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HELPING TRUCKIES • NEW KENWORTH T410SAR • HUNTER & REGIONAL TRUCK SHOW • & MORE

OUR TRUCKING HEROES

DEEN'S GOOD DEEDS



WE MEET THE ICONIC AUSTRALIAN TRUCKING FAMILY THAT HAS BEEN BUSY HELPING AUSTRALIANS IN NEED FROM GOONDIWINDI TO STANTHORPE TO PETERBOROUGH IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA. ACT JOINED THE DEEN FAMILY ON A RECENT HAY RUN TO TAREE TO HELP OUT A COMMUNITY DEVASTATED BY DROUGHT FIRES AND FLOODS.



STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS SMITH



It is a Friday afternoon in late January, and I am catching up with one of Brisbane's most iconic trucking families, the Deen family. I am surrounded by a few cousins, they are typical Aussie blokes and the conversation goes from the Holden Maloo ute Mussy Deen just bought, which after this month's announcement, seems like a great investment, to the

latest Mack Super-Liner 1988 rebuild in Australian Custom Trucks magazine done up by Dennis Kelly. Jock Deen, from Gainscout Transport Services, is doing up a 1988 Super-Liner and says they just caught up with Dennis and truck whisperer Glen Beutel recently to see the truck first-hand. "I am doing mine up at the moment, I

was getting the tank measurements off Glen, I want to lift the bonnet higher," Jock says. I ask if they are going to send it to someone to get the job done, the room erupts in laughter. "No, we'll do it all in-house," Jock tells me. I have met Mussy, the owner of Mactrans Heavy Haulage, previously along with some other members of the



family around the truck show circuit over the years. They are good operators, the guys they work for and with, know it, that is why the family have been so successful over the years. The Deen family has a long history in Australia. The family's providence in the country goes back over six generations. The Deens started

traversing across the country, originally working as hawkers and traders travelling to the most remote areas in Australia. In those days they worked with camel trains. Fazal Deen, a cousin to cousins Jock and Mussy, is enthusiastic and proud to share this rich family history and tells me it was his great, great grandfather,

Futtah Deen, that first bought a truck, a Chevy and that was about a century ago. "Where the camels went, he went too," Fazal tells ACT. He says the family still travel on the same routes as their forefathers, the camel tracks have now turned into highways.



For the Deen family it is a rite of passage to own a truck. Jock and Mussy both have their own trucking businesses, Jock, with his father, doing tipper work and Mussy doing heavy haulage.

For Fazal, he too has owned trucks, even though he has been working in other industries, predominately the mining industry.

He tells me that he was always an avid believer that the old Macks were better than the new Macks, that was until he bought a current model.

"When I got in the driver's seat again, I bought a New Breed Super-Liner. Going from that, I wouldn't go back to an older truck," he tells ACT.

"It's the comfort of the New Breed trucks hands down that sets them apart."

Macks are simply the choice of truck for the family and Fazal says even his father, who is retired, has a couple of Mack's, including a New Breed Super-Liner.

In fact, the Deen family own four of the rare collectible 16 Mack Bicentennial Super-Liners that were ever built. The Deen family also own trucks from every Mack limited edition range ever made in Australia. Both Mussy and Jock own customised Macks, however, their trucks are not just for show, they are working trucks. Jock is a familiar sight around South East Queensland driving his V8 Mack Titan tipper and

quad dog. Mussy can sometimes be seen in any one of his eye-catching customised heavy haulage trucks. They both love the Mack E9 V8 engine which power their favourite trucks. Fazal has studied and has completed his master's in business administration (MBA). He also started his own tech company, one of his products is a paperless docket system for tipper trucks, Tiptraxx. His experience driving has given him the best knowledge of what a an operator needs in the app. He sold his beloved Super-Liner to fund his latest venture.

"I sold the Super-Liner to start a tech company," he says.

He now drives one of Jock's Super-Liners as his business takes route. He say sthe two trucks are just one model apart but seem a world apart with the ease of performance. To cap that off he misses his cup holder.

I am always happy to chat about trucks but today we're talking about what the Deen Family have been doing for several country towns that have been in all sorts of strife with droughts, fires and floods. Little do I know now but I'll be joining them in the near future to see first hand the impact they make giving to a small community. I entered the house that sits behind the original family home in Oxley, I abided by the house rules to take off my shoes in respect.

The Deen family are devout Muslims.

Fazal tells me that part of the faith requires Muslims to help people that are in need.

He explains Muslims believe in the Day of Judgement and a big part of the faith is to help others. It's like a points system, the more you do, the more chance you have of getting to heaven, and if you do nothing when you could of, well you loose points and teh potential to reach heaven. He explains for the Deens, charity is a matter of faith as well as a family tradition. The family have been doing this kind of thing for years but have now starting working with structured charities. Fazal tells me about a recent mission to Stanthorpe, QLD.

"We wanted to do it as a family and we had three generations, all driving down together. It was really something. It was the first time in decades all the brothers, my father and uncles, were driving together and it was emotional, especially for the people that knew the family," he tells ACT.

"One person recognised us and said, weren't you the guys that did the hay run to help us years ago, and we were."

President of the Granite Belt Drought Assist Group (GBDA), Glenda Riley, says that water usage in Stanthorpe had been restricted to 100 litres per person, per day and the situation was particularly hard for large families. The town tells stories of people



"One person recognised us and said, weren't you the guys that did the hay run to help us years ago, and we were." - Fazal Dean.



washing their children with 600ml bottles of water, shooting their animals because of a lack of feed, and the unfortunate reality of farmers giving up hope and taking their own lives. Fazal says high suicide rates is one of the most horrific effects of the harsh conditions facing the farmers across the country, he says the desperation is heartbreaking. But he switches the conversation back to hope with a story of a young child.

"You should have seen it, he had the same sense of excitement that my nephew has, who is around the same age around 10, when I give him a toy, and this was for a 10 litre bottle of water," Fazal exclaims.

He says that the appreciation of what the Deen family have brought into the towns they have helped goes well beyond the practical uses for hay and water and the most touching statement is when people say they thought they had been forgotten.

"What we are doing, I believe, is giving people hope," he tells ACT. The hospitality of the town folk has also been reciprocated providing brand new barbeques to prevent cross contamination when cooking halal meat to feed the volunteers, validating both acceptance and recognition of the Muslim faith.

Four similar other operations have been done in conjunction with the Deen family and this has been with the support of Muslim Aid Australia who are the main co-ordinators for the hay and water runs.

Other organisations contributing to these hay and water runs include Muslim Charitable Foundation, Strike Fuels, Brothers in Need, Australian International Aid, and by MAA's overseas partners IHH, Hayrat (Turkey) and Al Imdaad Foundation (United Kingdom).

The first trip was to Goondiwindi where they sent three trucks loaded with hay bales.

MAA spokesperson Riyaad Ally says after the three truck loads, they believed that was great for a short period but he adds there were so many farmers out there that were requiring support and they wanted to do more. "A month after that we did another distribution, which was our largest at

that point of time, which was 11 truckloads with the Deen family, we ended up doing a distribution of 440 hay bales."

Ten months later they saw the situation happening in Stanthorpe, they were running out of water.

Riyaad said the Deen family were contacted again and the first distribution was 10 truckloads with 196,000 litres of clean drinking water.

Fazal says the water was transported in 10 litre bottles, and 1000 litre pods, he warns others planning to do the same thing to ensure safety comes first. "We bought the pods brand new, what unfortunately was happening after we did this, people were using pods that used to contain Adblue and quite a few animals got killed," he says.

"All ours is certified for drinking water, even the tanker we have outside is certified for drinking water, that is why we have told the Granite Belt Drought Association, make sure that they are all certified pods, we bought ours all brand new, sealed. We were the ones that unsealed them."

At the end of last year the group went to Adelaide on the 21st of December with one of the biggest loads, 16 trucks and 19 trailers delivered to Peterborough in South Australia.

Fazal said the local transport companies in South Australia were proud to be involved in the operation and had no qualms displaying the MAA banners on the loads.

"We just had a few family members and we still had 16 trucks, they were all proud to display the Muslim Aid Australia signage," Fazal said.

Jock is the logistics coordinator for Muslim Aid Australia, Mussy also assists Jock with the logistics.

Jock and Riyaad work effectively to co-ordinate the humanitarian aid. One of the things they are most proud of is that every dollar raised goes straight into helping the people that need it.

These are charities without administration fees and with a very quick turnaround of raising money and providing the community with what it needs, fast.

The organisations have also been quick to aid bushfire victims.

They have given aid in the form of vouchers for retail stores to ensure the

money is spent on actual needs for the whole family rather than tobacco and alcohol.

"We are supporting local families that have had their homes destroyed or damaged. People that have been evacuated out of their locations. We have been distributing vouchers from places like Bunnings, Big W and Kmart," Riyaad says.

The last run to Stanthorpe delivered 200,000 litres of water and 130 tonnes of hay bales for the Drought Relief operations. Twenty trucks were used, and all were Macks, as is customary with all the Deen family hay and water runs.

The rest of the Deen family members usually go out on the hay and water runs but this time they also took members of the Muslim community to meet with the locals and buy from the local stores to help the community in a practical way to help stimulate the economy.

"The last time we did something a little different and asked member of the Muslim community to come out as well and spend time with the people in Stanthorpe," Fazal explains.

"Giving the water and giving the hay is one thing but talking to the locals and being there for the locals and giving them a shoulder to cry on, I think that was just as valuable."

"We have never been ashamed to say that we are Muslim," Fazal explains.

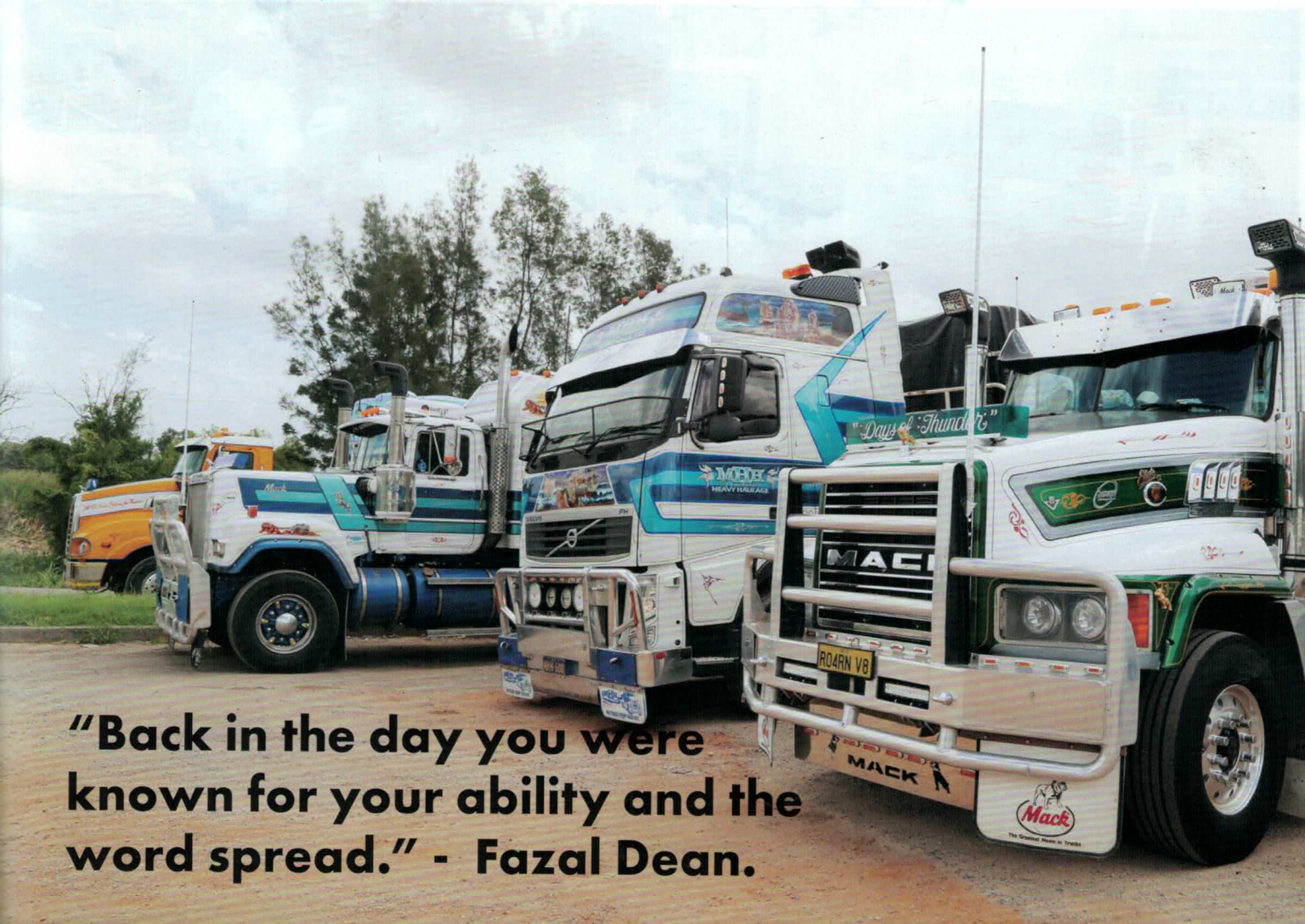
"Back in the day you were known for your ability and the word spread. What we found was that people didn't care. If you are a good bloke, then you are a good bloke. It's Friday and we have just come back from the mosque, and people know that," Fazal explains.

"People know that at lunch time on Friday we go to the mosque."

He says this has been accepted by the customers the family work for years.

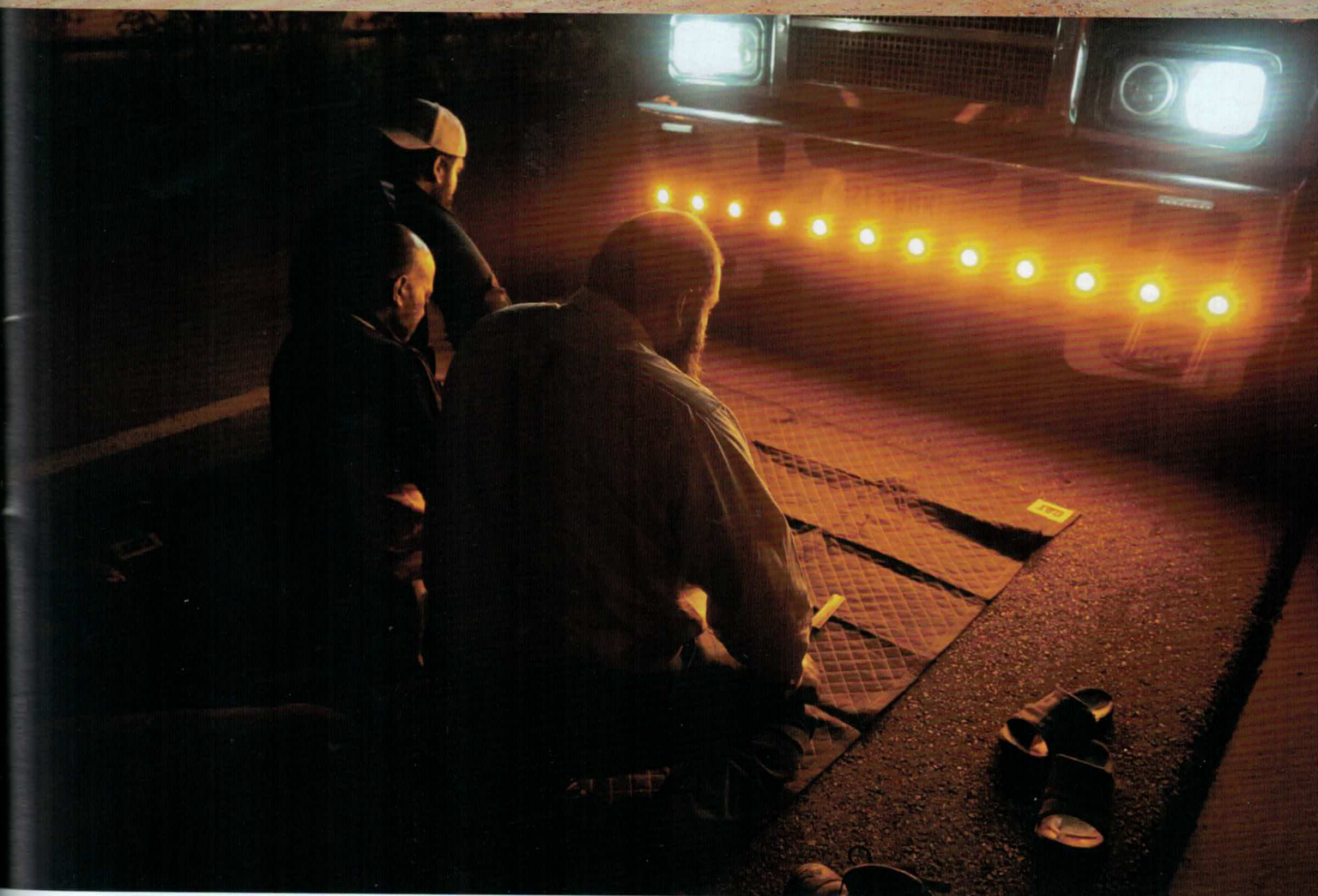
Then Fazal says to me that they are organising another hay run, this time to Taree and invites me to come along.

We leave on a Saturday morning well before the sun rises and have plenty of time to talk on the way down in a convoy of 11 trucks. For me growing up with a Catholic father and Anglican mother it's a good opportunity to see a day in the life of a Muslim. We were lucky to have a prayer before dinner



Three custom Mack heavy trucks are parked in a row on a dirt lot. The truck on the left is white with blue and yellow accents. The middle truck is white with blue and yellow accents and has 'Mack Heavy Haulage' written on the side. The truck on the right is white with green and yellow accents and has 'Duke of Thunder' written on the side. The trucks are all equipped with large chrome bumpers and multiple headlights.

"Back in the day you were known for your ability and the word spread." - Fazal Dean.



washing their children with 400ml bottles of water, shooting at criminals because of a lack of food, and the unfortunate reality of farmers giving up hope and taking their own lives.

that point of time, which was 11:30, we ended up doing a distribution of 440 hay bales.

money is spent on critical needs for the whole family rather than to buy a grand dinner.

"We are supporting local families that have lost their homes destroyed or



and one before bed and a Sunday service but for Muslims its five times a day. Once again, the prayers are part of the points system and all five need to be done every day. There are also rules for when you miss prayers and exceptions under certain circumstances.

It's still dark before sunrise and we stop along a safe area of the road. This is my first experience with the prayers. Fajr is the prayer that starts off the day with the remembrance of God.

The convoy pulls over to the side of the road. Mats are brought out and an app is used to find Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad, to find the direction of the prayers. This prayer also just happened to face the lead Mack truck in the fleet and we have a picture on the previous page.

The second prayer is Dhuhr, shortly after noon. Next is 'Asr, late afternoon. Just after the sun goes down is Maghrib, the fourth prayer. The fifth prayer is 'Isha. This is done before retiring for the night, Muslims again take the time to remember God's presence, guidance, mercy, and forgiveness. This is the ritual for every day and they also go to the mosque. As well as prayer and charitable deeds, part of the religion also requires a percentage of your earnings to go to charity through Zakat. I am learning the religion has many rules and most are based around charity and prayer.

It's been a good drive but now we are pulling into Taree.

The BBQ boys are hard at work feeding the farmers and trucks are

lined up ready to receive the hay. Local Lions Club President George Greaves is watching on as everyone works together to unstrap the hay. He is visibly moved to tears at the generosity. I am thankful to be invited on this experience. Not only did I learn, I saw first hand what the organisations and families have been doing. This run was sponsored by Muslim and Christian groups working together to help people affected by drought, then fires then floods.

The Deens and the organisations in this story have also been busy over the last few months making sure international students have been looked after with food throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

