

ELPHINSTONE: A BRAND HISTORY



Dale Elphinstone has never been afraid of a challenge. In fact he often tells people “we did it because we didn’t know we couldn’t”.

Since modifying Cat surface mining equipment to suit underground applications out of his Father’s shed on their Mooreville Road farm in 1975, the Elphinstone name has been synonymous with underground mining.

Elphinstone’s first fully designed and manufactured underground mining product was a 13 tonne articulated dump truck, which was sold to Agnew Mining in 1983. Three years later, in 1986, the first Elphinstone designed and manufactured underground load haul dump (LHD), the R1500, was sold. One short year thereafter, in 1987, the Company exported its first machine overseas to the Henderson molybdenum mine in Clear Creek County, Colorado.

The Caterpillar OEM continued to develop and refine their underground mining equipment range, which led to their specialisation in LHDs and articulated dump and ejector trucks. All products were built around Cat components and sold via Cat Dealers globally.

Between the years of 1975 and 1995, Elphinstone had delivered underground mining machines to over 50 locations around Australia and more than 35 global export sites across 5 continents.

Elphinstone’s success quickly drew the greater attention of Caterpillar and the two parties established a 50/50 joint venture in 1995, creating the business known as Caterpillar Elphinstone Pty Ltd.



Five short years later, Caterpillar exercised their option to purchase the remaining 50% of the business in 2000 and eventually replaced the Elphinstone name with the world famous Caterpillar trademark.

Not that Caterpillar has ever been far removed from the Elphinstone story.

Dale Elphinstone’s relationship with Caterpillar began in 1966 at the age of 15 as an apprentice with Victorian and Tasmanian Cat Dealer, William Adams. Following his Trade qualification came employment as a Field Service Mechanic across Tasmanian and King Island mine sites, and for a period of two years, with Canadian Cat dealer, Finning.

Some 20 years after commencing his apprenticeship with the Cat Dealer, Mr Elphinstone’s progressive thinking and entrepreneurialism enabled him to realise his life long dream of becoming a Cat Dealer Principal - cemented with his 1987 purchase of the same Victorian and Tasmanian dealership, William Adams.

Now, just 40 short years later, Elphinstone is once again a recognised Cat OEM, manufacturing Haulmax 3900 Series off highway haul trucks, Railmax RMT14D Road-Rail excavators and Elphinstone underground support vehicles.

Together, Elphinstone and Caterpillar have manufactured more than 5000 underground and surface mining vehicles from their collective facilities in Burnie over the past 40 years.



Two young lads go to work with Dad. Dale is on the left

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