

Horwood Bagshaw is the oldest manufacturer of agricultural machinery and implements in Australia.

John Stokes Bagshaw opened the Pioneer Works in Elizabeth St Adelaide in 1838. He constructed the first winnower in SA and they were marketed under the name of "Champion". Other products included chaff-cutters, threshers, horse works and machinery for mills. John Bagshaw's sons followed him into the business and the name was changed to JS Bagshaw & Sons Ltd Pioneer Works. John Augustus Bagshaw became president on the death of his father in 1888. The range of machinery manufactured was expanded to include machinery for cleaning, grinding and grading wheat, for grading currants and raisins and for wire-making.

In 1910 the company moved to 12 acres of land at Mile End which became the headquarters of the new company Horwood Bagshaw Ltd.

Joseph Henry Horwood worked in various engineering concerns in Victoria and SA in the late 1800s. In 1882 he established JH Horwood & Co and began manufacturing hydraulic hoists wool-scouring machines and well-boring tools. JH Horwood & Co Ltd was formed in 1912 when Mr. MO' Barker took a substantial share interest in the firm and became managing director. In 1922 Inman and Sons merged with Horwoods and brought their agricultural machinery business into the company. In 1924 Mr. Barker negotiated with JS Bagshaw & Sons Ltd and acquired the company which was renamed Horwood Bagshaw Ltd. Directors of the company were: Messrs Barker Managing Director, HR Horwood, S Howell, SD Reid, AE Smith, H Thomas Chairman and GW Lawrie Secretary.

By 1926 the company had city showrooms in Currie St to display its combines, ploughs, scarifiers, harrows, hay-balers, chaff-cutters, strippers, winnowers and other implements. The full range of Lister engines and shearing machines were also carried by the company while the engineering business was run as a separate division, with the emphasis on boring, pumping and engineering lines. The company also made car and bus bodies and rolling stock.

Mr. Barker retired as managing director in 1946. Mr. BH Farrow who was manager of the NSW Branch took over until his death in 1954. Mr. AE Smith and Mr. OH Heinrich were joint managing directors until 1956 when Mr. R Bateman became managing director. He retired in 1962.

The 1950s saw the Mile End plant reorganised into one of the most modern foundries in the southern hemisphere. In 1958 the company acquired the Victorian firm Mitchell & Co Pty Ltd giving Horwood Bagshaw a complete range of small agricultural implements. In 1959 it acquired the SA general engineering business J Todd & Son Ltd which was renamed Horwood Bagshaw Engineering Ltd. In 1960 EBJ Chaplin & Co Ltd and Chaplin Crane Hire Service were absorbed with the new engineering division. 22 acres of land was purchased at Dry Creek for a storage and assembly area. The first assembly building was opened in 1959.

Mr. A.JS Howe was appointed general manager in 1962. In 1963 Horwood Bagshaw acquired the Victorian firm of Daniel Harvey Pty Ltd adding a range of orchard, vineyard and broad acre tillage implements and fruit graders to the company's range. The company developed a large and active distributor dealer network throughout Australia. The company began to export machinery to South Africa and South East Asia and in the 1960s the Horwood Bagshaw group of companies manufactured the biggest range of agricultural implements offered by one manufacturer in Australia. In 1965 Andrew Smith, and in 1970 Sir Keith Angus and Mr. Heinrich, retired and Mr. CD Rowe died. They had been with the company for years. Andrew Smith had joined as an office boy in 1903.

In 1972 David Shearer Ltd of Mannum was purchased. The Mile End premises were sold and in 1974 the business was consolidated at Mannum. The company began to diversify so it was not as dependent on the rural sector and began producing mining machinery. By 1980 there were the agriculture, mining, and industrial engineering divisions.

Throughout the 1980s the company made losses due to the poor state of the rural economy. Sales in 1987 dropped to \$8,791,028 which was the worst sales period for agricultural machinery ever recorded in Australia. Having accumulated losses exceeding \$17m Horwood Bagshaw was placed into receivership by FAI Insurance Ltd, the company's major creditor and shareholder. The company remained in receivership until 1990 when FAI effected a debt-for-equity swap to become the company's 100% shareholder. In March 1998 the company was purchased by Sweeney Investments and has been restored to profitability. Horwood Bagshaw holds 20% of the Australian seeding and tillage market and 80% of the smaller Australian grader scraper market. It has 50 employees backed-up by a large number of contractors supporting its activity as an assembler.

HISTORY

(10 October 2000)

- Horwood Bagshaw was established in 1925 when J. H. Horwood & Co. Ltd acquired J.S. Bagshaw and Sons Ltd.
- J. Horwood was founded in 1912 by Henry Horwood at the age of 71. Mr. Horwood had substantial experience in mining and general engineering. He had been working as a manager and consultant to engineering companies in South Australia for more than 45 years. His company rapidly became a major player in the agricultural equipment industry after the acquisition of Illman & Sons, a company which manufactured agricultural equipment at Balaklava in rural South Australia
- J.S. Bagshaw & Sons had been manufacturing agricultural implements and general engineering equipment since 1838 and was a very well established company in South Australia by the time of the acquisition. In 1910, Bagshaw & Sons moved to Mile End, this being one of the most complete factories of its kind at that time.

The new company's head office and manufacturing site were located in Mile End (Adelaide). It prospered at this location and Edwardstown in Adelaide.

- A number of smaller manufacturers around Australia of agricultural equipment and machinery were acquired after World War I.
- At its peak Horwood Bagshaw employed almost 1,000 employees in Australia. In 1972 Horwood Bagshaw acquired Australia's oldest agricultural machinery company, David Shearer at Mannum, South Australia.
- In 1974 Horwood Bagshaw's entire operations were moved from the two Adelaide sites and a major redevelopment of the Mannum factory was initiated,
- In December 1987, having accumulated losses exceeding \$17m, Norwood Bagshaw was placed in receivership by FAI Insurance Ltd., the company's major creditor and (39%) shareholder.
- Horwood Bagshaw remained in receivership until June 1990, when FAI effected a debt-for-equity swap to become the company's 100% shareholder.
- In March 1998 the company was purchased by Sweeney Investments, the family company of the current Chief Executive Peter Sweeney and has been restored to profitability.
- Turnover for the 1999/00 year was A\$15 M.
- Horwood Bagshaw holds
 - 20% of the Australian Seeding & Tillage market.
 - 80% of the smaller Australian Grader Scraper market.
- Horwood Bagshaw has 50 employees, backed-up by a large number of contractors supporting its activity as an assembler.