



Jeff Williams

AS THE 2021 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PRESENTATION DINNER IS RAPIDLY APPROACHING, WE THOUGHT WE WOULD CATCH UP WITH ONE OF LAST YEAR'S INDUCTEES, JEFF WILLIAMS, AS HE EMBARKS ON THE NEXT PHASE OF HIS AMAZING CAREER.

Although we really had to twist Jeff's arm to allow us to do this exposé, he kicked things off where it all began 40 years ago as an apprentice panel beater, before honing his craft at several independent repairers. He started his own business, Specific Prestige, in 2000 and moved to the current location at Keswick in 2010.

It was in the past decade that Jeff developed what were to become long-term relationships with several manufacturers, becoming an authorised repairer for Jaguar, Land Rover, Audi, Aston Martin, Bentley, Volkswagen, Volvo, Maserati and Alfa Romeo. "We understand the importance of returning a vehicle to pre-accident condition using approved repair procedures and we have invested heavily over the years to maintain these approvals and ensure that the original safety and quality of the vehicle is not compromised."

However, the journey has not been without its challenges as the industry and the technology evolve at an ever-increasing rate. As an independent repairer, like so many across the country, Jeff sees two key trends influencing the pipeline of work.

"Industry consolidation, in various guises, has been taking place for decades, although it's the larger groups who are driving down the rates. However, the recent challenges with some of the bigger players may well be a sign that the industry is more challenging the bigger you get. In addition, the growth of networks connected to – or owned by – the two big insurer groups, can really soak up the work."

These have led Jeff to seek work from various other sources, including the RAA, private work and, of course, the OEMs. "We do all our own pre- and post-scanning but rely on the dealers for calibration to ensure the vehicle is safe to return to the owner."

Even before Jeff opened his own business, he was committed to working for the greater good of the industry and became involved with MTASA, and to this day he is still deputy chair of the Body Repair Division.

In announcing Jeff's induction onto the Honour Roll of the Lifetime Achievement Awards, Jason Trewin, Director I-CAR Australia, said: "Jeff has maintained his passion, drive and desire to continue to help others to strive and achieve their own business

goals and further support the greater good of the industry. In addition, he has been on the executive committee of MTASA and chair of the Body Repair Division and was instrumental in the introduction of the code of conduct, the collision repair Cost Calculator and the Greenstamp accreditation system."

As past chair of AMBRA, Jeff was also a key driver behind the AMBRA Shop Grading system, although he has now wound back this involvement to focus on the needs of his own business. In receiving his award, Jeff was typically modest when he said that he believed there were others in the industry who were more deserving than he was.

In addition to Jeff's commitment to the industry over the decades, he has developed and grown a successful business, always having an eye on the future. Specific Prestige has partnered with some of the best in the industry, not the least of which is Axalta Coating Systems and one of their premium brands, Standox. "Although I dabbled in water-based basecoat in the early days, it wasn't until I got my hands on Standoblue that I knew I was on a winner. The team at Axalta is first class and can't do enough for us."



Making a real statement.



Managing the mixed materials challenge.

Similarly, when it comes to equipment, Jeff has a range of Car-O-Liner alignment benches and a complete EVO straightening system. In addition, he has recently invested in the latest DryKing next generation spray booth from Symach and a full range of aluminium-specific tools and equipment in a dedicated aluminium repair cabin. Jeff is quick to point out that what really makes the business tick is the fully integrated state-of-the-art estimating, body shop management and accounting system from iBodyshop, fully supported by the team at DNS Technology.

For all the investment in the latest technology and development of OEM relationships, Jeff is adamant that what sets Specific Prestige apart is his people. "We have a great mix of youth and experience, with several long-term employees and some apprentices. However, we are not immune to the perennial

challenge of attracting and retaining the next generation of technicians."

Jeff is circumspect when he looks around the business. "It's funny. You don't realise how much time and energy the commitment to the various industry bodies has taken over the years, and the toll it has taken on the business. There's still so much to do to

stay ahead of the game here in South Australia, and that's exactly what I plan to do in the immediate future."

Editor: Despite Jeff's humility, it is clear that he is well and truly a worthy inductee of the Lifetime Achievement Awards. Look out for the 2021 announcements in July and the full report in the August issue.



Jeff really believes in quality relationships.



1944 siaone

Maximise Your Productivity

1944 crafts a consistent scratch pattern and offers excellent stability in your initial sanding stages so you can achieve a perfect finish more efficiently.



For more information contact your local sia Abrasives distributor or get in touch with us directly: 1300-SIA-123 OR sia.au@sia-abrasives.com

@siaabrasives_ANZ

