

Dave Gillies - Transfleet Ltd

Dave Gillies started his apprenticeship as a draughtsman in 1960 at Mason Bros. They were a large heavy engineering plant producing boilers, overhead cranes, barges, dredges and silos. They had a machine shop and a ship building plant - for Dave it was a great place to learn. On completion of his apprenticeship in 1965, Dave concentrated on work for the sales department, eventually moving into a sales-engineering position. Masons were pioneers in pneumatic handling of dry-powdered granulated materials. The spherical tanks used for cement and flour was a new process and Dave had to work hard to sell it. In 1969 Dave joined Domett Truck and Trailers as a sales engineer working from their Auckland branch. In 1970 he was asked to set up the branch in Mt Maunganui and covered sales of new trailers as well as modifications. In 1977, he was back in Auckland with a newly formed company – Domett Fruehauf Trailers, of which he was a shareholder. In 1980 Dave, with his wife Margaret, established Transfleet Equipment Ltd and purchased the balance of the assets of Domett Fruehauf Trailers Auckland.



In the years since, Transfleet have specialised in bulk haulage equipment, building their first aluminium tipper body in 1987 for Smith & Davie, a long-standing client.

1992 saw the introduction of 'live' or 'walking floor' trailer technology into the New Zealand refuse industry by Transfleet in collaboration with Hallco Manufacturing of Oregon USA.

There were many firsts in Dave and Transfleets history, both for them and the industry

- The first round front corner aluminium body
- In 1997 -The Transfleet Smoothy© smooth side aluminium dump body made its New Zealand debut
- In 2002 – the Clip Chip © panel product developed for the refuse industry.
- In 2011- By volume produced, Transfleet is New Zealand's top dump trailer builder.

There are many more other firsts complete a very busy 37 years for Transfleet!

In 2016 Dave facilitated the commission of Transfleet Equipment's new site at Wiri. Son Matthew and engineering manager Michael Eccles have taken over the day-to-day management of Transfleet but Dave and Margaret still keep a hand in the business.

Dave joined the TTMF in 1987 and was the President from 1988 to 1991 - he remained an active member until 2011. Dave's contribution to the industry is vast and his commitment to manufacturing excellence is evident in every aspect of the Transfleet product and culture.

I have known Dave since 1989 and have always respected his dedication to the industry, enjoyed his dry humour and appreciated his order book.

It is with great pleasure we award Dave, life membership.

Kate Bucknell, Executive Secretary, 2017

