

Staff Spotlight

Les Barker



For this issue of Blueprint the Staff Spotlight has shone as far as Liverpool and has landed on Les Barker.

Born in Liverpool during the 1940's Les and his family have always lived locally in Merseyside but he is no stranger to foreign lands, travelling extensively during his career. After leaving school at the age of seventeen, Les joined the Army and travelled to many countries around the world, including active service in North Borneo whilst serving with the parachute regiment. After his tour of duty finished he returned to Liverpool in 1967 – now holding an HGV license and embarked upon a career in transport. Working for a number of different companies he drove throughout Europe delivering a wide variety of products – including Lexus Cars!

His first experience of food distribution was in 1995 when he worked as an agency driver for what was then Tom Granby Distribution, the former owners of the depot from which we operate at Liverpool. He later joined the company on a permanent basis and was one of the drivers who would travel for three to four hours before starting multi drop deliveries and collections, and then travel back to base. Not an easy day's work!

In 2002, he joined the Customer Service team in Liverpool when Tom Granby (Liverpool) Ltd was sold to DBC Foodservice and later his knowledge of the UK road network, the customers and most of the delivery points was recognised when he opted to become a Traffic Planner – the job he is still doing today.

Les now lives in nearby Crosby with Carol, his wife of twenty five years. They have six children, all of whom have now left home, apart from his son David who shares his passion for football – and both follow their beloved Everton FC. As a former player of the game, Les recently undertook the recruitment and management of a team from Liverpool to play in the Nagel Football Tournament in Kassell, Germany, and even organised sponsorship from one of our customers (Meadow Vale Foods of Cheshire) who kindly provided the kit.

Although he has now given up his HGV license, he still continues to travel and has recently refurbished a property in southern France to where he may retire – one day.

Les, you are a gold-plated genuine Scouser and we hope you will be with us until that retirement day arrives.

25 Years Celebration

Rupert Ryall and Dorothy (Dot) Stone joined Langdons within a few days of each other in June 1981. We were therefore delighted to make a joint presentation to mark their 25 years with the company on a day which fell between the two precise anniversaries. The photo shows our Chairman and Managing Director (Mike Donoghue) presenting gifts to Rupert and Dot.



Dot Stone has been a stalwart of our Traffic Admin Department throughout those years. When your editor joined the company she was the entire Traffic Admin Dept (for the now defunct dry freight section). Her attention to detail is legendary throughout the business and these days she is mainly involved in invoicing storage accounts (including Gerber) and producing stock reports for customers. She is Scottish by birth, and despite living in England for most of her life, she has never forgotten her roots.

Rupert Ryall is something of a legend at Langdons. When he started, he was Dot's counterpart in what was then still known as Taunton Meat Haulage. He then moved on to become a Traffic Planner, then Depot Manager (at the long since closed Fareham Depot), then a senior Traffic Planner until the mid 1990's when he made the switch to Sales and of course you all know that he is today our Sales Manager for the Southern Region.

You would struggle to find someone working at Langdons who is more passionate about the firm, although that enthusiasm does sometimes get him into trouble! They say that if you cut him, he bleeds blue blood. Your editor has not put this to the test, but would not doubt it.

Congratulations to both of you!



DPFS Provide Yorkshire Solution

YOR Up and Running

David Price Food Services have opened a second depot near Doncaster, based at the former Celsius First cold store which is now operated by Matthews Transport. The new short code is YOR.

The new operation will improve service levels for Chillnet into important population centres including Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Hull and Sheffield. The allocated postcodes have been taken from Liverpool, Peterborough and their own operation at Wallsend.

This latest addition to the network is all about improving service levels for Chillnet, but it is also related to efficient operation. Smaller territories for each depot can actually lead to an increase in throughput due to better utilisation of transport equipment.

Initially DPFS intend to manage the transport planning function for YOR at Wallsend, but eventually the depot will have fully independent local management. Some of the drivers at YOR for start-up will be experienced existing employees.

Contact Details:

David Price Food Services Ltd
C/O Matthews Cold Store
Langwaite Grange Ind. Est.
South Kirkby
Yorkshire WF9 3AP

Tel: 01977 642839
Fax: 01977 642851

email: yor@davidpricefoods.co.uk



New Transport Equipment Rolls in

2006 is proving to be a record year for investment in new transport equipment.

No less than 38 new tractor units will be in service by the Autumn. 28 of them are the new design Renault Premium with 440 bhp engines and all fitted with optidriver 2 automatic gearboxes.

10 are DAF CF85 Spacecabs with 430 bhp engines and AS Tronic automatic gearboxes.

Also recently delivered are eight new Scania 26 ton six wheelers all fitted with the new 5 cylinder 270 bhp engine and opticruise automatic gearboxes. The bodies were built by Gray and Adams and are fitted with Thermo-King Spectrum refrigeration units with twin evaporators.

Graham Millard (Fleet Engineer) says that automatic gearboxes are now a standard specification as he has proved that the increased purchase cost is justified by lower maintenance costs and improved fuel consumption, and the vast majority of our drivers prefer them to manuals.

In addition five new Schmitz and five new Gray and Adams trailers have recently gone into service. All are fitted with Thermo-King Spectrum refrigeration units with twin evaporators. Ten more Gray and Adams trailers are due for delivery during August and September.

All new trailers and rigids are fitted with the Load Lok Autostow "soft" internal splitter doors which (after much experimentation) is now regarded as the best specification for such equipment.

Much Needed Improvements at PET Now Complete

If you have ever been to TDG Peterborough (our landlords at what we call PET) you will know that until recently the yard surface resembled a World War 1 battlefield and the loading bays being used for Chillnet transshipment were not sealed.

Thanks partly to a financial contribution from Langdons, TDG were persuaded to make the necessary improvements and, as you can see in this picture, we now have sealed doors and a good yard surface.

The entire Chillnet operation had to move down to the other end of the site during the works, causing major disruption, but our colleagues there managed to keep everything going in the knowledge that they would soon be back in place with improved facilities.

Tony Kane (Depot Manager) can now stop making excuses to customers who would like to visit the site for various reasons. Bring on the QA inspectors!

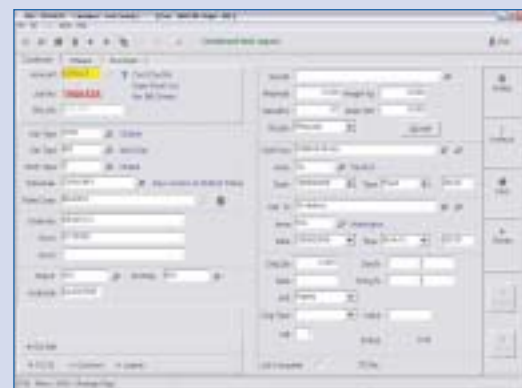


Two Million Jobs Booked to Mandata MP3

At the time of writing this, we are fast approaching job no 2000000 in MP3. By the time you read this, we might have already booked it.

Whoever books that job will be hearing from us and might expect at least a bottle of the bubbly stuff to be coming their way.

As a matter of interest, the company inputs in excess of 8500 individual jobs to MP3 each week. That is an awful lot of keyboard bashing, although many jobs are now being booked directly by our customers who are using Advanced Services.



Digital Tachographs Arrive

After many months of discussion and debate Langdons finally managed to secure confirmation during late April that all new build vehicles ordered after May 1st 06 will have a mandatory requirement to be fitted with digital tachographs.

Despite widespread reservations and a long standing resistance to change within our industry, the new equipment has been introduced with the primary intention of improving road safety throughout Europe. The technology will provide a more robust and secure system of recording drivers' hours and duty periods.

So with the benefits established, what will the new technology actually mean to Langdons in practice?

Firstly we have organised training seminars for management and drivers which outline the operational detail. These have been accompanied by memos and fact sheets to reduce confusion and minimise uncertainty during the introductory period, and whilst everyone familiarises themselves with the equipment.

During April and May we rolled out the installation of our chart management system (TRUTAC), alongside digital readers and scanners in all 7 of the Langdons' depots. Drivers have been issued with application forms to obtain their personal 'smart cards' which are to be used in conjunction with the vehicle

Article by Arran Osman, Transport Director

equipment to collate, store and download all the relevant information. Smart cards will be read locally on a daily basis, in compliance with hours' legislation that has also been amended in respect of there now being a requirement for charts to be retained by drivers for 15 calendar days, in addition to the charts from the current working week.

In Early May we received the delivery of the first 2 Renault Premium 440 Euro 3 tractor units fitted with digital tachographs. The vehicles are part of our scheduled 3 year replacement program and have filtered into the fleets at Bridgwater and Peterborough. There are in excess of 30 more vehicles due for arrival throughout the remainder of 06 and all will be equipped with digital systems.

With Langdons' ongoing commitment to comply and uphold legislation it is crucial that everyone involved with the operation of this equipment fully understands all the relative aspects and their individual responsibilities.

Please do not hesitate in contacting local transport managers or the tachograph office at Bridgwater if you require any further help or advice. There is also some useful information available within the RHA www.rha.net and VOSA www.vosa.gov.uk web sites.

Molly Joins The Fleet

Recent visitors to Bridgwater will have noticed a strange beast shunting trailers these days. We have purchased a nearly new "Terminal Unit" or Tug as it is generally known – made by MOL in Belgium.

Specifically designed for high volume trailer shunting operations the off-road vehicle features a hydraulically driven lifting fifth wheel which means that trailer legs need not be raised and lowered every time a trailer is moved around the yard.

When your editor took this picture of yard shunter Graham Fox he told me that using the unit dramatically reduced the number of times he had to jump in and out of the cab and the suzies (airlines) and electricians can be taken on and off when standing on the unit.

When Gerber moves to the new store (see BLUEPRINT 11) Molly will be moving over to Express Park.

Long serving members of staff will remember "Gertrude" – a battered ancient Foden tractor unit used for shunting trailers at Walford Cross. Gertrude would be amazed at the sophistication of her replacement, although she might be a bit shocked by Molly's bright yellow paint job!

