

# btb

BETWEEN  
THE  
BRANCHES

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TIGERCAT INDUSTRIES INC.

The new LX870D  
exceeding expectations  
in Pacific northwest. Page 2

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# LX870D FIRST IMPRESSIONS



The LX870D tethered on steep terrain near Olympia in Washington state.

BTB visited Olympia, Washington to get operator Gary Smith's impressions of his new LX870D track feller buncher. Gary works with R.L. Smith Logging, which is owned by his brother and sister-in-law Roger and Carmen Smith.

**BTB:** *When did you start operating the LX870D?*

**Gary:** The machine started working at the beginning of February. It currently has 1,100 hours on it.

**BTB:** *What did you operate prior to this machine?*

**Gary:** I was on a Tigercat 870C with the 5702 saw head. It had 21,000 hours and I ran it for about eleven years when we traded it for the new one. Prior to that I ran Timbco.

**BTB:** *How long have you been operating equipment for?*

**Gary:** I started operating forestry equipment in 1988. So almost thirty years.

**BTB:** *What are your thoughts on the new model?*

**Gary:** Well, I like just about everything right now. The boom movements are quick and the saw head is quick. There has been a lot of thought put into this machine. I've been smiling since day one. First day I ran it I thought this is impressive. You can tell that the guys that build these understand loggers. They even put the storage area in the back, which is great for the shackles for the tether. The toolbox is also really nice, I can put a spill kit in there and shut the door and nothing gets thrown around too much.



Gary Smith of R.L. Smith Logging in front of his Tigercat LX870D track feller buncher.

**BTB:** *Why did you guys decide to purchase the Tigercat LX870D?*

**Gary:** The difference in the maintenance cost is just phenomenal. I mean tens of thousands of dollars cheaper a year to operate. I told Roger buy whatever you want but that 870 was so good it wasn't really a question. It had over 21,000 hours on it and it has the original swing bearing. The other brand at 10,000 hours already had two swing bearing replacements on it. It severely cracked from one end to the other. And other brands overheat. The Tigercat runs cool. 143 degrees Fahrenheit is as hot as I have ever seen the oil get to on the computer and that is very cool for a buncher.

**BTB:** *Have you noticed any new features with the new cab?*

**Gary:** I was very leery about the rearview camera but I got used to it very fast and I really like it. I use it constantly. At first, I didn't think I would like it but for tethering it is perfect. It makes it easy to look at

my tethering lines without having to swing around when I am going down the hill. We also do a lot of selective cutting around RMZs [resource management zones]. Normally you would have had to turn around to come out but now you can just use your camera to back out. That is a really nice deal there.

**BTB:** *What are your thoughts on the longer R-163L undercarriage?*

**Gary:** This machine gets around a lot lighter than it is. It performs like something that weighs 10,000 pounds less. We were worried about the soft terrain but the ground pressure is even better than the older 870.

**BTB:** *Your previous machine didn't have ER, are you using it now?*

**Gary:** Yes, you use a lot less effort and the boom shoots right out. It's so quick.

**"I've been smiling since day one."**

– Gary Smith, LX870D operator

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**BTB:** *Do you like the Bluetooth® audio system?*

**Gary:** I told my kids I had Bluetooth now and they laughed. I don't know how that works, but my kids said they would get me an iPod and get me hooked up.

**BTB:** *What improvements would you suggest for the engineers back at the factory?*

**Gary:** I honestly can't think of any. It has got everything that needed to be changed on the old one. I can't come up with anything. It has great access and steps everywhere you need them. I like how you can fuel without lifting the lid. Having interior lights come on when you open the door is very nice in the morning.

**BTB:** *Have you been using Telematics?*

**Gary:** I like to know how much fuel and DEF I am using every day. My sister-in-law Carmen is in the office and likes to look at the average history of fuel and DEF usage. She showed me how to log in and look at the graphs to see when I am idling and when I am working. It was really neat to see. It turns out I go in two hour spurts. I work for two hours then take a 10-minute break and relax. Then I go for two hours again. I never paid attention to my pattern but [my brother] Roger was laughing at that.

**BTB:** *What is it like working with your brother rather than managing your own company like you once did?*

**Gary:** I like it. I get to do the part I like now. All I do is take care of this baby right here [points to his LX870D]. And Roger finds the work. When I was on my own I was only one guy. I had to stop work to go bid on a job that I might not get, and it bothered me. I decided with my kids that I want to have time to go to baseball games. This is more my style. I didn't like being a business owner.

**BTB:** *Have you visited the Tigercat factory?*

**Gary:** I had the chance to go but then something came up and our mechanic went. He couldn't stop talking about it for months after he got back. He said they were so informative. The only thing they wouldn't tell him when he asked was what type of steel they were using – they laughed. Roger says I have to go sometime and I do want to.

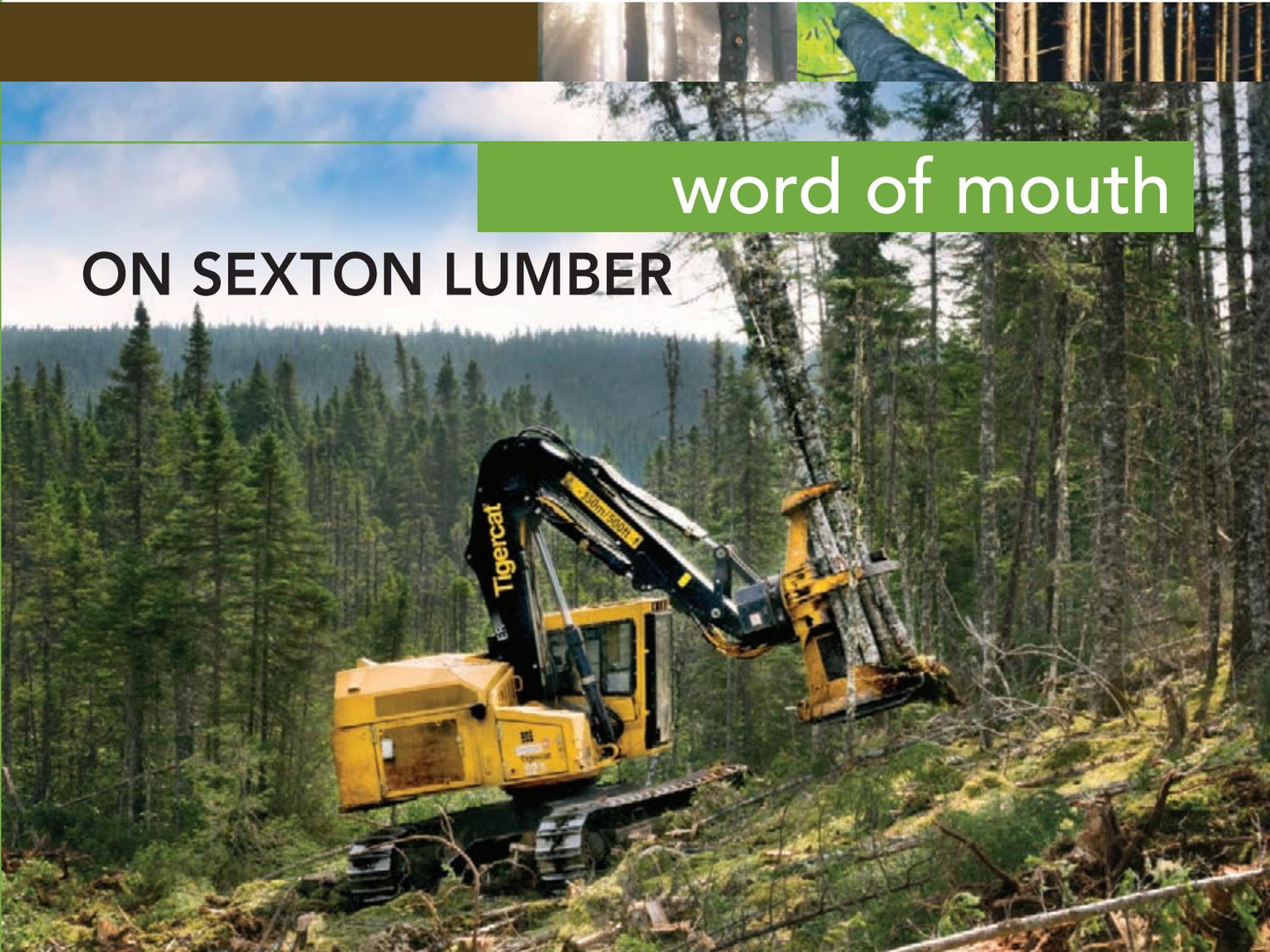
I have seen Ken [MacDonald] at a couple of logging shows and I've been to a Tigercat dinner and that man is impressive. Those are the type of people you want to buy equipment from. You know it isn't a company that is just slapping things together and pushing them out the door and saying sold! With this machine and the last machine, there has always been someone asking how things are going and checking up on you after you purchase it. You know there is someone back in Canada at the factory that cares about you. ■



Gary likes to play guitar so his brother added "Gig Bear" to his cab door.

*Watch Tigercat LX870D feller bunchers operating in Washington with and without cable assist systems on Tigercat TV by visiting*

[www.tigercat.com/video/lx870d](http://www.tigercat.com/video/lx870d)



## word of mouth

# ON SEXTON LUMBER

Our harvesting costs have gone down. And that's mainly because of production. Production comes from machines running. Simple as that.

**Big dreams and hard work led the Sexton family business from a horse and water-powered sawmill to a modern, integrated harvesting and sawmilling operation.**

– Paul Iarocci

*In August 2017, BTB visited the harvesting and sawmilling operations of Sexton Lumber based in Bloomfield, Newfoundland. Owners, Kevin and Susan Sexton have built a thriving, vertically integrated business. It begins in the rugged, scrappy spruce and fir forests of the North Atlantic island and ends with Sexton Trucking delivering dimensional lumber to customers within the province. The company also has a market reach throughout the Maritimes and into the United States.*

*Along the way, roundwood is processed at the twin line small log stud mill at a rate of 60 million board feet per year. Round pulp as well as chips and recovered residue are trucked to Corner Brook Pulp & Paper. The mill and harvesting operations employ around 100 people. The company rates as a major success story in the province, overcoming many challenges along the way through hard work, forward thinking and common sense. Kevin Sexton tells the story in his own words.*

### How it began

My dad started his first sawmill in the early forties when they were using horses to pull the logs and the water-propelled wheel that would drive the saw. The watermill we'd call it. I never came along until the sixties and during summer holidays and after school, that's where I'd be, at the mill – stacking lumber or

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Susan and Kevin Sexton.

playing in the sawdust. So I grew up in the sawmill business. As time went on, I moved away from it and got into trucking. But as my dad got older, I realized that I was going to have to make a decision. Was I going to be in trucking or was I going to continue in the business?

Susan and I bought a chipper and debarker in 1992 and started producing chips for the Abitibi pulp mill in Grand Falls. We had it set up in the yard at my dad's sawmill. We produced two loads a day. Susan and I and one other fellow would debark and chip all day. Then after the shift was over, I'd take off to Grand Falls with the chips. I'd make the two trips and be back home again for the start of the shift in the morning. That wasn't easy. I was running on two and three hours of sleep for weeks and weeks like that.

We eventually bought another truck and hired a driver. He started hauling the chips and I stuck around and helped at the mill a little bit. After four years, my dad was ready to retire. That's when we took over the mill.

## Modernizing the mill

It was only just a small mill but we envisioned being the biggest sawmill in the province. That was our goal and we took a different approach than some other mills in the province. We researched newer technology. That's one of the things I believe in, technology. We saw the trend of logs getting smaller, so I bought the first chip-and-saw mill that came into the province in 1996. It was a used machine and I had to get it trucked out of Montana. It came here in five or six trailer loads. There were pieces everywhere. We set it up and it looked like a spaceship to us. I mean we had never seen anything like it. We had our trials and tribulations but we stuck with it and ran that old machine for about four years.

I have no idea how we did it, but in 1999 we financed a new sawing machine – a HewSaw from Finland. And that was a big step. It was almost two million bucks and it was the latest and greatest in sawing technology back then. I've still got the machine. It was a big investment for somebody with 50 bucks in their pocket and not knowing anything about it. I had dreamed about this HewSaw for years. The salesman in BC, he was tired of talking to me. We





Sexton runs three H845D harvesters.

went through, I'd say, four or five different finance companies to get the machine financed. I honestly think that those lending agencies that financed it believed in us. And that's why we got the money, as far as I'm concerned. They believed in us.

### Mill closure stimulates a new opportunity

*The Abitibi mill closed in February, 2009. By that point Kevin had struck a deal to send chips to Kruger in Corner Brook. When Abitibi closed, the provincial government took back the timber rights and reallocated the volume to the sawmills that were previously buying saw logs from Abitibi.*

We were buying our logs from local contractors and the Abitibi Bowater pulp mill in Grand Falls-Windsor. We had no harvesting equipment whatsoever. When the mill closed, that was the beginning of our harvesting days. When we started, we didn't think Tigercat was in our reach, as they were expensive machines. It became something like with the sawing machine. We dreamed of having Tigercat machines after seeing them at DEMO 2008, but when would we get there? So we just kept on harvesting.

It was the Atlantic equipment show in 2014 where we first met Chris Baldwin. He showed us around and we looked at that 1075. That show would have

been in April and Wajax delivered it to us in July. We put it in the woods and looked at it side-by-side with our other forwarders. We could have melted down the other two and there wouldn't be as much steel as there was in that 1075. In the woods, steel means something.

Over the years I've had the opportunity to purchase quite a few different brands of equipment. I've met the people associated with each company and I've seen the service that comes with it. There is no doubt Tigercat equipment is by far superior to other brands and they have proven it. But technical service is also crucial. Tigercat is almost like a family and I firmly believe that once you start buying Tigercat equipment you are a part of that family.

Last year Sexton Lumber harvested 150 000 cubic metres with three feller bunchers, including a Tigercat 845C and 845D. The bunchers are followed by in-stand processing: three H845D harvesters plus four older excavator-based processors. Forwarding is accomplished with two 1075B forwarders and a third aging forwarder that has not yet been replaced. The crew works a single shift, 50 hours per week. Stem size and stand density is what one would expect for a North Atlantic maritime climate with rugged, rocky geology and

**There are so many steps in the process – from the time the harvester goes in the woods to when that piece of lumber is wrapped and ready for the customer. There are so many things that are out of our control that could cost money.**

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less than outstanding soil quality. Average size is about ten trees to the cubic metre and stand density averages 1,500 stems per hectare.

On the track machines, the only failure that I know of was a main pump. We were only down a day and a half. The other buncher and the processors, I don't know if we've had any downtime. On average, the processors are doing ten to twelve cubic metres per hour. We're not in the big wood. We get two eight-foot [2,4 m] logs and a piece of pulp. Their fuel consumption is much better than the other processors by far. They are probably two litres per hour more efficient than the excavator bases with much more horsepower [260 hp vs 159 hp]. And forget about the fuel. The uptime alone makes them more efficient than anything else out there.



Kevin and Susan's latest buncher, an 845D.

## Vertical integration

*The harvesting crew is producing eight and nine foot logs and currently supplying 60% of the sawmill intake of 1 000 cubic metres per day. That translates to annual mill production of 60 million board feet of lumber.*

Our pulpwood from a typical block averages 25 to 30 percent maximum because we're accepting logs

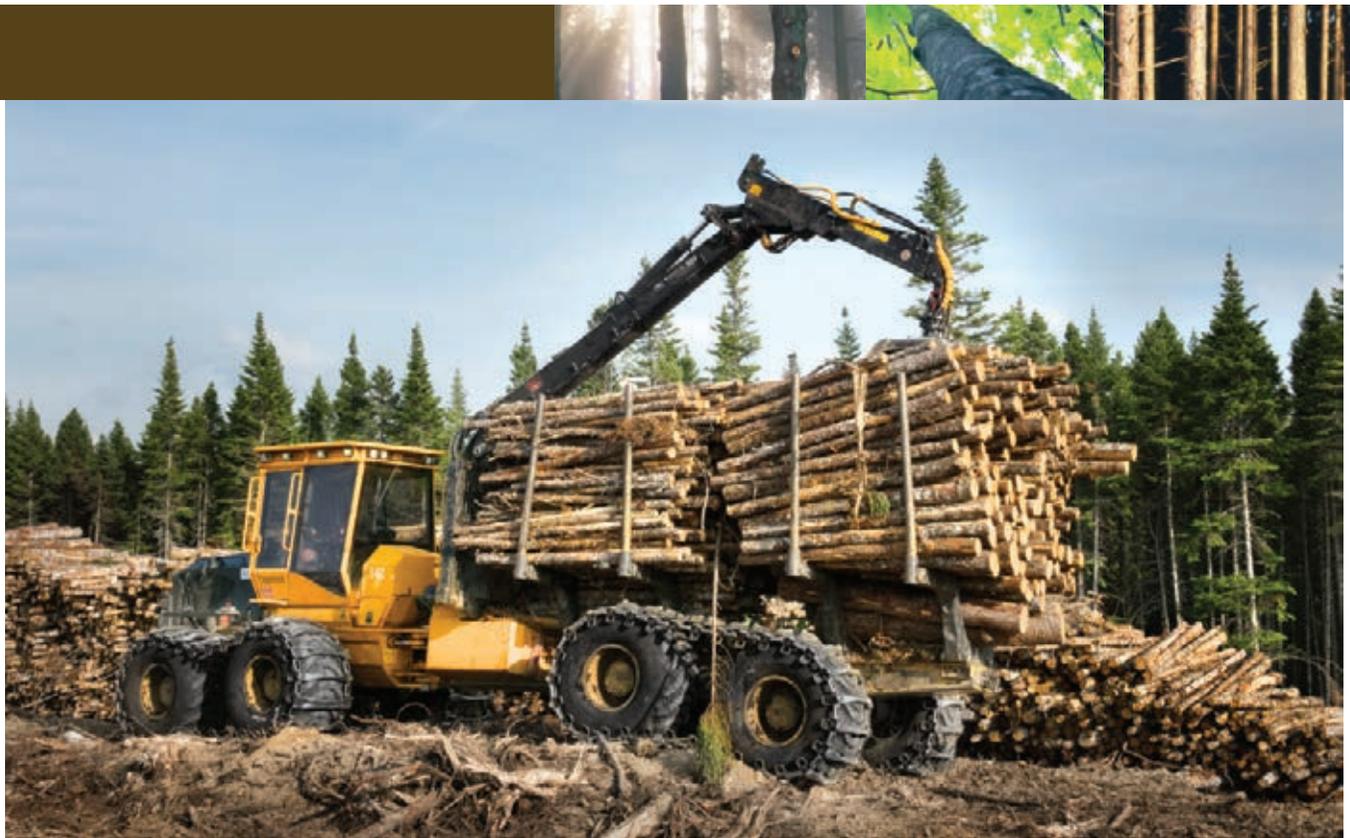
down to a three-and-a-half inch diameter top at the sawmill. That is just a single two by three. We mill two-by-three, two-by-four, two-by-six and two-by-eight stud wood. The maximum that we can process is thirteen inch diameter. So we've got what they call a butt reducer. And a lot of the time, it is just the flared butt that we have to grind down. The fibre goes to our dryer and is sent to the pulp mill for hog fuel. So that fibre is recovered.

Our primary market for lumber is here in Newfoundland. We sell some in the Maritimes and the remainder, probably 40%, goes to the US. My plan is to install a third sawing machine. We need to bring our annual harvest up to 250 000 cubic metres and increase the mill output to 100 million board feet.

*Another recently completed project was the installation of a finger-joint plant. The rationale? To address the high incidence of trim backs – six and seven foot lumber that is only marketable in the US, and commanding a poor price at that.*

The value of the shorter lumber trim backs we were producing was really low, plus we were not recovering anything in the sawmill shorter than six feet. So there was lumber





Tigercat 1075B forwarder. According to Kevin, "In the woods, steel means something."

going to the chipper that had four feet of good wood. Now, we want to recover all that and send it to the finger-joint plant – not to make eight foot lumber because we're producing plenty of that. But there is a good market here for long-length lumber for horizontal use. And most of what's being consumed is coming from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec. So instead of sending short lumber south and getting basically nothing for it, let's turn it into a product that we can sell right here at home and increase the value big-time.

We also put in a small pressure-treating plant. Not to compete with the big guys – we just want to add a little value to some of our products and offer it to local customers that we sell lumber to every day.

### Cost per tonne

Our harvesting costs have gone down. And that's mainly because of production. Production comes from machines running. Simple as that. That's what Neil Greening, the "finance minister" always tells us: it's not about the capital cost, that is just one component. Everything has an impact. You know what really hurts us is machines that don't produce. Downtime is a

killer because you never gain it back. It's gone forever and the cost of producing wood from that machine, obviously, it's going to be higher on average because it has to offset all the lost production.

### Susan and the finance minister

*Kevin names his wife Susan and Neil Greening, the controller, as the two team members that are absolutely critical to the operations and success of the business. Susan manages Sexton Trucking which is focused on delivering finished lumber to the customer base within the province. She also manages all the contract haulers for roundwood and chips.*

**Tigercat is almost like a family and I firmly believe that once you start buying Tigercat equipment you are a part of that family.**

Susan looks after all the drivers and she takes all the calls when they are broke down in the middle of the night. But Susan also knows this business as well as I do. She knows every move that a machine makes at the mill. So Susan's role is whatever she needs to do. If there's an issue in the woods and I'm not available, she'll look after that. If the mill is broke down for some reason, she can look after that too. We share the responsibilities.

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And Neil – the finance minister as I call him – has been with us for nineteen years. He's an accountant but he sure knows this business and we rely on him heavily. He knows the recovery for the sawmill and the fuel consumption for the harvesters. Every week, he's doing reports and following recovery. Neil is the one that will tell me if a machine is starting to burn more fuel in the woods. At the end of the week, we know what the wood cost is per cubic metre for that week. We're right up to date.

You've got to know what your cost is. And it's too late six months down the road. We need to know weekly. Our recovery in the mill is tracked hourly. We're averaging 285 to 287 board feet of lumber per cubic metre out of the sawmill. If we drop down for an hour to 280, we don't hit the panic button. But if our recovery consistently stays down by four or five board feet per cubic metre, that's a pile of cash at the end of the day. We are doing 1 000 cubic metres in a shift. If we lose five board feet per cubic metre, that's 5,000 feet of lumber that we don't have. It could be something as simple as dirt on a scanner and it's not reading the diameter of the log correctly. And if we go on for six hours like that and all we needed was a tissue to clean a laser, shame on us. Knowing our numbers is crucial.



One of the two saw lines at the mill. It all happens very fast. At this stage, the machine is rotating the log according to the scan in preparation for sawing.

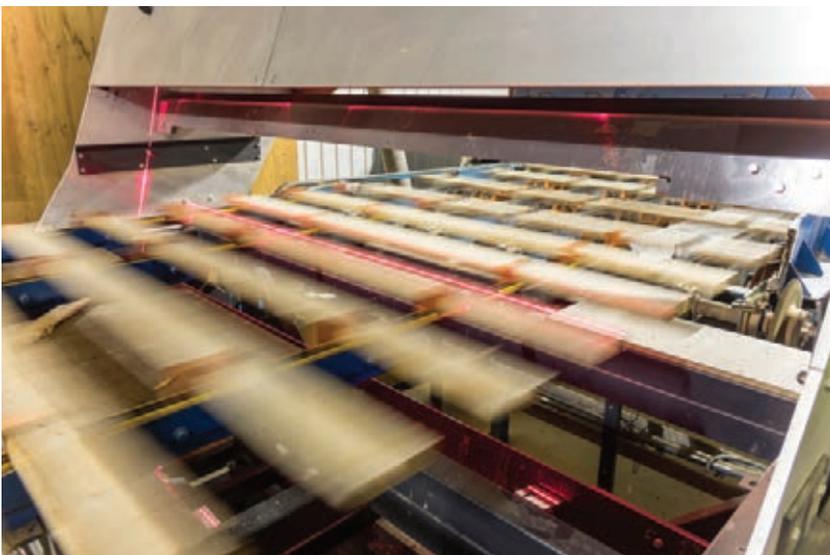
## On becoming a logger

*Kevin relates what it felt like to make another enormous investment and enter into a venture that he had no practical experience with. Suddenly in 2009, he and Susan were loggers.*

**That's one of the things I believe in, technology.**

It was scary because I didn't know the logging end of it. I just tried to get a couple of good people around me that did know logging. And I figured we could apply what we knew about the sawmill side of it to the harvesting side. Like tracking and controlling cost, recovery and inventory. So that's what we did. It's not like there are two business models.

We apply the same principles daily in the woods as we do here at the mill. Now, I'll be first to admit it's been much more difficult to actually do that because we are here. And the woods operation – when you're not on-site every day – it makes it more difficult. ■



Scanning the lumber for quality.

# BATTERY LIFE AND MAINTENANCE

Batteries that power our vehicles and equipment are something we give very little thought to, that is, until that dreaded moment that we turn the key and the engine doesn't start.

– Rick Routliffe, service representative

In years gone by, it was common practice to carry out routine maintenance on our vehicle batteries to keep them performing optimally. Today, batteries are marketed as maintenance free, but are they really? Although batteries today do not require the same maintenance that they did in the past, there are a few things that will make life easier for you and your battery.

The surface of a battery should always be clean and dry. Various types of debris that may be collecting on the top surface of your battery can be conductive. This may create a path that can allow current flow. This can cause the battery to discharge. Moisture, often due to condensation, will amplify this problem.

Battery terminals must be kept clean and tight. Dirty or loose connections do not conduct electricity and may lead to difficult starting of the engine and batteries not being fully charged. Corrosion on battery terminals is often a sign of electrolyte loss through excessive venting, very likely the result of overcharging.

Tigercat machines that run on 24 volts use two batteries connected in series. When replacing these batteries, always replace them both at the same time. They should be fully charged and need to be virtually equal in voltage, with no more than 0.3 volts difference between them. This will ensure the best life of the batteries.

## Wet cell or AGM

There are two types of batteries used in Tigercat machines depending on the machine application, model and design: flooded lead acid (wet cell), and absorbent glass mat (AGM). It is very important to



know which type is in your machine when it comes to maintenance and charging. While flooded batteries often have removable caps on top, this is not always the case. Always look for wet cell or AGM on the label, or look up the battery's model number online to confirm.

## Electrolyte

Lead acid batteries contain a mixture of sulphuric acid and water, called electrolyte. This electrolyte acts as a chemical medium that allows the flow of current between the positive and negative plates in the battery. During normal operation, some of the water in the electrolyte can be lost through ventilation. Because of this, it was common in the past to add distilled or demineralized water to the battery cells so that the electrolyte was replenished. Batteries are now manufactured with a surplus of electrolyte so it is no longer necessary to top them up.

However, excessive electrolyte can be lost due to vent seals not fully closing because of age or overcharging.

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This can lead to portions of the plates becoming dry. Plates that have become dry will no longer function electrically. This is a condition that cannot be corrected and it reduces the capacity of the battery.

When a cell in a lead acid battery discharges, a chemical reaction occurs between the lead in the plates and the electrolyte. That reaction produces lead sulphate and water. The lead sulphate collects on the plates in the battery. At this time the sulphate is soft. Properly charging the battery will reverse the chemical reaction and the lead sulphate and water are converted back to lead and acid. However, problems can begin if the battery is left in a discharged state for a period of time or if the battery is overcharged during recharging.

When a battery is left in a state of discharge for a period of time or if the battery is not sufficiently charged during normal operation, the lead sulphate begins to harden and form crystals on the plates. The hardened sulphate crystals will interfere with recharging the battery and as they continue to expand, they deform or possibly crack the plates, leading to battery destruction. Permanent sulphation is said to occur when a battery has been left in a state of low charge for periods of weeks or months but it is always best for the health of the battery to recharge a discharged battery as soon as possible.

Overcharging a battery causes water in the electrolyte to separate into hydrogen and oxygen. This is often referred to as “gassing” and these gases will escape through the vents on each cell. Hydrogen is extremely explosive. For this reason charging should always be done in areas with plenty of ventilation so the gases can dissipate.

### Charging wet cell batteries

Charging a battery is a process that replaces the energy that has been used. This should be done as soon as possible in order to avoid the formation of hard sulphation which leads to lower capacity and shortened life.

The alternator on your machine works very well maintaining the batteries except when the battery has become deeply discharged, as the alternator tends to overcharge batteries in this condition. Overcharging, along with sulphation are the leading causes of shortened battery life.

It should be noted that an average starting battery has only about ten deep discharge cycles available if it is recharged using the vehicle’s alternator. As such, charging a deeply discharged battery should ideally be accomplished using a prescribed three-step process which takes fourteen to sixteen hours to complete when done correctly:

1. Constant current/constant voltage (CC/CV) charge, also referred to as bulk charging. As much as 70-80% of the battery capacity is replaced in the first five to eight hours at maximum current and maximum voltage capacity of the charger.
2. Absorption charge, also called topping charge. The remaining 20-30% of the charge will take much longer than the bulk charge, an additional seven to ten hours. The topping charge begins when the battery reaches 14.4 volts. At this stage, the charging voltage is held at a constant 14.4 volts and current from the charger is reduced until the 98% of the battery capacity is achieved.



3. The float charge. The float charge begins immediately after the topping charge. In this last charging stage, voltage is reduced to a maximum of 13.4 volts and current is reduced to 1 amp or less. This will charge the battery to 100% and will maintain the battery in a fully charged state.

## AGM

AGM batteries are also lead acid batteries. The electrolyte in AGM batteries is saturated in a special acid saturated fibreglass mat. Because of this, AGM batteries are sealed, so gassing is not a significant issue.

*AGM batteries have several advantages over flooded batteries:*

- AGM batteries are generally more powerful than flooded batteries of the same physical size.
- AGM batteries have lower internal resistance than flooded batteries. Lower internal resistance makes the batteries more responsive to electrical load.
- Lower internal resistance allows AGM batteries to recharge as much as five times faster than flooded batteries.
- Improved vibration resistance because of sandwich construction.
- Acid saturated in a fibreglass mat makes a spill-proof battery.
- AGM batteries have better resistance to cold temperatures.
- AGM batteries are said to be less prone to sulphation when discharged.

However, AGM batteries do have a few disadvantages compared with flooded batteries. They are more expensive to manufacture and are more sensitive to overcharging.

## Charging AGM batteries

AGM batteries must be charged using either a charger specifically designed for them or a charger that has a switch for an AGM charging mode. The charging will follow a similar process as the wet cell, but the process must be carefully controlled as the AGM has much

**Overcharging a battery causes water in the electrolyte to separate into hydrogen and oxygen. This is often referred to as "gassing" and these gases will escape through the vents on each cell. Hydrogen is extremely explosive. For this reason charging should always be done in areas with plenty of ventilation so the gases can dissipate.**

tighter tolerances than a wet cell and is sensitive to overcharging. AGM batteries must never be opened as this will damage the battery.

1. Bulk charging. As much as 80% of the battery capacity is replaced in the bulk charge phase at maximum current and maximum voltage capacity of the charger. The battery must not be taken off the charger during this stage.
2. Absorption charge. When the battery reaches 80% of the total charge, switch to absorption charge. This stage uses a maximum charge voltage of 14.7 volts.
3. Continuous float charge. Switch to float charge once the current drops to 100mA or has been in absorption charge for four hours. This will charge the battery to 100% and will maintain the battery in a fully charged state.

For further detailed information on charging and battery care, refer to the specific battery manufacturer and battery charger instructions. ■

# FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION



Four generations of Sykes loggers. (L-R) Bill, Cooper, Cam, Marvin and Colton.

BTB spoke with Marvin Thomas Sykes, owner of M.T. Sykes Logging and twenty-seven-year-old son Colton Sykes to learn more about their all-Tigercat harvesting operations.

– Samantha Paul, Tigercat marketing

SALEM, Alabama – Passion for working in the woods is contagious and continues to be passed down from generation to generation in the Sykes family. M.T. Sykes Logging started with Marvin’s father, Bill Sykes in 1974. Marvin took over the business in 1999 when his father decided to retire. Today the company runs a thinning crew and a clear fell crew and both are all Tigercat.

## Four generations

Running equipment starts young in the Sykes family. “I started running equipment when I was twelve-

years-old,” says Marvin. “I would get on the skidder when they were eating lunch and pull a drag. It would take me about the whole lunch break to get one drag to the landing,” he laughs.

Just like Marvin, his son Colton grew up watching logging equipment run throughout his childhood. Colton worked with his father every chance he could: over Christmas break, on weekends and all through the summer. He started full-time after high school at age seventeen.

Marvin’s grandchildren, seven-year-old Cam and six-year-old Cooper, can’t wait to start operating. “We want to work in the woods with Daddy and Big Daddy,” they both say. At Christmas, the boys love unwrapping a new Tigercat die cast model. They hope to get the newest 724G feller buncher this year.

Marvin’s nephew, Edd Willingham runs the thinning crew and the clear fell crew is run by Colton. Marvin’s



wife, Christie, handles the books and Marvin himself fills in wherever he is needed. One day Marvin will be running the bulldozer building roads. The next day he might hop on the loader or drive a truck. M.T. Sykes owns seven trucks in total. Marvin owns six and Colton now owns one, purchasing his first log truck from his father two years ago. In addition, the company contracts three trucks from Marvin's brother Wayne, who owns a trucking business.

### The iron

The thinning crew consists of a 724E drive-to-tree feller buncher, a month-old 620E skidder and a 234 loader. The larger clear fell crew has a 620E skidder, an older 620D skidder, a 724G feller buncher, a 234 loader and a 250 loader.

Marvin was introduced to Tigercat in 2001 when the company purchased two Tigercat 240 loaders. Next came a Tigercat feller buncher in 2002. And in

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M.T. Sykes had its 724G arrive on-site in February 2017. Since then the company added a new 620E skidder to the line-up.

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The thinning crew with Forestry 21 staff and Tigercat district manager Johnny Boyd. (L-R): Ricky McConnell, Edd Willingham, Zane Plair, Russell McCullers, Bubba Beckwith, Johnny Boyd, Marvin Sykes and Forestry 21 sales specialist Lewis Greer.

2011, the company finally purchased its first Tigercat skidder. “To be honest it took me a while to get into the Tigercat skidders because of the price. But as competitor models increased in price, I recognized the true value in the Tigercat skidders. Once I tried one I liked it and they hold up a lot better,” explains Marvin.

Marvin’s son Colton runs the newest 724G feller buncher. “I have run them all but we like Tigercat the best,” he says. He loves having all the controls on the joystick versus having the arm control on the foot pedal like the 724E. “It is still just as strong and powerful as the older model but the upgrades to the cab are really nice. The seat is so comfortable,” Colton adds.

All Tigercat equipment has been purchased through long-time Tigercat dealer Forestry 21. Marvin and Forestry 21 owner Ricky McConnell go back over twenty years. “I knew Ricky when he was a logger with his brother, before he started selling equipment.

I get good service from Forestry 21,” says Marvin. “Ricky is always there to help when we need him.”

Forestry 21 took Colton to visit the Tigercat factory two years ago in 2015. “I was already a 100% Tigercat fan but after visiting the factory I was at 200%. Everyone was so nice and helpful. Tigercat runs its business like we run ours, valuing its employees and

their hard work. It really meant a lot when the owner took us around his steel factory where it begins, which was very cool to see. Everything seemed to work like a well-oiled machine,” Colton expressed.

### Hard work

Marvin believes his business has stayed steady and successful over the years from working hard and finding hard-working employees. “I try to take good care of my employees and help them out,” he says. The company employs fourteen people, including truck drivers. Employees are supplied with health insurance, good vacation pay and uniforms.

**“We want to work in the woods with Daddy and Big Daddy!”**

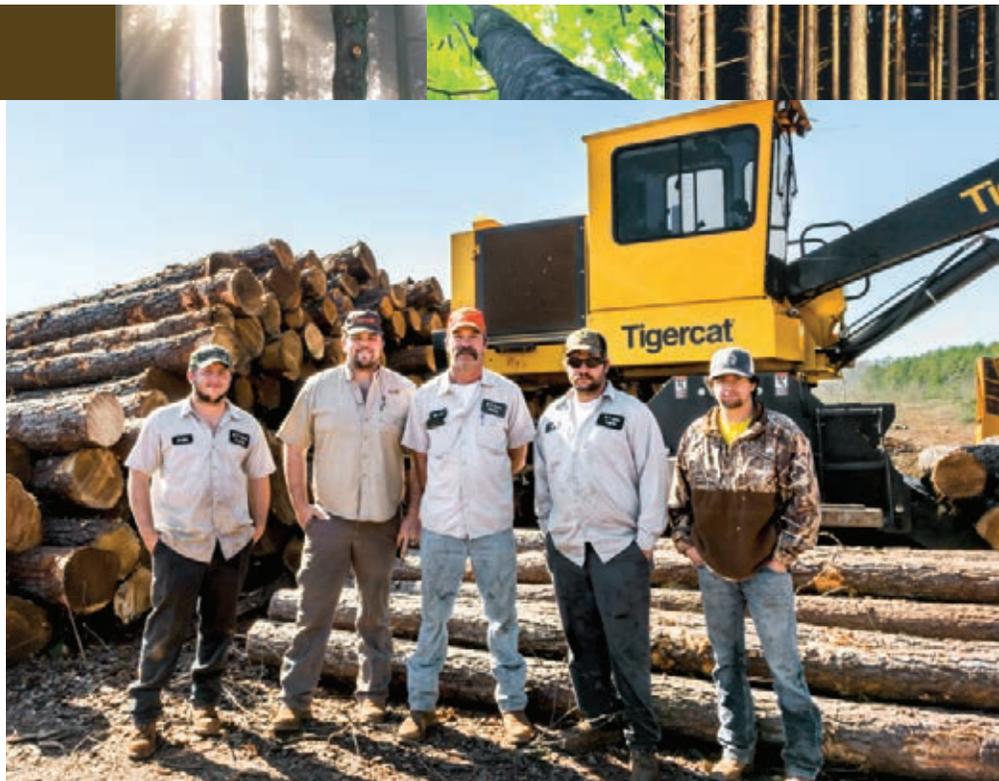
– Marvin’s grandkids  
(seven-year-old Cam and six-year-old Cooper)

Marvin makes sure his operators are versatile and can operate all equipment on the jobsite. This allows them to rotate over the lunch break to keep the flow of the operations moving. “This way nothing ever comes to a complete stop during the day,” Colton explains.

“My father always taught us to work hard and don’t quit. I think our success boils down to hard work and making hay when the sun shines. Whenever you have the opportunity to get a bunch of logs out, you got to seize it and stay until dark if you need to.” The crew won’t leave for the day until a load of logs is ready to go for the next morning.

The company harvests primarily softwood and some mixed tracts with softwood and hardwood. The thinning crew hauls 50-60 loads per week and the clear fell crew hauls an average of 80 loads per week but has reached up to 160 loads. “We have been off and on quota but it seems like right now things are steady,” says Marvin.

Marvin, 49, is content with the size of his operations with no plans to add a third crew. His son Colton, who



The clear fell crew (L-R): Justin Adams, Colton Sykes, Marvin Sykes, DJ Thompson and Zack Howze.

will take over when he is ready to retire, is currently taking more time in the office to learn all angles of the business. Colton respects his father and the knowledge he has gained over the years. “He is the boss and owner but he’s not your typical boss. He works hard and will get in there and help out with everything,” Colton states. Colton plans to continue to encourage the strong interest his children already have in the forestry world. Marvin and Colton both recognize that passion starts young and if guided correctly, will last a lifetime with generations to follow. ■



**“Tigercat runs its business like we run ours, valuing its employees and their hard work.”**

– Colton Sykes

# women in logging

## LOGGER GIRL

Samantha Paul begins a new series on women in logging with hopes to inspire young women to consider logging as a career. First up, an interview with BC based operator, Hannah Dehoog that explores how she got into the logging industry, what life is like for a woman in logging camps and what she loves about being an operator.

Hannah Dehoog – AKA Logger Girl and Hanimal – of Smithers, British Columbia, is catching a lot of attention in the logging community. It's not just her engaging presence on social media, but her determination, bravery and skill as a young female heavy equipment operator working in a decidedly male dominated industry.

### Growing up

Hannah has been exposed to and involved in various aspects of the forestry industry for the majority of her life. Before she was even old enough for school, Hannah was marching around the bush alongside her father, a log buyer at the time. In high school she worked at a tree nursery and a sawmill, and now at the age of 22, Hannah works as an equipment operator for Groot Bros. Contracting Ltd. out of Houston, British Columbia.

The first question Hannah usually gets asked when someone discovers what she does for a living is, "How did you get into that?" Although her father, Chris Dehoog is a log buyer for West Fraser, she was introduced to operating equipment by an ex-boyfriend. While visiting him at a remote logging camp, a crew member suggested that she get a job on the crew. "No one thought I would take the suggestion seriously but as soon as the idea of running equipment came into my mind, it lit a fire in me. This is what I want to do," she says.



Passionate forestry equipment operator, Hannah Dehoog of Smithers, British Columbia.



Hannah loves her 'office' view and says she never gets sick of seeing the mountains from her cab window.

Hannah wasted no time. Before making the long drive home, she found the name and address of the contractor and stopped at his house to beg him for a job. She had no operating experience but was extremely determined. She recalls that after some persuasion the contractor said to her, "I will give you a chance, just don't piss me off." She was ecstatic. She couldn't wait to tell her Dad. "Guess who's going

logging Dad?" Hannah yelled. He was thrilled.

Hannah's father, Chris, is well known in the logging community and is a huge motivator for Hannah. She works hard every day, not only to prove herself as a female operator but to make her Dad proud. "That drive will never change," Hannah states. "Most people think the start of my career as an equipment operator got handed to me by my Dad, but it didn't. I did it all on my own," she explains. "My Dad will be the first to tell you that he did not lift a finger. He did not make a phone call or be a reference."

### Life in camp

How many young women could survive life in the middle of the bush, with no cell service, infrequent showers and only the company of an all-male crew for weeks on end? Hannah happily took on this challenge. "It was intimidating being the only girl in the camps. It is definitely more challenging for girls," says Hannah. "It took a while to get used to only showering every ten days," she said.

When BTB spoke with Hannah she had just finished eight months of night shift, working alone with just a satellite SOS phone and the stars. "I got used to it. Some nights I got freaked out but I did what I had to do. It was an adventure."



Adrenaline junkie Hannah popping a wheelie down a logging road.

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## Dream machine

Hannah started out on an excavator, learning simple hydraulic controls and basic machine maintenance.

On day three she got behind the seat of a processor operator and by day four she was on her own operating the processor. She recalls her boss telling her not to fire a log through the cab.

After two years operating a variety of machines including excavators, processors, skidders and loaders, Hannah finally got her hands on a Tigercat feller

buncher, an LX870C. Hannah had always wanted to run a leveling machine. “I’ve tackled some pretty steep ground with that tilter and loved every minute of it,” she states. Tigercat quickly became her favourite brand.

**“My heart is like a compass that points to anything that feeds adrenaline.”**

– Hannah Dehoog, operator,  
Groot Bros. Contracting Ltd.

Having run an 880 logger, several Tigercat skidders and both an LX870C and 870C, it was clear to her that Tigercat manufactured for the operator. “Life changing,” is how she describes the Turnaround® skidder seat. “And I love how accessible everything is with the

buncher. The hood flips open, the auto hydraulic pump is great and all the doors and guards are easy to use.”

When mechanic, Dave Hunter and Hannah were both working at Matt Hromatka Contracting, he gave her the nickname Hanimal and it has stuck with her over the past three years. When asked what type of Hanimal she is, she always responds with, “I’m a Tigercat.” She considers herself a bit of an animal – a little wild and outgoing in almost every aspect of life.

## What fuels her?

Hannah is an adrenaline junkie. “My heart is like a compass that points to anything that feeds adrenaline,” she states. “When I am not logging, I am



Making more than the average twenty-two-year-old, Hannah spends a lot of her pay cheque on toys that keep her playing outside all year round.

sledding with my family, dirt biking or hanging out with my boyfriend and pit bull, Phoenix.”

She loves taking on new challenges. “There is nothing a guy can do that I can’t do. That is what fuels me,” explains Hannah. “If someone doesn’t think I can do it, I want to prove them wrong.”

### The power of social media

“I am very proud of what I do as a female forestry equipment operator and so I want to share it with the world,” explains Hannah. “I also don’t think there is enough promotion for women in logging.” Since she started sharing her logger girl lifestyle on social media, other women have been curious about what it is like to be a woman working in harvesting. Hannah provides them with candid insight whenever asked.

Due to Hannah’s social media presence, she often gets recognized around Smithers and Prince George, British Columbia. She loves the attention but understands other young women are watching her so she tries to behave online. “I have a cheeky way about explaining some of the challenges I face but I absolutely love my job and truly encourage other women to give it a try.”



Hannah feels very lucky to now work the day shift only a forty-five minute drive from her family home.

### What’s next

The next step in her career is to get certified to low bed equipment as she feels that would be a useful skill. She could also see herself working steep terrain abroad and has had job offers in New Zealand.

It takes a certain type of person to log every day whether you’re a girl or a guy. “I don’t think women are superior to men and I don’t think men are superior to women. We are equal and we all need the same opportunity,” she says. Hannah is driven, hard working and tough. She is proud of what she does and isn’t going to stop promoting her logger girl lifestyle anytime soon. ■

### DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LOGGER GIRL

Time	Action
2:15am	Alarm goes off, then snooze!
3:00am	Out the door to work
4:00am	Arrive at the cut block, check fluids, warm up the machine
4:30am	Start bunching
4:00pm	Finish daily service
4:30pm	Complete maintenance and drive home
5:30pm	Cheers!



# STEEP SLOPE LOGGING IN CHILE

Approximately eight tonne drags for the 635E.

**An update on the processes, technologies and advancements at work in Chile's challenging logging operations.**

– Paul Iarocci

Cordillera de la Costa or the Chilean Coastal Range is a mountain range that runs from north to south along the Pacific coast of South America. It runs parallel to the Andes Mountains, extending from Morro de Arica in the north to Taitao Peninsula, where it ends at the Chile Triple Junction, in the south. Between these two ranges is what is known as the flat central valley where there is some relief from what is otherwise

considered rugged, steep terrain. Add to this an annual average rainfall of 1 200 mm in Concepción in the north to 2 000 mm in Valdivia in the south. And just when you thought the going was tough for logging operations, factor in the prevalence of high forest undergrowth, including climbing vines. And no, we are not done yet – Chile's forest industry finds itself almost devoid of valley bottom roads, meaning extraction is almost always uphill to crest or spur roads.

Traditionally – like most other countries with these challenges – Chilean logging operations, whether they are ground-based or cable logging systems, have



Mecharv's cable assisted LS855D felling and bunching for a yarder.

been largely motor-manual with extraction being either cable skidders or small European-style cable yarders. However, modern logging equipment has quickly evolved with the introduction of Tigercat six-wheel skidders and leveling track shovel loggers. Now the opportunity exists for ground-based harvesting systems to be used in steeper terrain that was previously the domain of the traditional cable yarding systems. There is strong collective opinion expressed by the Chilean forestry companies that a man in a certified cab working on steep terrain is far more safe than a chainsaw operator or choker setter in the same environment.

Tigercat and its dealer Latin Equipment Chile (LEC) rose to the challenge with the LS855D shovel logger (configured either as a feller director with the 5195 directional felling head or with a live heel shovel logger boom) and the Tigercat 635 series six-wheel skidder. Combining these machines with the tethering technology and expertise from New Zealand provides the safest possible harvesting solution – even further reducing the reliance on hand falling, cable skidding and aerial extraction – methods which require manpower on the ground in exposed and precarious situations.

The Tigercat LS855 series shovel loggers cost effectively convey wood 50-100 metres uphill and position pre-bunches in a more advantageous location for the six-wheel drive skidder to perform the secondary extraction on the easier terrain. Tigercat shovel loggers equipped with feller-director boom

systems and the 5195 directional felling saw are greatly expanding the terrain that can be mechanically felled. Many Tigercat shovel loggers and skidders are leaving the factory bound for Chile and other steep slope regions with factory installed tether points, ready to accept cable assist systems. Accompanying software is ready to integrate with third party winch assist equipment.

### Feller director shovel logger with conventional skidding

Forestal Nylumar owner, Pablo Martorell, sat down to talk about the evolution of his company's operations in 25 years. The operations range from flat ground to steep slopes and the overarching goal of the company is to be able to cover the entire range of terrain and to replace men on the ground with mechanization. Pablo explains that it has been a very long process from fully manual operations with animal powered extraction, to the beginnings of mechanization with track skidders and modified excavators, to where the company is today.

Pablo says that the company's mill clients and the market in general have become more demanding, with steadily increasing safety standards that impact work practices and machine specifications. "It is no longer an option to purchase equipment that is not purpose-built for forestry applications," states Pablo. Dealer support and mechanical availability are much more critical as the mills push for longer shifts and around-the-clock operation.

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Many of Pablo's machines are double shifted and clocking 300 hours per month. He is demanding 85% availability with planned maintenance and employee breaks factored in. This leaves very little time available for breakdowns and unplanned maintenance. "We have the Tigercat 615 working ten days on and five days off. The mill wants to change to 30 days per month with three shifts per day. The machines will never stop. We will need back-up machines even to do preventative maintenance. You can see how important it is becoming to have tough and reliable machines." He also notes that adding a third operator and rotating through operators on a daily basis will likely increase wear and tear on the machines and increase the chance of misuse. Pablo figures that he can run the machines to 18,000 hours on a high duty cycle and then revert them to a spare machine status.

The sites that the 615C skidders operate on are pine jobs up to 35% slope. There are two identical systems: Two older cable skidders support a 615C. An LS855C shovel logger configured as a feller director handles all felling and normally performs one shovel logging cycle as well. Pablo explains that the cable skidders will work in bad soil areas in wet weather, bringing stems to the 615C which handles the balance of the skidding.

## Cable assisted operations

Cable assisted operations in Chile are typically found on sites with some significant percentage of terrain at 100% slope but also ranging down to 60% – grades where many readers will have seen mechanized machinery, especially tracked felling machines, working happily and without cables in Canada, the US, New Zealand and Scotland. The difference in Chile comes down to soil quality and rainfall in combination with the slopes.

Tigercat started in the cable assist arena by equipping the LS855 carriers with a bolt-on cable mounting system. The effort focused on mechanizing felling on steep slopes and possibly replacing yarding with shovel logging. Often the machines were felling for a yarder and the next step in the evolution was to try to further reduce reliance on yarding rigs by adding winch assist systems to skidders.

In conjunction with inventor and Pacific northwest logging contractor, Eric Krume, Tigercat now has a patent pending cable routing and mounting system for skidders. It is offered as a factory-ready cable assist package. The clever concept routes the cables through



KBM uses an LS855D shovel logger to get the wood out of steep sections to where the skidders can more easily perform secondary extraction duties to roadside.



Mecharv's cable assisted 635E with the patent pending factory-equipped cable assist package. The clever concept routes the cables through the blade.

the blade and attaches to the frame structure behind the front axle, closer to the payload. With other systems that route the cable underneath the blade, there is always the danger of damaging the cable with the blade. Not only is this possibility eliminated, but the operator can raise the cable if required, say to clear an obstacle, merely by raising the blade.

In the case of long-time Tigercat and LEC customer Mecharv, a 635E skidder is tethered to an Ecoforst T-Winch with an eight tonne maximum pulling force. We observed the machine carrying approximately eight tonne loads on a grade ranging from 40-45%. Nothing earth shattering, but good, consistent production with little to no ground disturbance due to wheel spin. The feller director configured LS855D was on a similar grade with a higher capacity winch system.

## Shovel logger with live heel and grapple

At the other end of the spectrum, in KBM's southern Chile eucalyptus chipping operation, headed by Ismael Hermosilla, the crew was often experiencing isolated sections of moderately steep terrain. While not considered to be steep slope logging, the poor soil, especially during high rainfall in winter combined with the 30-35% slopes in isolated parts of the cut blocks were significantly reducing the effectiveness and productivity of the skidders.

Ismael attended DEMO International in British Columbia last September. After seeing the 632E for the first time, KBM purchased two units as well as a 635E. Ismael also spent some time with Tigercat people discussing the possibility of adding an LS855D shovel logger to the southern operation. In the end it was decided by Ismael to purchase a Tigercat LS855D configured with a shovel logger boom and live heel and grapple to extract, shovel and pre-bunch the trees from the steepest sections of the cut block to easily accessible points for the skidders to finish the job.

The shovel logger accomplishes these 50-75 m (165-245 ft) turns effortlessly – with very low fuel burn and minimal soil disturbance. Most users, including Ismael, report that the shovel loggers are always busy and piling on hours, because of their flexibility and swiss army knife-like capabilities on a logging operation – both in the stand and at roadside. ■

*Watch Tigercat's Chile operations on Tigercat TV by visiting*

[www.tigercat.com/tv](http://www.tigercat.com/tv)



## CUSTOMER APPRECIATION

In August, Latin Equipment Chile hosted a customer appreciation weekend. And where better to hold an event for a bunch of steep slope loggers, than on the slopes. The customers, along with representatives from LEC and Tigercat spent a weekend skiing and enjoying the mountains at Corralco.



### BOONVILLE, New York

Beautiful August weather blessed the 70th Annual New York State Woodsmen's Field Days in Boonville, New York. Many show attendees were drawn to Tigercat dealer CJ Logging Equipment Company's large show display featuring Tigercat machine models: 610E, 632E, 1055, 234B and LX830D. Many guests lingered in the booth to share logging stories with Swamp Logger TV celebrities Bobby and Lori Goodson.



### HOT SPRINGS, Arkansas

The air-conditioned Hot Springs, Arkansas Convention Center was the perfect location to host the Southwest Forest Products Expo on a hot August weekend. Tigercat dealer MidSouth Forestry Equipment spent many hours cleaning and shining the Tigercat machine models on display including 234B, 615E, 620E, 630E, 632E, 720G and 724G. Pictured here are Lynn and Joe Frost, owners of C & L Wood Company with their grandson, Luke Frost. They are the proud owners of this new Tigercat 615E skidder.

### ICUEE EXPO

Tigercat teamed up with StreetWorks Industries at the October ICUEE Expo in Louisville, Kentucky. The Tigercat T726G trencher, an M726G mulcher equipped with the 4061 Tigercat mulching head and the AD610C utility carrier equipped with a Digger Derrick filled out the booth.



# event wrap-up



## PAUL BUNYAN SHOW

Many customers and friends joined the Tigercat team in the Ricer Equipment booth at the Paul Bunyan Show located in Cambridge, Ohio.

Tigercat's first 602 cable skidder was purchased by Bill Shufflebotham Logging. The new offering by Tigercat attracted a lot of attention in this part of the world, where the compact design is favoured for high value hardwood selective felling. The machine has a fixed front axle with an oscillating centre section to achieve a very narrow overall width.

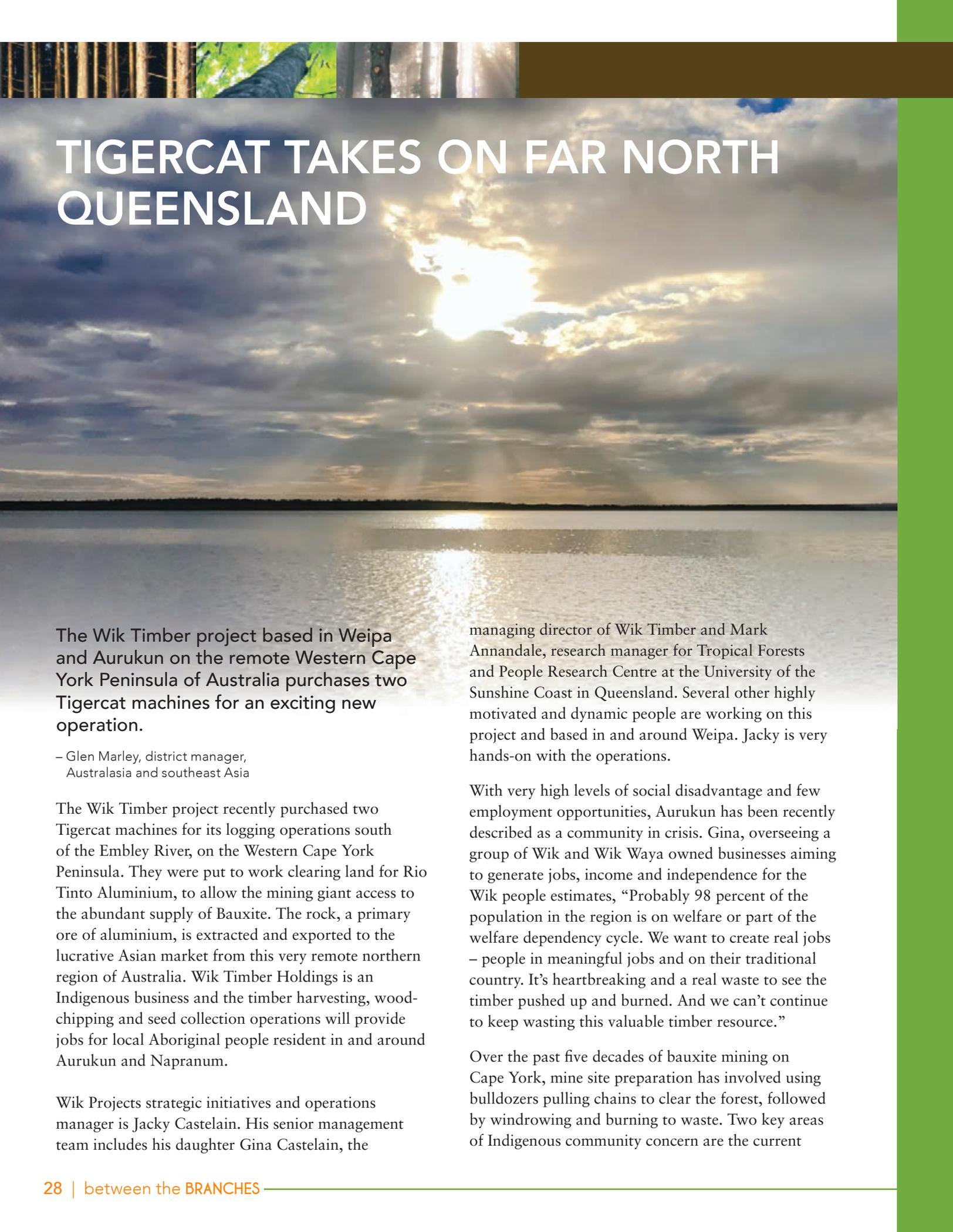
Bill Shufflebotham, based in Rockport, Illinois purchased the first 602 cable skidder. Bill has been logging for 35 years as a selective cut operator in mixed hardwoods on ground ranging from flat and wet to severe slopes.

Bill says the reason he selected the new 602 is because "it's the only quality small machine on the market, it's easy to move at nine feet wide and it's powerful." He is excited to get the machine in the woods and feels the new frame oscillation will add to steep ground stability. Bill is confident in Tigercat's design and



engineering and says his experience with Ricer Equipment as well as Tigercat's commitment to after sale support made his decision to buy the first North American 602 an easy one.

Of note: Bill Shufflebotham's younger days include ranking 18th in the world as a champion bull rider – one tough guy. Pictured with Bill is Randy Mueller of Mueller Brothers Timber Inc. (MBT) located in Old Monroe, Missouri. Randy is a third generation co-owner of MBT with brothers Kevin and Tracey. MBT specializes in top quality hardwood lumber and has a long-standing relationship with Shufflebotham Logging as a producer of high-grade logs.



# TIGERCAT TAKES ON FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

The Wik Timber project based in Weipa and Aurukun on the remote Western Cape York Peninsula of Australia purchases two Tigercat machines for an exciting new operation.

– Glen Marley, district manager,  
Australasia and southeast Asia

The Wik Timber project recently purchased two Tigercat machines for its logging operations south of the Embley River, on the Western Cape York Peninsula. They were put to work clearing land for Rio Tinto Aluminium, to allow the mining giant access to the abundant supply of Bauxite. The rock, a primary ore of aluminium, is extracted and exported to the lucrative Asian market from this very remote northern region of Australia. Wik Timber Holdings is an Indigenous business and the timber harvesting, wood-chipping and seed collection operations will provide jobs for local Aboriginal people resident in and around Aurukun and Napranum.

Wik Projects strategic initiatives and operations manager is Jacky Castelain. His senior management team includes his daughter Gina Castelain, the

managing director of Wik Timber and Mark Annandale, research manager for Tropical Forests and People Research Centre at the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. Several other highly motivated and dynamic people are working on this project and based in and around Weipa. Jacky is very hands-on with the operations.

With very high levels of social disadvantage and few employment opportunities, Aurukun has been recently described as a community in crisis. Gina, overseeing a group of Wik and Wik Waya owned businesses aiming to generate jobs, income and independence for the Wik people estimates, “Probably 98 percent of the population in the region is on welfare or part of the welfare dependency cycle. We want to create real jobs – people in meaningful jobs and on their traditional country. It’s heartbreaking and a real waste to see the timber pushed up and burned. And we can’t continue to keep wasting this valuable timber resource.”

Over the past five decades of bauxite mining on Cape York, mine site preparation has involved using bulldozers pulling chains to clear the forest, followed by windrowing and burning to waste. Two key areas of Indigenous community concern are the current



The Wik and Wik Waya people have a rich history associated with logging and milling going back well over 100 years.

pre-mining management practices and the outcomes of post-mining landscape rehabilitation efforts.

Currently, bauxite mining operations clear and burn an average of approximately 1 500 hectares (3,700 acres) of native forest per year, representing approximately 210 000 tonnes (230,000 tons) of forest biomass. Rio Tinto’s Amrun project – extending mining activities south of the Embley River, between Weipa and Aurukun – is estimated to require additional clearing of around 28 000 hectares (70,000 acres) of forest, representing around 4,2 million tonnes (4.6 million tons) of forest biomass. “Substantial quantities of greenhouse gases are being emitted, says Gina. “Bauxite mining is expected to continue for at least another 50 years and the continued burning of forest products would be a major lost commercial business and employment opportunity for the region’s

Indigenous communities and a significant ongoing source of greenhouse gas pollution.”

Gina, along with other Indigenous community leaders, knew they were not making use out of the high value timber – Darwin Stringybark, Cooktown Ironwood and Melville Island Bloodwood – that was being disposed of. Sound harvesting with a diverse range of products, including saw logs, peeler logs and biomass chips, along with value-adding operations seemed to be the logical long-term answer. Demand for the various products is expected to come from Chinese, Vietnamese and domestic sawmillers and manufacturers of timber-based products. In addition, power transmission poles will be marketed to electricity distributors, Rio Tinto Aluminium will require railway sleepers, and Rio Tinto Aluminium and others will demand chips for mine rehabilitation.

The Wik and Wik Waya people have a rich history associated with logging, milling and home building in this region going back well over 100 years. The Aurukun and Napranum communities both operated sawmills to supply products such as home building materials, local farm fencing and railway sleepers up until the Napranum mill finally stopped production in 2012.

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Jacky Castelain is impressed with the build quality of the machines.



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The new 610E skidder pulling a hardwood drag.

A long tradition of sustainable and responsible forest, land, environmental, historical, and cultural management in this region guides the vitally important goal of developing a commercially viable and sustainable business plan for forest harvesting, as well as fire management and mine rehabilitation operations. When at full scale, the business will produce up to 125 000 tonnes (138,000 tons) of timber and other forest products annually for international and domestic markets. Annual turnover is expected to be around \$6 million. The operations will employ 70 local Aboriginal people.

This particular project has been seventeen years in the making. The harvesting concept started back in 2000, with Rio Tinto offering a Letter of Agreement in 2008, and the Queensland State government minister issuing a Letter of Support that same year to the Wik and Wik Waya community elders and leaders. The Operational Harvest Plan was finally secured in December 2016. Many detailed trials and studies were completed and a full Access Agreement with Rio Tinto was close to sign off.

At that point, Jacky set about securing the most reliable and robust forest harvesting machines he could find for this very remote location. The result was the purchase of a 610E skidder as well as an S855D shovel logger equipped with the 5195 directional felling saw and the feller director boom system. The machines

were delivered in August 2017 to Hey Point on the southern side of the huge Embley River.

Gina reports that “our first sales agreement is close to being finalised with Curly Tatnell Dale & Meyers Operations Pty Ltd. Dale & Meyers is expected to take Darwin Stringybark and Bloodwood sawlogs as made available by Wik Timber Holdings Pty Limited, up to a maximum of 3 500 tonnes for the remainder of 2017 and 25 000 tonnes in 2018.” That’s great news for the burgeoning operations.

In addition, Wik Projects has partnered with the University of the Sunshine Coast Tropical Forests and People Research Centre and the Queensland government to investigate the characteristics of the woodchip generated from land clearing for bauxite mining. Mark and his team are currently assessing the woodchip’s potential as a biofuel through gasification, production of pellets, or other processes, in addition to the potential in mine rehabilitation areas to improve soils and rehabilitation outcomes.

Importantly, these options will be further considered for their Indigenous business and Indigenous employment outcomes. “Imagine if we can demonstrate that we can collect sawlogs for our sawmills, process some for veneer, utilize some logs for power poles and then utilize the rest as woodchips to generate electricity for Aurukun through Indigenous-owned business and replace diesel power generators.

And all of this from forest resources that have been traditionally cleared and burnt for over 50 years,” says Gina.

Mark adds that his “inner Brisbane Stringybark Cottage is a show home for the high value timber that the Wik want to salvage: Darwin Stringybark and Cooktown Ironwood. These species are in the highest value categories and can be used for any construction purpose in housing. One of the beauties for the market,” continues Mark “is the range of colours from light gold colours suited to domestic markets through to the red timbers favoured by the China and Japan markets. These Cape York timbers provide that spectrum.”

With harvesting, transport and port access planning complete, the logging operations are now in their initial stages. Phil Turnbull (Onetrak territory manager for NSW, QLD, and NT), Brad Madden (Onetrak senior field service technician), Steve Green (Tigercat Australian product support manager) and myself arrived at the remote Hey Point operations along with the two machines for the three-day delivery and start-up trials.



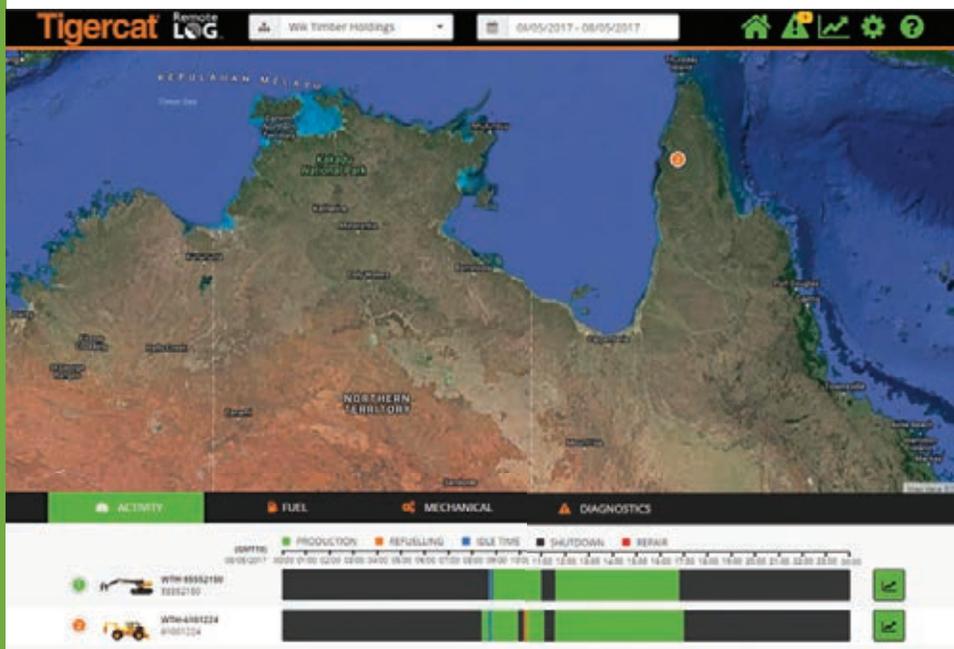
The inner Brisbane Stringybark Cottage is a show home for the high value timber that Wik Timber wants to salvage.

Jacky stated after the delivery and start-up that the Tigercat machines were “very strong and well built” and that he was “very happy that he bought Tigercat.” Then he asked with a big grin on his face, “When are you guys going to start building mining and construction equipment?”

Gina and her team spoke to many existing loggers around Australia before choosing Tigercat. The result was a recommendation to Jacky to invest in a brand

name that – as an experienced mine clearing operator – he had never heard of. Once Jacky watched the 5195 equipped S855D falling these large, mixed eucalypt trees and then bunching them up for the nimble but powerful 610E skidder, he knew they had made the correct decision. Now a few months on, Jacky says, “The machines are running well and the Onetrak and Tigercat guys so far have been very good to deal with and helpful with our operations.”

Both units are fitted with Tigercat’s RemoteLog™ telematics system, with real time machine data relayed via satellite. The Wik Timber Holdings service and support team can monitor each machine’s working positioning, production and fuel efficiency at any



Remote logging operations require reliable machines. Tigercat’s new RemoteLog™ telematics system is also proving very helpful.

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time, as well as be advised immediately of any technical issues to proactively monitor performance. They can use the system to manage scheduled servicing and maintenance quickly and accurately.

The initiative and drive of the Wik Timber Holdings team is improving the education and long-term employment opportunities for the Wik and Wik Waya people. In addition, the team is leading the way with much improved management of the Australian northern mining leases by utilizing a sustainable and valuable forestry resource. The team is accomplishing all this while shouldering the additional and incredibly important cultural responsibilities. Perhaps this is just the tip of the iceberg for mining operational land clearing practices in Australia going forward. ■



## COUNTRY COWBOYS WIN GRAND FINAL

The Temuka based Country Cowboys defeated the Ashburton Barbarians 40-18 in the 2017 Aoraki Rugby League Grand Final to lift the Duncan McGregor Trophy. The Aoraki Rugby League covers the North Otago, South Canterbury and Mid Canterbury regions of the South Island of New Zealand. ■

Image courtesy of Clive Callow, Timaru Online [timaruonline.co.nz](http://timaruonline.co.nz)



# CHANGING OF THE GUARD

New leadership at Tigercat. Tony Iarocci to step away from role of president and join board of directors. Grant Somerville steps up.



Tony Iarocci



Grant Somerville

Tigercat has announced that Tony Iarocci will be stepping away from his position as president effective October 16, 2017. Tony has held the position of president since Tigercat's inception in 1992, steering the company through rapid growth both in terms of product development and geographic market expansion amidst an often fierce competitive landscape, major economic downturns and other challenging externalities.

"I have immensely enjoyed my work at Tigercat – the initial research of potential business opportunities that was necessary to warrant the formulation of a new company, recruiting start-up staff, product development and all the sales, marketing and customer service functions that went along with my role," says Tony. "I wish to convey my deep appreciation to Ken MacDonald for having provided me this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I also want to thank everyone at Tigercat and all the Tigercat stakeholders for their much appreciated assistance, dedication and cooperation."

Tony will be passing his day-to-day responsibilities over to Grant Somerville. Grant got his start in the forestry industry in 1978 as a harvester operator. He is a long serving executive at Tigercat who worked with Tony at Koehring Waterous in the early eighties on several

development projects, including the design of the company's first purpose-built track feller buncher. An integral part of Tigercat, Grant has led many important design initiatives since joining the team in 1992 and has held several positions with increasing degrees of responsibility, including product manager for track machines, advanced engineering, and most recently vice president, engineering.

"Opportunities to work with and learn from individuals like Tony and Ken are rare," says Grant. "I feel very fortunate to have been included in the creation and growth of Tigercat over the past 25 years, and to now assume more leadership responsibility. 2017 marks my 40th year working within forestry and machinery manufacturing. I see a promising future for our industry and look forward to continuing Tigercat's role as a leader in innovation."

CEO Ken MacDonald answers the burning question of what comes next for Tony. "Tony remains in great health and he has agreed not only to join the board of directors but to continue to contribute to the company's growth, focusing on the recruitment and development of design talent and working with fellow team members and suppliers on both product and component improvement." Tony will also consult on special projects and new product development. ■

# LA CRETE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

As reported by James Farquhar, Tigercat district manager

Tigercat and Wajax sponsored an annual charity golf tournament in La Crete, Alberta. The tournament is a way for the two companies to support and show appreciation for a community that is a huge supporter of both Tigercat and Wajax. It also gave the two companies the opportunity to showcase some new products. Wajax supplied equipment and had machines placed around the course, including a Tigercat 632E skidder.

After the eighteen holes of golf there was a fantastic dinner served followed by a live charity auction. All proceeds go to support the community golf course. Once the sun went down, many in the community turned up with their families to enjoy what I have overheard to be one of the best fireworks displays in La Crete. Sponsored by Wajax and choreographed by Wajax vice president of sales, Lee McMartin, it was a perfect end to a great event. “And special thanks to Kevin Barry [Wajax sales specialist] for his organizing efforts on the part of both companies,” commented Lee. ■



The tournament winners (L-R): Randy Lynch and Jake Frosse (Pineridge Logging), Barry McBride (Wajax sales specialist) and Brian Dawes (Wajax regional sales manager)

# MONTANA LOGGER OF THE YEAR

**Bull Creek Forestry named Montana Logger of the Year.**

The FRA's 2017 Regional Outstanding Logger, Bull Creek Forestry is a family owned business based out of Seeley Lake, Montana. Leelyn Cahoon and wife, Teresa are native to the area. The whole family is involved in the day-to-day operations. Joel operates the Tigercat 1075C forwarder and Levi runs the Tigercat LH822C harvester. Both machines were purchased from Titan Machinery in Missoula, Montana. 24-year-old Tylor drives a log truck, while Teresa keeps the books and handles logistics.

Leelyn's success is due not only to hard work but also because he is always learning how to be efficient in every aspect of the business. He buys his own timber and contracts with the state of Montana as well as mills throughout the state to deliver raw logs to the mills. ■

*Read more about Bull Creek in BTB 34, "Meet me in Montana."*



(L-R) Tylor, Joel, Leelyn and Levi Cahoon after receiving FRA Regional Outstanding Logger award for 2017.

## FROM RUSSIA: ILM GROUP VISITS CANADA



Headquartered in St. Petersburg, Ilim Group is the largest pulp and paper organization in Russia. Its mills account for more than 75% of the total pulp production in the country and the company's harvesting operation is currently running twelve Tigercat machines – three 870C track feller bunchers, three skidders, two H855C harvesters with 575 harvesting heads and four T250D track loaders.

The upper management team made the long trip to Canada to get a closer look at the Tigercat

manufacturing plants in Ontario. After touring the Tigercat facilities, the group flew to northern Alberta to visit the logging operations of Joe Martushev, whose ancestors settled in Canada after emigrating from Russia a couple of generations ago.

The field visit gave the Ilim representatives a unique opportunity to speak with Canadian-based loggers in their native language and to get first hand feedback on the equipment. It was also helpful in that the Alberta conditions and operations are quite similar to Russia. ■

## TIGERCAT APPOINTS SALES MANAGER FOR EUROPE AND RUSSIA

Grant Somerville, the new president of Tigercat Industries Inc., is pleased to announce that Matt Roberts has been promoted to the position of sales manager, Europe and Russia. "My focus will include the continued development of distribution for sales and product support in the European, Scandinavian and Russian markets," explains Matt. "With the ongoing expansion of our product offering for these primarily cut-to-length markets, we stand in a greater position than ever to offer forest harvesting professionals in these areas a durable and productive tool."

Matt has been with the company for over nineteen years, most recently as marketing manager for the harvesting attachments product line and overseeing dealer development. Matt will continue to manage Tigercat's dealer development activities worldwide, supporting the continuous improvement efforts of the Tigercat dealer network in order to better serve Tigercat customers around the world. ■



Matt Roberts



Waldir Kelcheski

## TIGERCAT INCREASES PRODUCT SUPPORT IN SOUTH AMERICA

Tigercat is pleased to announce that Waldir Kelcheski has joined the Tigercat product support team in the position of South America factory representative. Based in Tres Barras, Santa Catarina, Brazil, Waldir will focus on providing after sale technical and commercial support to Tigercat's growing customer base in South America.

In this position, Waldir will provide infield technical support to the Tigercat dealer network and assist Tigercat engineering with technical issues, product improvement and new product development.

Waldir has eighteen years experience working in the forestry industry in a technical support capacity. He has worked for such companies as John Deere Forestry, Latin Equipment do Brazil and most recently Waratah. At Waratah, Waldir supported the marketing and sales department, performed new machine start-ups and provided technical support and operator training. Waldir is fluent in Portuguese, English and Spanish and is currently pursuing an MBA in Corporate Strategic Management. ■



Kristofer Larsson

## NEW SALES SPECIALIST FOR TIGERCAT AB IN SWEDEN

Kristofer Larsson, based in Gävle, Sweden has taken on the role of sales specialist for Tigercat AB. He will be covering the mid-region of the country. Kristofer has a technical background – a degree in pulp mill process technology and several years experience as a heavy equipment technician. Most recently he was employed by Swedish harvesting head manufacturer, SP Maskiner AB, giving Kristofer a strong understanding of cut-to-length harvesting systems and the Swedish forestry equipment market. “The Tigercat team is made up of awesome people who are designing and building great quality products,” says Kristofer. “I am looking forward to doing my best to further strengthen and develop Tigercat's position in my own home market.” ■

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