

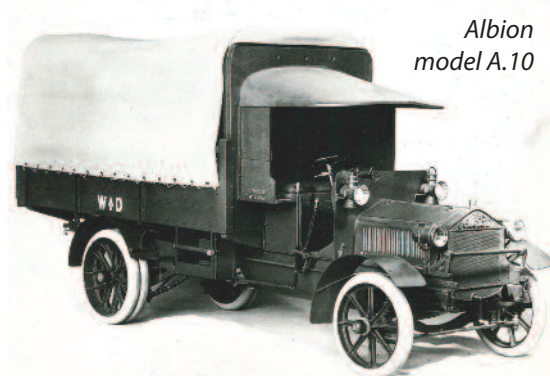
Watts Group News

Winter 2018



Remembrance, and A Look Into The Future

I'd like to share a bit of family history that has had a positive effect on all of us at Watts Group today. My grandfather, Arthur Watts, took a leap of faith in 1918 and borrowed £20,000 to purchase a huge supply of War Department Albion trucks and spares from Thessalonica. (You could buy a house in London at that time for £500). This put 'Watts Motorised Transport' in the position of having more availability of spares than the Albion factory itself! What's more some of the chassis were used to initiate the bus service in valleys of South Wales.



Albion
model A.10

Our world has changed dramatically in a hundred years. While we can't predict the future, our past gives us the foundation and confidence to know we can cope with any upcoming challenges. Brexit, electric trucks, and restrictions on plastics all of them will be met by the one commodity we value above all others – our people.

With that in mind, I'd like to thank you all for your efforts for the Group this year and wish you all a wonderful Christmas and start to 2019.

John Thurston, Group Chairman



It was particularly relevant to note that our Trucks Service Team has been involved in a very special Remembrance Day service, which involved climbing a mountain first! Read more about it, and the newest additions to our growing family in this, our winter edition.



Watts inside

If you have any ideas you would like to have considered for the next newsletter then please email details to dianeprice@watts-group.co.uk

- More orders for WT&V from the Owens Group
- WT&V fellow business remembers armistice with truck poppy logo
- Watts Urethane welcomes new and celebrates old employees
- WU develops new Squeegee technology
- New recruits at Plysolene
- Shawn does a runner for charity
- Tons of HIPS sold

Watts Truck & Van Clock Up Another Success

Continuing their stellar sales performance, Watts Truck & Van will be supplying 36, that's right, three dozen!, new XF480FTG Super Space Cab tractor units to the Owens Group.

These vehicles will be replacing 25 Scania and 11 Mercedes tractor units, and will be their frontline fleet of vehicles for the drivers who spend 4-5 nights a week out in them whilst delivering throughout the UK. The 36 new DAFs will be maintained by Watts Truck & Van's dealerships in Swansea, Cardiff and Newport which are conveniently located to support Owens' network of depots in Llanelli, Port Talbot, Bridgend and Newport.

Owens Group is a high profile member of the Transport Association, and in conjunction with DAF Trucks we have also trialled the FAN370CF curtain-sided demonstrator this year with some very positive feedback.



Gareth Rees with Eurof Owen, Commercial Director

Simon Griffin, Dealer Principal at Watts Truck and Van, told us: 'Eurof Owen, Group Fleet Manager, Andy Williams and Bodyshop Manager, Robert Evans, visited the Leyland Assembly Plant to witness their vehicles being built.'

All 36 vehicles will be delivered by the end of November.

Well Worth Remembering

Family-run and fellow 'Business In The Community' member Castell Howell Foods have just taken delivery of 10 new DAF LF230 refrigerated vehicles from Watts Truck & Van Swansea, one of which has the Poppy Appeal logo.



This is particularly significant in the centenary year of the armistice of the Great War. It has been discussed recently how future generations will make connections to those

who lost their lives in previous conflicts. It will be through actions such as these that we will all help to keep their memories alive.

They have been operating DAF trucks since 1995 which make up half of their HGV fleet. HQ is in Cross Hands with 4 satellite depots in Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Chirk and Avonmouth. They celebrate their 30th anniversary this year, and also took delivery of 6 new DAFs earlier in the year.

Director Martin Jones, who has an excellent business relationship with Watts Truck Sales Manager, Gareth Rees, says "The vehicle performance is good. The DAFs are easy to drive with a good turning circle, and are the right size to maintain the payload with good manoeuvrability. The engine and gearbox suit our hilly territory in Wales, and the trucks appeal to the drivers with good dash layouts. Watts are a good dealer, reliable, helpful and their parts availability is very good."

Taking Remembrance To A Higher Level?

As part of Watts Newport's support activities in the community, the team helped Mark Turner of the Ebbw Vale Wheelchair Sports Club to an astonishing achievement on Remembrance Sunday.

Mark, fellow veteran Darren Foote, accompanied by Rhodri Williams (still on active service) and the Team from Newport, completed a wheelchair pull all the way to the summit of Pen Y Fan in the Brecon Beacons where they held a Remembrance Service and laid a wreath and crosses.

The sponsorship money they raised will go to the club to enable its continued valuable work.



Watts Urethane. It's All About The People

Developing and investing in people should be at the core of every good business. For WUP this is an area where there have been significant improvements.

A great start

In August, WUP recruited their first young apprentice for a number of years who joined in August, exercising funding available through the Apprentice levy. William Hurran is currently completing an Advanced Apprenticeship which includes two courses; NVQ Level 3 Extended Diploma Mechanical Manufacturing and a BTEC level 3 Mechanical Engineering. The NVQ supports more practical assessments and the BTEC compliments by being more theoretical. William is being mentored by Richard Brooks – Technical Director and David Cracknell – Tool room supervisor. Welcome to the team William!

INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Warm welcomes...

Caroline Greening – Accounts Credit Controller, Caroline joined the finance team in August and brings with her a wealth of experience in Accounts & General administration from the Banking sector, IBM and more recently ROHA in Caldicot.

Christopher Gettings – Electrical Maintenance Technician. Christopher is a seasoned Electrical installation engineer who joined the WUP maintenance team in September.

Alex Parish – Maintenance Technician. Alex joined the team in October after freshly finishing a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Engineering Maintenance.

LONG SERVICE

Tommy Williams – 40 years

In September, Tommy completed 40 years working within the Watts Group. He joins an elite group of employees, including Paul Grindle and Craig Maller to reach this milestone. Tommy now works as a Production Supervisor within the WUP team and has been responsible for training and sharing his knowledge with hundreds of manufacturing employees over his 40 year reign. Thank you for your dedication and loyalty to the Watts Group!



David Millin – 25 years

David has had a number of roles within the business over the past 25 years, but is now our Quality Controller. David was a lead member of the team when WUP gained ISO 9001:2015 accreditations last year and has maintained a high level of dedication to the business throughout his 25 years to date. Well done David and here's to another 25!



Watts Urethane Is Set To Wipe Out The Competition

Those clever chaps at Watts Urethane have known for some time that there is a market for squeegees! This may not seem too earth shattering until you consider the dozens of applications in which they are employed, and that one of the biggest potential markets is China.

Although they look like simple strips of Urethane, looks can be deceptive. In use, these little babies have to put up with some pretty rough treatment. They are used extensively to print items like touch screens and electronic displays. (I thought they were just something for cleaning the windows – Ed.)

Ironically, one of the properties of the inks used in these processes is its desire to melt normal polyurethane owing to the solvents in their make-up. So, how do you keep the integrity of the blades working edge and ensure sharpness during its working life?

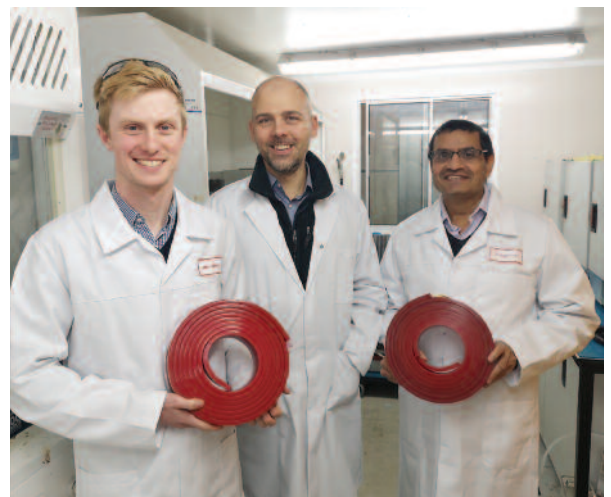
You put your crack team of scientists to work madly at formulating a product that will do it all. (Of course some claim that it was actually a cracked team of mad scientists – but super talented nonetheless!)

The results have been more than impressive and are set to be a complete game changer. They have managed to conjure up a material that not only matches the solvent resistance of the industry leading product, which is made in Japan, but increases resistance to wear by 800%.

Watts Urethane are currently providing samples to some very enthusiastic Chinese and European customers for initial approval before

putting the material into production as early as next year.

Congratulations to everyone but especially our own Mad Scientists: Dr Prakash Patel (Head of Development), Richard Brooks (Technical Director) and James McKeag (Development Chemist).



New Recruits At Plysolene

It's always nice to start by greeting new members of our growing family. This time we have two people to welcome aboard.

Tom Chapman joined us in July as Manufacturing Manager. His role has been, and will be, to oversee and maintain the high standards on which Plysolene's reputation has been built. Tom will also be reviewing safety precautions in the factory to protect the members of our team and guarantee their health and wellbeing.

Tom will be closely involved with the new ABS line which is nearing completion and will be producing product in the very near future.

Tom received his engineering training in the Royal Navy, having served as an engineer on board the Frigate, HMS Kent, so we already owe him our thanks for his service. While there, he completed two tours, the Middle East and a Far East deployment.

Next, let's welcome Fenn Caddick, he'll be reporting direct to Tom in his role as Maintenance Engineer. Alongside Tom, he'll be focussing on expanding Plysolene's training programme to encompass our



Fenn Caddick

Tom Chapman

growing product range. The team will also be implementing a programme of preventative maintenance which will, in turn, improve efficiency. Less downtime – more runtime!

Fenn comes to us after a career in boats and Super Yachts, so he should find this plain sailing. (Sorry, couldn't resist – Ed.)

Finally, let's congratulate Andy Browne, a more home-grown talent, who has been promoted to Production Manager. Andy's skill and insider knowledge will prove invaluable to the rest of the team.

Somebody's Put A Lot On Their Hips

Hayley Royle of Plysolene, is pleased to announce the sale of over 5 tonnes of HIPS (that's High Impact Polystyrene to you and I... a lot... of High Impact Polystyrene) in a single order.

The material was commissioned by Mint Manufacturing based in Leicester. It has been used to create these stunning Tiffany Christmas stands which will feature in promotions over many department stores.



Shawn Does A Runner

Although Shawn Lainchbury has been with us less than a year, he's decided to run off! It's all in a good cause though – the NSPCC to be precise.

Shawn says; 'I took up running ten years ago to stay in shape and keep the weight down, like many others, I caught the bug and started increasing my distance until last year when I ran my first marathon in Brighton. Since then, I have run the Beachy Head marathon and the Brighton one again in 2018.'

Shawn says he has a bucket list of marathons to run with London at the number one spot and goes on to explain his plan for 2019.

'Next year I will turn 50 and want to mark the event in a memorable and useful way. I've decided to run the London Marathon and raise money for the NSPCC by doing so. I have a target of £2,200 and have raised over £400 so far. I'd like to thank all my colleagues for supporting the fortnightly cake sales.'

I'm sure the wider Watts family will ensure that Shawn reaches his target and will do what they can to support such a worthy cause.

Donors can find details here:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/shawn-lainchbury1>

We value your feedback on the newsletter. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please email dianepriec@watts-group.co.uk



Watts

Watts of Lydney Group Limited, Althorpe House,
High Street, Lydney, Glos, GL15 5DD, UK

t +44 (0)1594 847400 f +44 (0)1594 847401 www.watts-group.co.uk

