

# Those Behind the Trees



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# Introduction

Because those in the forest industry work with nature to earn their livelihood, they must respect the integrity of the land with an eye towards the long term. Thus they mostly see themselves as faithful stewards of a limited natural resource to be used not only to support their own family, but to be nurtured and protected for future generations as well.

Furthermore those in the industry have a strong belief in family and community. They profoundly understand the interconnectedness of trees, soil, water, and air. They understand and will uphold the ideal of the common good, even when it may place some boundary on personal interest. These are concerned residents who will continue give voice to the ideals of sustainable forestry so as to preserve the opportunity for all to enjoy the fruits of their labour.

**This is their North Coast story.....**

# Hayden Timbers, Telegraph Pt



- As the timber industry evolves into the 21st Century it is faced with new challenges including smaller diameter trees, reduced volumes of timber and tightening environmental and planning regulations.
- With these issues in mind, Darrell Hayden, owner of Hayden's Sawmill set about building a high recovery mill that minimizes wastage.

**Maximising Log Recovery.**

# Hayden Timbers, Telegraph Point

- Hayden Timbers is successfully owned by Darrell Hayden – who has had a long-term involvement in the timber industry, about which he is very passionate. In Darrell's view the conversion of timber to woodchip is not consistent with his vision of achieving the highest and best use of local hardwoods.
- Following construction of a new mill in 2005, the Company expanded considerably under Darrell's direction and now supplies a diversified range of products, while maximising recovery and mill usage, across a range of species. Due to its flexibility in machinery set-up, the mill is able to supply a diverse range of raw hardwood products such as flooring and decking, export timbers, fencing (posts, rails, palings) wharf timbers, railway and mining products
- Accordingly, Hayden's operation places as much emphasis on the lower end of the market as to the high-end premium logs. "Over the years we have found that we can achieve really some positive results by converting off cuts into products such as mine timbers, pallet timber and fence palings" said Mill Manager, Trent Whitby. Trent is particularly proud that he works for what he calls a true recovery mill.
- Hayden Timbers believes in the long-term future of the industry with timber being a truly sustainable resource if properly managed and harvested. Accordingly the Company has coupled its use of new technology and processes with a program of training younger people looking for a start in the industry and permanent employment by putting them along-side experienced personnel willing to mentor and share their expertise.
- the job will provide a practical skill base for the mill for many years to come.



# Ian and Judith Leslight



**Silviculture  
and Invasive  
Weed  
Control.**

# Ian and Judith Leslight

- Ian & Judith Leslight operate a Private Native Forestry Management and Consultancy business, called “Forest Restoration Projects.”
- “Silviculture is the art and science of forest management. It has positive benefits for your triple bottom line, Social, Environmental & Economic” said Ian
- “Forest Restoration Projects assist people in protecting their forests from risks, restoring their forest through silviculture, invasive weed control and monitored regeneration. The focus is on implementing a long term sustainable forestry management strategy for their native forests.”
- “Our philosophy,” explains Ian “is that, whilst cleaning up our forests for a sustainable future, we should be maximizing the recovery rate of all privately owned timber, irrespective of the size of the operation. The top and bottom ends of the supply chain, commercial high grade logs or poles and fire-wood respectively. In between there is a good market for farm use timber, such as fence strainers and building poles.”
- “The cycle of harvest, regeneration, growth and harvest again is often not swift enough when left unmanaged, this can be accelerated through silviculture management; using natural disturbance methods, weed control, ecological burning and other forms of best practice is the emphasis of our current projects” said Ian.
- “While logging on private property may be an attractive proposition, there are often insufficient volumes to cover the costs of a harvesting crew. Our aim therefore is to create improved economies of scale by encouraging groups of like-minded and well trained land owners teamed with motivated youths to undertake sustainable private native forestry practices over a number of farms therefore adding value to our timber and peace of mind to our customers”.

# AE Gibson & Sons, Kendall, NSW



Leading Australian  
manufacturer of hi-tech  
timber processing  
equipment



# AE Gibson & Sons, Kendall, NSW

- AE Gibson and Sons have evolved into one of Australian's leading manufacturers of hi-tech timber processing equipment. They operate from a small village named Kendall, on the mid north coast of NSW.
  - Kendall has a long history of timber cutting and milling, dating back to the 1860's and now has a population of about 3000 people.
  - Gibson's have invested heavily in developing the latest technology which has led the company being awarded contracts to supply machinery as well as complete sawmills to Fiji, PNG and New Zealand competing against international opposition.
  - Recently the company has undertaken large structural steel building projects which complement the sawmill equipment and material handling side of the business and has proven to be a natural extension of its engineering capabilities.
  - Today, Gibson's has two manufacturing centres and boasts an active management team controlling sales, product design and production.
- As the largest employer in Kendall by far, Gibson's are an outstanding example of a successful firm doing its bit for small town community development

# Australian Solar Timbers, Kempsey, NSW



Manufacturers and  
suppliers of the blackbutt  
flooring for the multi-  
award winning  
Glasshouse Performing  
Arts Centre

# Australian Solar Timbers, Kempsey, NSW

- Australian Solar Timbers (AST) is a specialist manufacturer of premium hardwood flooring, located at Kempsey, in NSW.
- AST's investment in leading edge technology in sawing, processing systems and equipment ensures efficiency, consistency and quality in production of timber flooring. As the world leader in environmentally friendly solar kiln drying processes which harness the natural energy of the sun, the business is an outstanding contributor to the MNC economy.
- "Effectively the use of solar kilns reduces our reliance on non-renewable energy sources. It also produces a superior product as the drying process is slower" said Sales Manager, Roy Head. "In recent years we have also pioneered the use of diamond tooling and computerised log scanning"
- The business has been family owned since 1919 operating continuously in the NSW hardwood industry. Owner of AST is Dr Douglas who continues the family tradition of innovation and adaption to the changing industry environment in which they operate.
- Australian Solar Timbers roots started as an idea in the trenches of Gallipoli where two ANZAC soldiers, Stan Ball and Douglas Oakley dreamt about opening a sawmill on their return to Australia. This dream in fact came true. In 1919, after their eventual safe return the two men established a sawmill on the NSW North Coast where over the next twenty years they commenced a succession of small sawmills, which concentrated on cutting brushwood timbers.

# SA RELF & Son, Bulahdelah, NSW



Manufacturers of a distinctive and appealing product from sustainably managed North Coast forests.



# SA RELF & Son, Bulahdelah, NSW

- The Dorney family operates two hardwood sawmills, Newell's Creek at Markwell and S A Relf & Sons at Bulahdelah. The Company is now widely known for its quality flooring and decking products and have won a number of prestigious awards including the ATIC Quality Assurance award (twice) for timber flooring manufacturers.
- Anthony Dorney says "the properties of timber offer qualities unlike any other material –flexible in its application, durable yet not harsh underfoot along with a wide range of colours and attractive features. Since timber is a natural product, it may have a wide variety of natural features and colour variation within the one species. Every floor is unique and may well vary from timber samples or showroom displays".
- Flooring available from S A Relf and Sons with a secret nail profile and also end matched, the wider floorboards 130mmx19mm are top nailed to minimize cupping. All timber is sourced locally and kiln dried on site.
- The species available are: Sydney Blue Gum, Coastal Blackbutt, Brush Box, Turpentine, Grey Ironbark, Flooded Gum and Stringybark, all graded in accordance with the amount of naturally occurring features such as gum vein, tight knots, checks (thin shrinkage cracks), borer holes etc.
- This is another great North Coast timber company producing a distinctive and very appealing product from sustainably managed North Coast forests.

# Boral Timber

## Heron's Ck, NSW



North Coast hardwood species are an excellent choice for decking and outdoor landscaping because of their high density, toughness and natural beauty

# Boral Timber

## Heron's Ck, NSW

Clinton Skeoch, Market Development Manager of Boral Timber says: "When selecting a decking timber, it is essential to choose the right species for the job. Factors that will impact the decision may include location, durability, aesthetic preferences and how easily the timber complements other materials.

"Blackbutt is renowned for its strength and versatility and has an attractive blonde colour which is suitable for both flooring and decking. Blackbutt timber is naturally fire and termite resistant, treatment free and non-susceptible to lyctus borer making it ideal for the Australian climate. Combine it with F27 structural timber to complete outdoor timber requirements such as bearers and joists, stair components and exposed external beams."

With its fire resistant properties, Blackbutt is also suitable for use in bush-fire prone areas and in BAL 29 areas, as set out under Australian Standard AS3959.

Boral Blackbutt decking is manufactured from Australian Coastal Blackbutt that has proven durability in Australian conditions. Boral decking is offered in a vast range of Australian hardwood species which are seasoned for our climate and can blend harmoniously with any style of outdoor area. In addition to Blackbutt, other popular species include Grey Ironbark, Spotted Gum and Tallowwood.

Boral has also achieved Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) chain of custody certification (AS 4707-2006) for its timber products. This means that timber used to produce Boral Timber's hardwood flooring, decking and structural timber has been sourced from certified, legal and sustainably managed resources.

# 50 Years of Continuous Employment



Mal Green celebrates 50  
Years at Boral's Heron's  
Creek timber mill



# 50 Years of Continuous Employment

- Mal Green has spent the past 50 years working at the company's timber mill at Herons Creek, on the NSW North Coast, where he started as a 17 year-old school leaver, initially stacking pallet material and palings. He currently operates one of the manual saw benches at the mill, a position he has held for about 30 years.
- The Executive General Manager of Boral Timber, Steve Dadd, paid tribute to Mr Green on behalf of his fellow workers and the company, describing Mr Green as a role model for younger employees at the mill. "It is an extraordinary achievement to have worked half a century in this physically demanding industry," Mr Dadd said. "Mal is still one of our best benchmen with a keen eye for timber and a wonderfully fluid way of handling heavy machinery. His loyalty and commitment are an inspiration to all at the mill, and we wish him all the very best as he celebrates this milestone."
- Mr Green was born into a timber family at nearby Wingham in 1946: his father, Ted, worked at Longworth's Logging in Laurietown, and introduced Mr Green to the then manager at Herons Creek soon after he left school. His uncle and his brother-in-law also worked in the industry, and so, too, does his son, Paul, who has been with Boral Timber for about a decade.
- Mr Green said that like the industry, he had experienced some hard times over the decades, including the closing down of other mills in the area and reduced work hours due to a drop in demand over the years. "But I would not have it any other way," he said. "I have enjoyed working at Herons Creek – and the company has been good to me, especially during difficult family times." "I have worked with some great crews over the past 50 years and have made some good friends from the old days."

# Sweetman's Timber Mill, Millfield, NSW

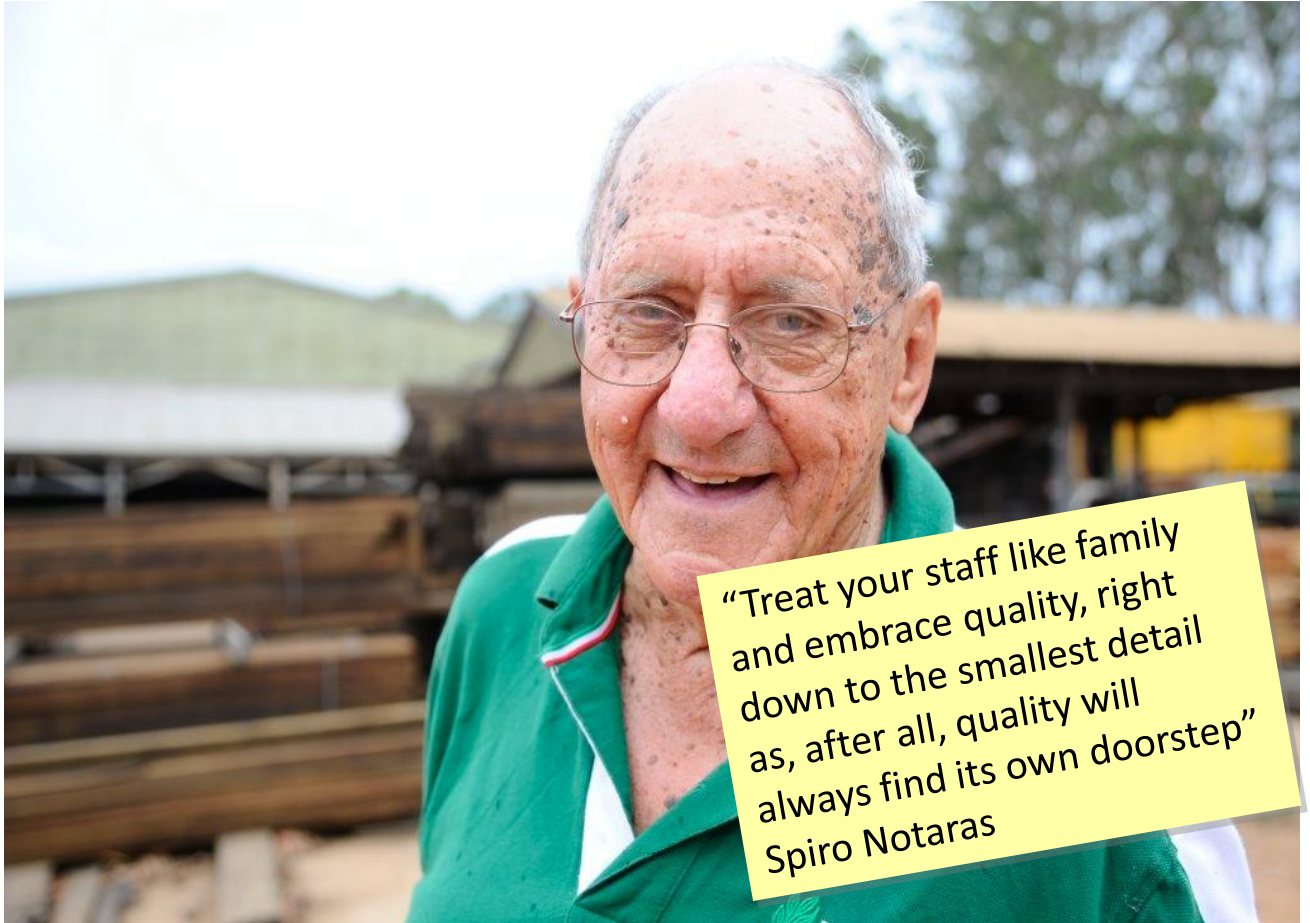


Sometimes entrepreneurial opportunities arise that push timber processors down a path of niche opportunity in areas not previously contemplated.

# Sweetman's Timber Mill, Millfield, NSW

- Ken Sweetman, owner of Sweetman's Timber, located in a beautiful rural area near Cessnock in the NSW Hunter Valley, is an example of a man who has foreseen such a niche opportunity and invested in its success.
- Sweetman's is a fourth generation timber milling operation with 100 years of direct experience in the NSW timber industry. While Ken is extremely proud of his firm's diverse range of timber products – with more than 50,000 lines available including structural timber, fencing, decking, mine props and garden furniture – his firm's success has been achieved by ensuring that each of the items in the product range is manufactured in accordance with customer's specific requirements in mind.
- “We supply a lot of tailored products to suit the needs of bridge and wharf builders as well as beams and other heavy structural applications” said Ken “ For example we have designed our machinery and mill layout to produce log lengths and large-end sections not generally available elsewhere. Many mills are restricted to log lengths of around 6m but we have found this to be far too short for some of customer's specifications – particularly the wharf and bridge builders in NSW and Tasmania.
- “Over the years we have become very flexible in what we can produce, always with the customer's species and schedule requirements in mind. Our turn-around times are rapid and quality is paramount”, said Ken's grandson Luke who, these days has taken on the responsibility for overall management of the mill.
- “There is an inherent simplicity in using hardwood - its strong, flexible, durable and very sustainable. Timber bridges are structurally stronger than the alternatives and, since timber is carbon neutral and a renewable resource, its impact on the environment is better than man-made materials such as concrete and steel” said Luke.

# J NOTARAS AND SONS - 60 YEARS OF SUCCESS



"Treat your staff like family  
and embrace quality, right  
down to the smallest detail  
as, after all, quality will  
always find its own doorstep"  
Spiro Notaras



# J NOTARAS AND SONS - 60 YEARS OF SUCCESS

- The Notaras story is one of two brothers of Greek heritage, Brinos and younger sibling Spiro who, in 1952 with the help of their father bought the Lawrence Sawmill in Grafton, NSW.
- In somewhat tragic circumstances, Brinos was the victim of car accident in 2005. Despite this enormous setback, Spiro decided, in true unrelenting family fashion, to continue the family hardwood business which by this time had established itself as one of the leaders of hardwood timber production throughout NSW.
- Recently Spiro celebrated his 80th birthday, 60 years of which have been spent in the hardwood industry. As a family business, the Notaras family have survived the forest assessments over the last 40 years finding new approaches to stay ahead and thus providing crucial economic and social support to the township of Grafton.
- To grow the business Spiro recognised inefficiencies in some existing production processes. He felt that, not only were high energy costs threatening the firm's future he needed to find new markets that matched the changing nature of the available resource. Markets in Japan were developed, supplying North Coast hardwoods, particularly spotted gum and blackbutt, for walkways, floating pontoons, seats, decks and boardwalks. Closer to home gymnasiums in Victoria, art galleries including the prestigious Adelaide Art Gallery and even the Speaker's Wall at Parliament feature North Coast timbers, milled and supplied by Notaras.
- Over time investments of more than \$7.8m have occurred into value-adding machinery including kilns, planers, moulding and specialised joinery equipment, all of which helped to secure the jobs of 38 skilled workers and their families, even during the toughest of times. Today 80% of production comprises flooring, decking and fencing.

# Weathertex, Raymond Terrace, NSW



The only Australian-owned  
and operated manufacturer  
of natural Australian  
hardwood weatherboards  
and architectural panels.



# Weathertex, Raymond Terrace, NSW

- Weathertex has made a considerable commitment to environmental sustainability, all the way from material sourcing, high technology production processes, waste control and management. And it uses only hardwoods sourced from new-growth North Coast State Forests or private forests from certified sources making Weathertex very environmentally friendly compared to other construction materials such as concrete, brick, steel and fibre-cement.
- During the Weathertex production process new growth pulp and fibres are processed using high pressure steam, natural wax is added and the resultant wet-lap is pressed for 30 minutes between steel plates, planed and embossed with the beautiful patterns available to complement most natural finishes.
- Weathertex is a truly a remarkable North Coast timber manufacturer, prospering in an era when manufacturing in Australia has been very tough. Originally established in 1939 to produce Masonite, the Company has been owned by Paul Michael since 1998. Under his careful guidance, significant investment of more than \$2m has occurred in production technology, computerisation and painting facilities creating a state-of-the-art facility and a beautiful range of lightweight building products which are a breeze to handle and install.
- Weathertex's website ([www.weathertex.com.au](http://www.weathertex.com.au)) provides a gallery of beautiful finished products. It's well worth a look! TIMBER MADE PERFECT - NATURALLY

# Machin's Sawmill, Wingham, NSW



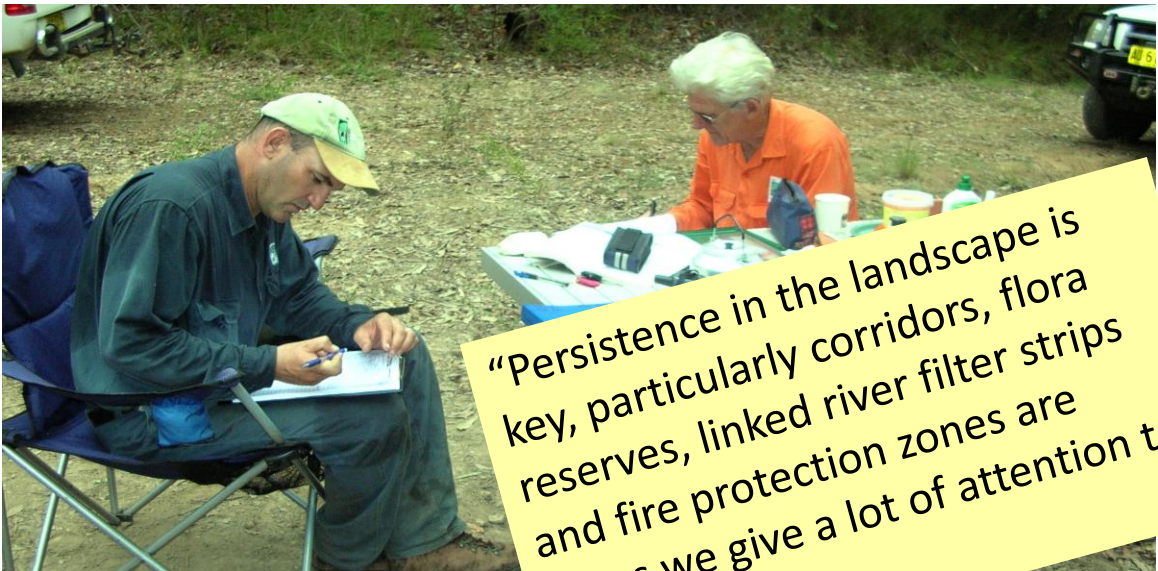
*"The key factors that have ensured our longevity have been a focus on quality, service and integrity" Ralph Blenkin, Owner*



# Machin's Sawmill, Wingham, NSW

- One hundred years ago Henry Machin took the first steps to creating a Manning Valley Icon, which today remains one of Wingham's largest employers and contributors to the local economy.
- An advertisement in the Wingham Chronicle on the September 14, 1914 read "Machins Sawmill Killabakh. This mill has now commenced work. I am prepared to supply timber of any kind at lowest cost. Local Builders should send for quotes H.J. Machin Proprietor." Henry founded Henry Machins and Sons, which despite having undergone name changes since, has continued an unbroken ten decades of service involving four generations of the one family.
- The family were very forward thinking and established kilns at Elands for drying flooring in the 30s (well before "value adding" became a catch phrase) and purchased a Caterpillar crawler tractor for logging. Both of these were firsts for the growing north coast timber industry. They also developed the bogey log jinker which would track behind the lorry without cutting corners.
- During WWII despite a shortage of labour the company expanded to meet the demands of war to become a collection of five mills. On a site at Elands was the big hardwood mill, plus a scrub wood mill cutting rainforest timbers, a mill at Blacksand Creek, another at Doyle's River plus one at The Den (Mooral Creek). A variety of timbers were sawn to meet the demands of the war.
- John Machin, the third generation had joined the company around 1948. and over the years he developed an intense love of the bush and the natural environment throughout the Manning Valley. Machins is now owned and operated by Ralph Blenkin who confidently states that the key factors that have ensured our longevity have been a focus on quality, service and integrity.

# Forest Ecologists – Preserving Endangered Flora and Fauna



“Persistence in the landscape is key, particularly corridors, flora reserves, linked river filter strips and fire protection zones are areas we give a lot of attention to”

# Forest Ecologists – Preserving Endangered Flora and Fauna

- Forests Corp NSW employ a team of skilled ecologists and support staff who have undertaken an estimated 20,000 surveys in the NSW Central Region over the last 15 years. The Central Region extends from Macksville to Tamworth in the North to Putty and the Hawkesbury River in the South of NSW.
- As a result there is an ever increasing amount of knowledge about the landscape and the processes necessary to ensure endangered flora and fauna are preserved into the future. "Our next step is to introduce a landscape biodiversity monitoring program that assesses the health of the ecosystems across the broad land base. This will help to determine the effectiveness of the actions undertaken to protect the species" said senior ecologist Chris Slade.
- "Apart from pre-logging surveys we are also involved in targeted research projects, such as for the Eastern Pygmy Possum and species-specific monitoring programs such as for the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby and the Large-footed Myotis (Insectivorous Bat). This is an amazing species of bat which flies closely above the surface of the water along creeks trawling for aquatic insects. Interestingly we recently re-captured an individual that was first caught in 2005 in a tributary to the Wilson River during monitoring surveys. The individual was captured during pre-logging surveys and again during the 2012 Wilson River monitoring survey. The distance between roost sites is 7.8kms as the bat flies along the creeks. This has revealed a lot about the longevity of the species in the wild, will assist to give an indication of population size and has highlighted the habitat use and value of riparian habitat management employed" said Chris.
- Considerable attention is being given to biodiversity in general by Chris' team – a multi-disciplined group who work closely with other teams from Forests NSW including surveyors, harvest planners.