

Ian Stevenson - Transport Trailers

Ian Stevenson began his career as an apprentice fitter-turner at W.P. Walker Ltd in Hamilton in 1951.

Those were formative years in which he learnt the basics of his trade. But, perhaps more importantly for what was to follow, W.P. Walker Ltd was also where he met fellow apprentice Bill Box.

The two were ambitious. And in a hurry. Bill had finished his apprenticeship, but Ian had six months to go in his when the two went out on their own and started Transport & General Engineering Co. Ltd, now Transport Trailers.

To this day, Ian remains one of a very few to start his own company while an apprentice. His first workshop was in Kent Street, outside Hamilton. Much of the early work was general engineering, but within a year Ian got his first commission for a trailer – a single-axle semi for a kauri logger in the Coromandel.

It was the beginning of a history of trailer building that would span nearly 70 years and today would make their company New Zealand's largest manufacturer of heavy aluminium and Hardox transport equipment.

Ian's first foray into aluminium was a truck and trailer body he built for Roose Industries in Mercer. Ian admits he had misgivings about an aluminium trailer, but he and Bill persevered and pioneered the technology, a New Zealand first. By 1972, almost their entire output was aluminium trailers, marketed under the Transport Trailers brand.

Today the company Ian and Bill started is thriving. At the time of writing, Transport Trailers operates from three separate sites; the main two sites based in Hamilton and also a new service centre building site in Drury, Auckland – part of their nation wide service and support network - in total, 33,000 sq metres of building!

Members since 1961, Ian served on the NZTTMF council from 1979 to 1983, served on the drawbar safety standards committee, hosted and convened the first TTMF subcommittee for HV brakes in 1980, and in 1981 was on the TTMF subcommittee that developed our code of practice for design and manufacture of suspension systems.

Ian was made a Life member in 2023



Bill Box and Mike Stevenson

