



Dave Annett
Engineering Pioneer

Issue No 3 - January 2009

timarudirectory.co.nz

All proceeds are invested back into the district promoting tourism and the family history of it's pioneers.

MY JOURNEY SO FAR

My name is David Annett and I was born on the 3 May 1921 in Timaru. My grandfather was William Annett who sailed from Ireland on a Canadian built immigrant ship called the Matoaka. It arrived in Lyttleton in 1862. My parents are William and Georgina Annette. My mother's maiden name was Foster. My brothers and sisters names were William, Gertrude, Ellen, Jean, Charles, Gordon (Don). My grandfather was a road construction contractor and he helped build many of the early streets in Christchurch. My mother took ill and I lived for a time with my eldest sister in Ashburton. I went to several different schools. Allenton Primary in Ashburton, Lyalldale primary School, St Andrews primary school and finally spent 2.5 years at Timaru Technical College where I took a course in Engineering.

When I left school I served my engineering apprenticeship with Parr & Company. My best friend at school was Les Darling and he also served his engineering apprenticeship with Parr & Company. When war broke out I was too young for service overseas but I did serve in the 1st Canterbury regiment territorial. At Parr & Company we started making munitions for Bren gun carriers. I was man powered in and out of the army 3 times but while my mates were going overseas they decided I was needed at Parr & Company to make munitions for the war. I then joined the Royal NZ Navy as an engineer between 1943 and 1946. I served on the NZHMS ships the Matai, Kiwi and Achilles. I rose to the rank of Chief petty Officer ERA. My friend Les Darling joined the merchant Navy at the same time.

On the 13th March 1946 I married Sylvia Anita Tonkin in the Chalmers Presbyterian church. In Timaru. We were blessed with 2 daughters Fay and Lorraine



They were the cutest girls in town. Fay is the one with teddy bear and Lorraine has the basket of goodies for Grandma.

When Les and I came out of the Navy we both went back to work for Parr & Company. I went to Christchurch for 12 months and worked for Frank V Thomas Ltd Engineers. Les Darling and I often spoke about going into business on our own. One day a Christchurch engineering firm had a closing down sale of all their machinery. I rang Les and asked him to come up and look at the machinery. Les came up to Christchurch on his motorbike and we bought the equipment. We borrowed a truck and trailer from Wosty Cartwright and Les and I stored it all in Tom Kyle's traction engine sheds at levels.



William and Georgina Annette with their young son David at their farm home in Lyalldale



Dave learning to drive in his fathers 1919 Ford motor car at Ridgemont Lyalldale in 1922



Dave in the Royal NZ Navy.
Chief Petty Officer ERA

The shed on the left is Tom Kyle's Blacksmith shop where Dave & Les stored their machinery at levels

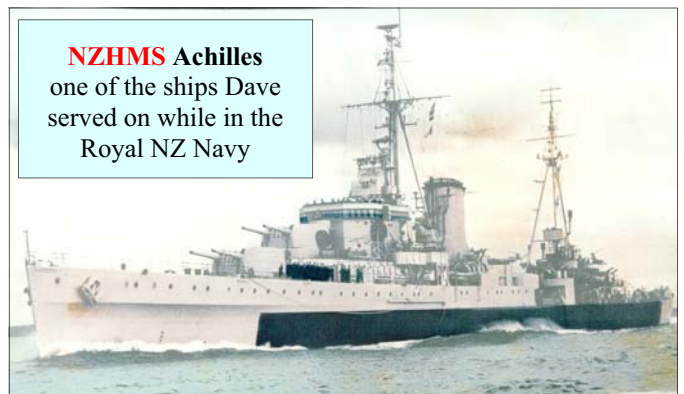


Dave Annett Royal NZ Navy
Les Darling Merchant Navy



Dave Annett MBE with his wife Sylvia in 1994 after being honoured for his service to the engineering industry and export.

NZHMS Achilles
one of the ships Dave served on while in the Royal NZ Navy



A Timaru Business Success Story

Jack Parmenter leased us his tin shed on the corner of King Street and Royal Street. That was Sept 1947 and was the beginning of the engineering firm of Annett & Darling.



The first workshop of Annett and Darling Limited

In 1949 we bought out the Timaru Engineering and welding Company and we moved to Woollcombe Street next door to where Caroline Motors is today.



The second workshop of Annett & Darling Limited currently the home of Engine Overhaul services

After 3 months we realised we needed to employ staff so we employed our first worker Bill Gilmore. Unfortunately Bill died at a young age.



3 mates Bill Gilmore left (first employee) with Les Darling & Dave Annett

Les and I got on really well as partners I called him the senior partner because he was a week older than me. We made parts for cars and farm and factory machinery. We did a lot of work for the International harvester company Andrews and Bevan. We also made machinery for wool scours and did maintenance work on them. We discovered what was required in the wool scouring industry as most of the stuff they were using back then was behind the times.

We continued to make pieces of machinery and pretty soon we were employing a staff of 20 people in the small Woollcombe street premises.

Ted Falvey who also did his apprenticeship at Parr & Company and he was our workshop manager for many years.

We bought 50 acres of land at Washdyke and built our own premises on 2 acres of it where the Andar business is now. We formed a company and invited shareholders in that could offer some expertise to the company. Ted Davenport, George Tregenza, Wosty Cartwright and Bob Burnett were some of the early shareholders.

Annett and Darling Limited open their workshop in Washdyke in 1969. During our peak we were known as the largest manufacturer of wool processing equipment in the world.



I'm Ted Falvey.

I was employed by Annett and Darling now known as ANDAR for over 30 years. I am 3 years younger than Dave and Les and I met up with Les in the Merchant Navy where we both served on the same ship SS Batrafie which was a refrigerated ship that travelled around New Zealand picking up meat.

I enjoyed working with Dave & Les they were both so easy to get along with. There were no real bosses on the job or employment contracts we were all just one of the workers and we just got on and did what we had to do. In all the time I was with the engineering firm I never once heard Dave & Les have cross words. I was their workshop foreman. The company trained a lot of apprentices and at one time there were as many as 90 on the staff.



Buckley & Young bought 20 % of the company then to 49% and finally full purchase. Les and I stayed on as joint managers and I became a director of the company

The company expanded rapidly and Export markets were established in several overseas countries. Buckley and Young changed their name to Chemby Marketing Limited My Wife Sylvia died in 2001 and I have since remarried to Sylvia's best friend Trixie Crossman. Both of our families grew up together.

Les and I were the best of cobblers all our life. We had different interests outside of work Les played Golf and I flew aeroplanes.



Dave's Cessna 172 which he flew for business as well as pleasure

We enjoyed a beer together but we did not live on each others door steps. Our wives go on really well together. I joined a Probus club but I was still a Director of the company until 1995. Part of our success was the fact that we both considered ourselves one of the staff rather than being the bosses.

My expertise was in engineering and I was awarded and MBE for my services for the industry.



2 Good Keen Men

Dave with writer and comedian Barry Crump who received their MBE awards on the same day. Dave Annett was awarded the MBE for his services to engineering and export. Barry Crump was awarded his MBE for his services to literature and comedy. Member of the British Empire medals were awarded to them both by the Governor General of New Zealand Hon Dame Kath Tizard in 1994.