and a t-shirt, but it doesn't hurt to dust off the suit for a special occasion. More than 80 MiTek customers, staff and partners gathered at Doltone House, Sylvania Waters at 6.30 on a cool Friday evening for pre-dinner drinks and the chance to mingle amongst friends.

It wasn't long before the main room beckoned. As all were ushered to their tables Tim Rossiter took to the floor to welcome all with a well-prepared, albeit brief, speech. "I don't get pre-speech nerves. I feel very comfortable in front of a crowd...bring it on," said Tim with confidence. For all it was a memorable night – for Tim...probably one he'd rather forget. Left pondering if he'd crossed a black cat or walked under a ladder on entering the venue, Tim's night began to unfold as soon as everyone sat down. 'I have no idea why, but during my opening speech as MC, I called Andrew Bricknell's wife Viki – twice. In my defence Viki (Peter Hutchison's wife, Viki) was sitting next to Heather,' admitted Tim sheepishly. That's not the end of it!

Unlike some Gala events where a band might play, some other far more inclusive entertainment would appear from the shadows. Three Waiters. Their skills went far beyond placing meals on tables and opening bottles of wine. 'I don't want to give too much away,' said Tim – let's just say: 'they were very talented and very amusing.'

As night wore on people could be seen table-hopping; a constant bellow of laughter echoed around the room. Everyone was getting into the spirit of the night, enjoying the chance to catch up with old friends and reminisce. Having put his 'slips-of-the-tongue' well behind him Tim stood to continue his MC duties. But first he had to grab everyone's attention. With wine in hand he arose; intent on





gently striking the glass with a butter knife in the politest manner. He dropped the ball again – well – he actually dropped the glass! ‘It made a hell of a mess, wine flying in all directions,’ admitted Tim. ‘On a positive note: when I looked up everyone was looking at me. Job done!’

There were several awards and plaques given out on the night. Recently retired industry pioneer Wil Crosariol of ABC Frames & Trusses took out the big one: 50 years of service to the timber prefabrication industry.

‘Personal blunders aside – the night was a huge success,’ added Tim with a smile. ‘Can’t wait for the next one – however my days as MC are well-and-truly done.’

The evening came to an end at around 11pm as buses waited to return some couples to Rydges 15 minutes away. A few fabricators and MiTek staff decided to make a weekend of it and enjoy Sydney in style.



MITEK'S GREEN DAY!



Glenmore Heritage Valley Golf Course has been the venue of choice for MiTek's NSW golf day for several years...and for good reason. Sitting on the outer-west of Sydney, with the Blue Mountains National Park as a backdrop makes this 27-hole course a favoured destination for everyone from the novice to the seasoned golfer.

And that's perfect given the range of skill demonstrated by the nearly 50 players that attended.

'There are a few who are really good...then there's the rest of us,' laughed Tim Rossiter. 'Once again, the weather was magnificent. I don't know how we do it year after year, but you drive out to the course without a cloud in the sky and you know you're in for a great day – regardless how many balls you might 'misplace.'

More than 30 customers attended – some for the first time, others regular faces...all welcome to enjoy the day with MiTek staff. A hot coffee greeted all, then the 4-ball Ambrose, shotgun start got the games underway. Some had travelled some distance to play a round, none further than Andrew Bricknell (all the way from Melbourne).

However, best effort for attendance went to the two teams from TrussCo in Blayney, some 3 hours drive west of Sydney. Not so much for the distance travelled, more for the fact:

ALL of their staff made the journey. Well done! For many customers it was a chance to meet some MiTek staff members in their new roles within the company – but the focus was always on the next iron to draw from the buggy.

No dirt on any of the players – no tantrums – no putters hurled into lakes...everyone was well behaved. 'There weren't really any lakes to throw your clubs into anyway,' lamented Tim. 'The one thing that was really noticeable from last year was: how much of an effect the on-going drought was taking. As usual the fairways and greens were in impeccable condition but the rough and beyond was obviously doing it tough.'

Although Tim would not be organising next year's MiTek NSW golf day he was eager to point out its importance: '30 years running. It will be a big affair next year. We will try to give everyone plenty of notice...but **BOOK IT IN YOUR EVENTS CALENDAR NOW!**' Tim would like to see plants emulating TrussCo's enthusiasm. 'The more the merrier.'





At the end of the day awards went to:

1ST PLACE

Westview Frames & Trusses

2ND PLACE

Trueform Frames & Trusses
(plus Joe Pantano from MiTek)

3RD PLACE

Westview Frames & Trusses

NAGA AWARD

Warwick Drysdale -
Programmed Timber

NEAREST TO THE PIN

Mark Hall - Wesbeam

LONGEST DRIVE

Steve Sielicki - TrussCo

LONGEST DRIVE

Jason Watmore - TrussCo



APEX make a **KWIK 100!**



There are people who dream and do nothing and are surprised when they never achieve. There are those that dream and never achieve after doing much. Then there's Paul Bastow, Manager of Apex Wall & Truss Pty Ltd...who is not much of a dreamer – but more of a doer. He sees a problem – and an opportunity, and can't ignore it. 'It's like a constant drum echoing in your head: you can fix this...no, actually – you can improve this!'

And he does.

'I started my working life as a truck driver nearly 40 years ago. It wasn't long before I found myself building kit homes - and through that journey I saw the way prefabrication could influence building trends,' said Paul. 'I was hooked' – timber prefabrication became Paul's focus. 'I'm one of those blokes who always asks the question: can it be done better? I had a young family, a fledgling business and I wanted to make sure it worked,' said Paul.

'Most timber prefabrication plants are run by families: husband and wife, kids, partners and children. They can't afford the massive outlay for super-sized equipment,' said Paul. 'We were in the same position. In the early days I thought our timber truss manufacturing was slow,

labour costs heavy and production extremely inefficient. You just can't run a business like that and hope to achieve...let alone survive.'

Paul set about solving the enigma of manual labour, slow output of trusses and rather cumbersome working conditions. The latter is more a reference to: poor workplace health and safety. 'Timber prefabrication plants were not the safest working environments 30 years ago,' said Paul. 'Your employees are always your most valuable assets – you have to have their best interests at heart all the time. – that's why we reduced the exposure of the Kwikset Jig's pneumatic hoses; housing them in the rails.' It was an early innovation which would prove critical to the success of the KwikSet Jig.



'My wife (and business partner) Audrey, is a very patient and understanding woman...I locked myself away for 2 - 3 months working on a way to simplify production of roof trusses AND increase flow-through of product. I wanted to win at both ends. And I failed.' Audrey is still with Paul - 'a lot would have done a runner.' 'I am a very lucky man,' stressed Paul.

'I had gone through every machination, combination and valuation of the KwikSet Jig...and sent the specs to a local machinery manufacturer.' Paul had outsourced his project. 'They did what most do: they underspecified components, sourced inferior parts, poorly manufactured and engineered items. I didn't find out till it was too late,' lamented Paul. 'Two days after the first couple of Kwikset Jigs were sold, they were returned with both disgruntled parties wanting their money back! I had to find out why? I knew we were onto something very good - so what went wrong?' The only way Paul could see a future for his innovative product was to take over the manufacturing process. 'It was the only way I could guarantee quality.' So, more time and a substantial financial investment (on top of the original) ensued. 'By the way,' said Paul with much conviction: 'did I mention what a supportive wife I have?'

The KwikSet Jig boasts some very smart advantages over other truss manufacturing systems: rapid set up is enabled by allowing the operator to move in and around the jig stations without having to dodge potentially dangerous hoses (as mentioned, they're all housed within the floor rails). 'Feedback from nearly all our customers puts production up by 25-30%,' said Paul. Another key benefit is the ease of installation and operation. The KwikSet Jig is so versatile it can be modified to fit just about any plant's working space. 'There really is minimal downtime and operators become comfortable with it within a matter of minutes - the training program takes about 5 minutes,' added Paul.

The development of the Kwikset Jig has 'morphed' over the past two decades. 'We are always looking for feedback from

customers because sometimes the smallest improvements can deliver big results. The original concept was strong but over time updates have really honed the KwikSet Jig's performance.' Not one to lay idle Paul let slip: 'we're currently in production of the 'next generation' KwikSet Jig tailored specifically to meet the needs of low-profile truss manufacture - a growing demand in this building climate.' It will still manufacture just about every other type of truss - but with a 6cm rail clearance outputs are set to go through the roof!

'It's great to pass the hundred mark - and that's just in Australia and New Zealand,' smiled Paul. 'And we have just got an enquiry from a truss plant in Virginia (USA) - and that could potentially open up a whole new market.' Paul does admit the 100th machine came off the production line with no fan-fare, no brass band...and you get the feeling a bit more noise was probably warranted. Maybe he should have 'publicised' the occasion and got a bit of free PR for the business.

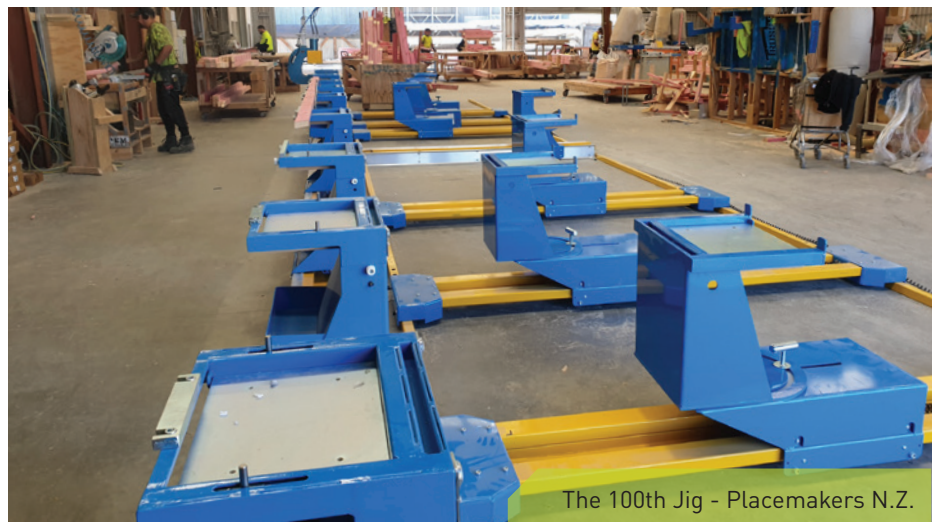
Paul's marketing skills have to be brought into question here though. When Holden Australia celebrated their one-millionth car coming off the production line (the EJ Holden Premier Sedan in baby-poo brown) - October 25th, 1962...executives were flown in from all around the world. Victoria's Premiere, luminaires from all walks of life attended a 'ribbon-cutting' moment of history captured by paparazzi (not yet tarnished with the title) -

10 employees got an EJ for free. 100 KwikSet Jigs v a million Holdens seems fair...given the size of the market. Paul did nothing! When asked if Audrey got the photo-moment of swinging an expensive bottle of French Champagne into one of the pneumatic presses...NO. 'It's already at the client's in New Zealand,' Paul announced proudly.

Surely you would have put a special plaque on it (like a commemorative edition model)? 'No' said Paul somewhat sheepishly. Moment lost. Although it probably echoes the 'manner-of-the-man'. Paul does not seem to be a seeker of plaudits. 'Ok - we've done a hundred...we've got another eight on order...where are we at with that lot?' - more Paul's style.

Truth is: Paul's marketing skills are off the chart. Rule 1: identify a need. Rule 2: answer the need. Rule 3: listen to your target market (customers). The Kwikset Jig has become a 'must-have' for timber prefabrication plants in Australia for the last 20 years. New Zealand (and American) truss plants are now benefitting from this incredibly smart, compact, easy-to-operate piece of timber prefabrication machinery.

The original concept: to help 'family' timber prefabrication plants optimise - even maximise on production of trusses...has come true; 100 times. 'I know it might sound a bit lame - but pride in the product comes from knowing you're helping other businesses just like yours,' said Paul with a smile.





SAPPHIRE™ GOES FAR NORTH

It had been a while since MiTek journeyed to far North Queensland. 'We have a strong, loyal following in the north so it made sense to get as many of our fabricators together and bring them up-to-speed with the latest developments in SAPPHIRE™.' Although many fabricators in the area are yet to change over to SAPPHIRE™ all are eager to embrace it. 'They're even keener to get their hands on the program after Richard Moulton's presentation,' added Toby.

Held in the Coral Sea Room of The Ville Resort Casino, with sweeping seaside views stretching as far as Magnetic Island and beyond, the conference attracted much interest. 'We don't boast the numbers of some of the big state conferences – but MiTek are well represented in North Queensland,' said Toby. There were about a dozen...a good turn-out.

It was a 1.30pm start. Danny Lake (MiTek) opened proceedings, welcoming all and giving a brief overview of the building industry; MiTek's role and how they looked forward to supporting their fabricators...and introduced a few new products. He then handed over to Richard who took control of the afternoon demonstrating his well-honed SAPPHIRE™ presentations. The content was comprehensive with the room mostly silent...except for welcome questions from a transfixed audience. Many present had not seen SAPPHIRE™ in action for some time; so the advances demonstrated created quite a stir at times.

All whom attended were familiar with SAPPHIRE™ and monitored regular updates from their FAM's but seeing live demonstrations of the program in real-time was an eye-opener.

Richard's well-rehearsed presentation went to time perfectly before handing over to Craig Klinge, Fabrication Account Manager/Design Engineer from MiTek's Brisbane office. Craig gave a one-hour presentation covering: Non-conforming





and non-complying building products and the havoc they can wreak on-site. There were a few horror stories here – but light at the end of the tunnel when you consider the huge range of Engineered Building Products MiTek make. Craig also stressed: 'it's very important to keep on top of the constant changes in building regulations' – and MiTek can also help here. The afternoon went by quickly and by 5.30pm it was time for the first of a few cold beers to welcome guests to the balcony. Thirst quenched, next stop: Miss Song's Asian Restaurant for dinner. 'Unfortunately, not everyone could stay for dinner; long trip home, pick up the kids etc – but for those who did it was a great chance to get together in a casual environment,' said Toby. 'Most of the MiTek staff were booked on the first flight back to Sydney the next day so we pulled up stumps at about 9.30pm.'

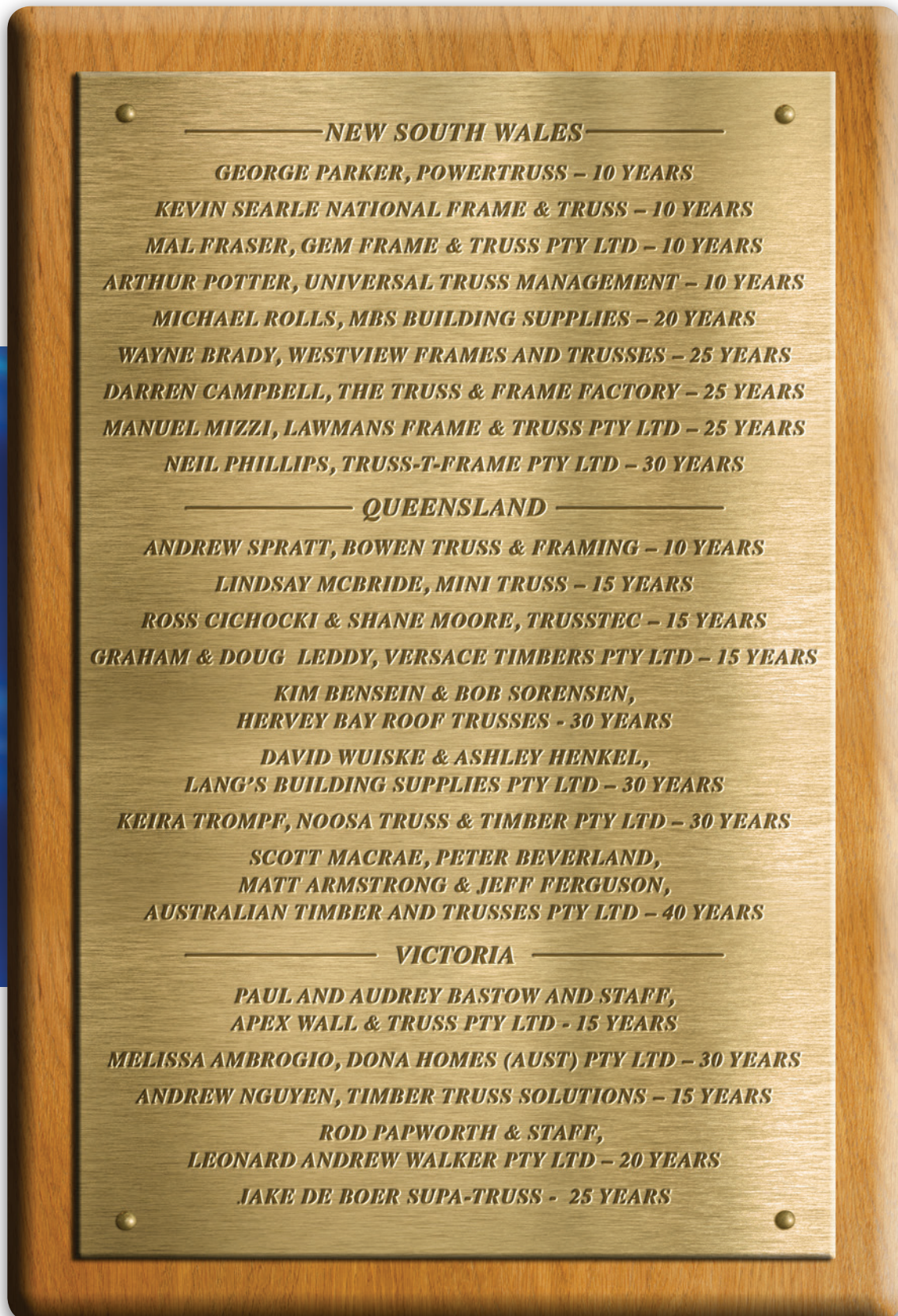
'Well worth the trip,' was heard from more than a few. And several had travelled from quite far to be there. Bowen Truss and Framing and FNQ Truss and Frame are to be specially commended for their efforts. Bowen is 200 km south of Townsville via the Bruce Highway – with Tully roughly the same distance but to the north. So, a good 5-hour turn-around trip for those fabricators.

For Bowen T & F manager, Andrew Spratt, there was an added bonus. Peter Hutchison made the special trip up from Sydney to present Andrew with a '10-year MiTek fabricator' plaque.



MiTek FABRICATOR MILESTONES

Over the past year the following MiTek fabricators achieved a significant milestone birthday and presentations were made to them as the opportunity arose.



NEW SOUTH WALES MITEK FABRICATORS



MAL FRASER,
GEM FRAME & TRUSS PTY LTD – 10 YEARS



KEVIN SEARLE NATIONAL
FRAME & TRUSS – 10 YEARS



ARTHUR POTTER, UNIVERSAL TRUSS
MANAGEMENT – 10 YEARS



GEORGE PARKER,
POWERTRUSS – 10 YEARS



MICHAEL ROLLS,
MBS BUILDING SUPPLIES – 20 YEARS



WAYNE BRADY, WESTVIEW FRAMES
AND TRUSSES – 25 YEARS



DARREN CAMPBELL, THE TRUSS
& FRAME FACTORY – 25 YEARS



MANUEL MIZZI, LAWMANS
FRAME & TRUSS PTY LTD – 25 YEARS



NEIL PHILLIPS,
TRUSS-T-FRAME PTY LTD – 30 YEARS

QUEENSLAND MITEK FABRICATORS



ROSS CICHOCKI & SHANE MOORE,
TRUSSTEC – 15 YEARS



GRAHAM & DOUG LEDDY,
VERSACE TIMBERS PTY LTD – 15 YEARS



LINDSAY MCBRIDE, MINI TRUSS – 15 YEARS



KIM BENSEIN & BOB SORENSEN,
HERVEY BAY ROOF TRUSSES – 30 YEARS



DAVID WUISKE & ASHLEY HENKEL,
LANG'S BUILDING SUPPLIES PTY LTD
– 30 YEARS



KEIRA TROMPF, NOOSA TRUSS
& TIMBER PTY LTD – 30 YEARS

QUEENSLAND MITEK FABRICATORS cont'd



SCOTT MACRAE, PETER BEVERLAND, MATT ARMSTRONG & JEFF FERGUSON,
AUSTRALIAN TIMBER AND TRUSSES PTY LTD – 40 YEARS



ANDREW SPRATT,
BOWEN TRUSS & FRAMING – 10 YEARS

VICTORIAN MITEK FABRICATORS



PAUL AND AUDREY BASTOW AND STAFF, APEX WALL & TRUSS PTY LTD - 15 YEARS



MELISSA AMBROGIO,
DONA HOMES (AUST) PTY LTD – 30 YEARS



ANDREW NGUYEN,
TIMBER TRUSS SOLUTIONS
– 15 YEARS



ROD PAPWORTH & STAFF,
LEONARD ANDREW WALKER PTY LTD
– 20 YEARS



JAKE DE BOER SUPA-TRUSS
– 25 YEARS

