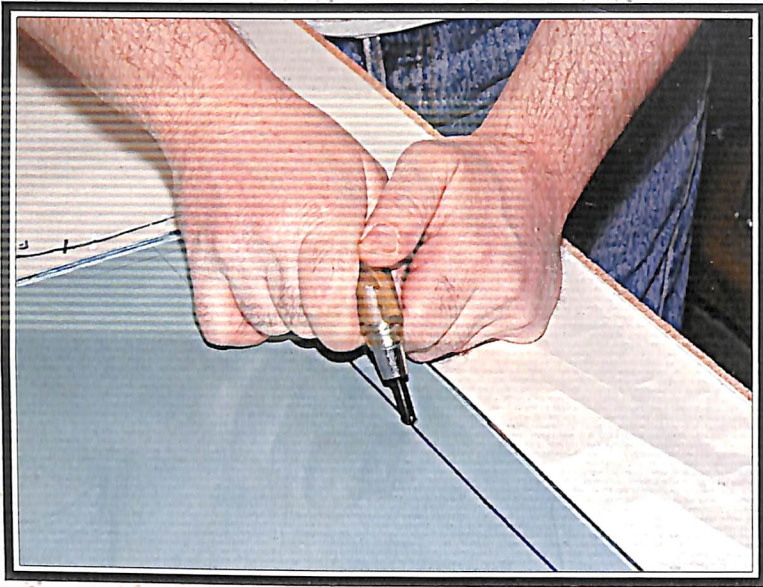




50th
ANNIVERSARY

1963-2013





“Those that share in the full sheet should always remember the one that made the first cut.”

Vin Taranto 2013

My story. *Vin Taranto*

I left school in grade 8, when I must have made some smart alec remark to the teacher, who said she did not know why I came to school, as I knew more than she did. Therefore I did not go back, much to my regret in later years.

I guess the seeds to go into business were planted very early in my life when my Grandfather would drive me from Warragul to Mornington for boarding school at the tender age of 5. I can still feel him grasping my knee and telling me, when I grew up, I must make the money, to which he must have instilled in all his grandchildren, everyone of them went on to run their own business, very successfully.

Grandfather had come from a peasant island named Alicudi in 1908, off the coast of Sicilia in Italy which Carmel and I had the pleasure of visiting in 2011. Very little has changed. There are no Motor cars on the island to this day. The ferry comes in each day bringing supplies and visitors which seems to be the highlight to the people who live there. They load up the Donkeys and they transport the goods up the steep hill to the residents.

My Grandfather went on to own a number of shops and properties. When I told him I was going to start my own glazing business, his only comment was, I should go into the food business because people must always eat, but if they had a broken window they could hang a bag over it.

Eventually he wished me good luck.

After a stint back on the farm that my parents ran, then a job at H.J.Heinz factory in Doveton, I was fortunate enough to get a job at Bremner Glass in Frankston. But after 2 years, Grandfathers influence to be successful got the better of me, so I gave notice, only to be told by Bob Bremner that I would not make it on my own.

After discussion with my wife Carmel, we had only been married for a year, and helping with the milking of the cows, as we were share farming on Dad's property, I went back next morning and asked for my job back.

Another year had passed, I decided I had to give it a go, so gave notice again, this time Bob wished me all the best.

Bangholme 1963



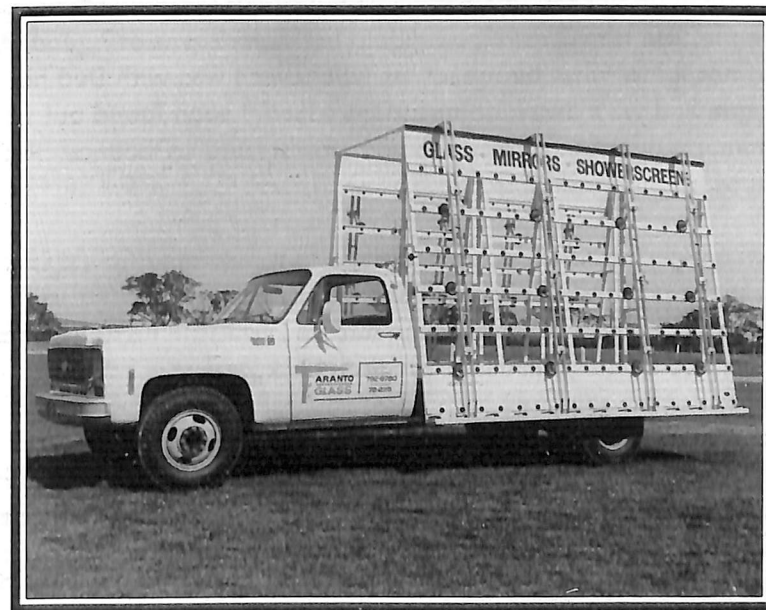
We then started Taranto Glass in a shed on the farm, picking a few jobs from friends and relatives. I was also working part time at the Drive-in theatre in Dandenong.

By this time we had finished share farming.

I then started contract glazing for M. & L. Glass at Sandringham. We then progressed to doing glazing for Murray Halkett cabinet makers at Moorabbin and also Gaffney Timber at Springvale.

This saw our first employee, Dick DeJong join us. The firm was then doing all re glazing for Eagle Star Insurance Co.

Our total sales for 1963-1964 \$8,000.00. In the year 2012-2013 total combined sales in excess of \$30,000,000.00, employing over 120 staff.





Our very first major work was at South Australia rubber mills, we quoted 370 pounds. Our glass purchased in cases from a Mr. Peter Joss in Richmond. When we picked up the glass Peter asked how we were going to pay, we said with a cheque. He then asked how would he know it was any good. At this stage I did not know what he meant, as whenever I was with Dad he would sign a cheque and walk away, no questions asked. I soon found out what he meant when cheques I had received for jobs started to bounce. This job turned out to be very profitable.

In 1965 we purchased our first block of land in Dandenong for 1800 pounds (\$3600) and building our first home in Sarena St. In the meantime my parents had moved into 26 Frankston Rd, Dandenong. It was then that we built a small factory in their back yard.

In 1966 we purchased 26 Frankston Road from my parents for \$10,000.

Two months later 22 Frankston road was auctioned. We had no money but were aware Dad had a spare \$10,000, so we convinced him we should buy it. Then 1969 we were offered 24 Frankston Road, but only had till 1.00 pm to decide on the day. At 12.55 I rang our accountant Bryan Waters, who was with us until he retired in 2011. I told him what we had done, he informed us we had no money, I told him it was his job to find the money for us, and somehow he did just that.

We then went on to purchase another 2 properties around the corner on Kirkham Road, which gave us the whole corner.

When our building was completed, we opened up the first retail and glazing business in Frankston Road, this saw us employing some 30 staff.



In the meantime we had the opportunity of buying a small glass business in Wonthaggi; this has turned out to be a wise investment. It is now run by our son Paul.

Our original contact in locating to Wonthaggi was Rodney Hoyle of Oliver-Davey Glass.

In the late 60's we would wait, sometimes up to 7:00pm for Alan Brown to turn up to pick up cases of glass in his already overloaded trailer, to head back home to Wonthaggi.

Alan progressed to be Mayor of Wonthaggi and also leader of the Liberal Party in Victoria. Alan along with the late Wally Purvis was instrumental in us locating a branch in Wonthaggi'

In the 1960's there were no vacuum lifters or grabs and very few power tools. All work was done manually. Today the workers cannot believe you actually had to use your muscles.

In 1978 we glazed the largest Double glazed unit that Pilkington Glass had produced to date.

This house was saved in the black Saturday fires, as the inner skin of the unit held; we were then able to re glaze windows.



In 1974 we had union trouble, when the union demanded that I join, and I did not see it necessary.

A black ban was placed on our business; this meant that no glass could be delivered.

It was then that the Dandenong Journal, Herald Sun and Channel 7 became

involved, doing stories about the ban. The union then dropped their demands. In later years the same union official dismissed one of his members, by accepting my evidence against his own member.

In the 60's there was no such thing as OH&S;

I can remember glazing four story flats off an extension ladder. Now a days if you can't reach the frame from the floor, you have to have scaffold built.

I can remember glazing a job with Tony, the glass was 4mm thick and high up on 1200x1200 mobile with timber blocks in the mud, Of course the mobile fell with the glass as well as Tony, he still complains about his sore ankle.

We have only ever had one major accident, when Kevin Timmins lacerated his wrist and could not work for about 4 years; He finished getting a payout of \$125, 000, that was enough for him to purchase a house.

Talking about OH&S, I came across a photo of myself in the 70's, when we were doing a job on the Dandenong Town Hall clock. I had no safety harness, hanging out in midair, but that was the accepted practice back then. Everything seemed so much safer then.. We took risks because there was no talk of safety and unions were not as strong as today.



In 1985 I was having trouble running the business as it had got so big. It was then Oliver-Davey glass approached me to sell, so I did and retired. I was to stay on for a couple of months doing some Aluminium framing.

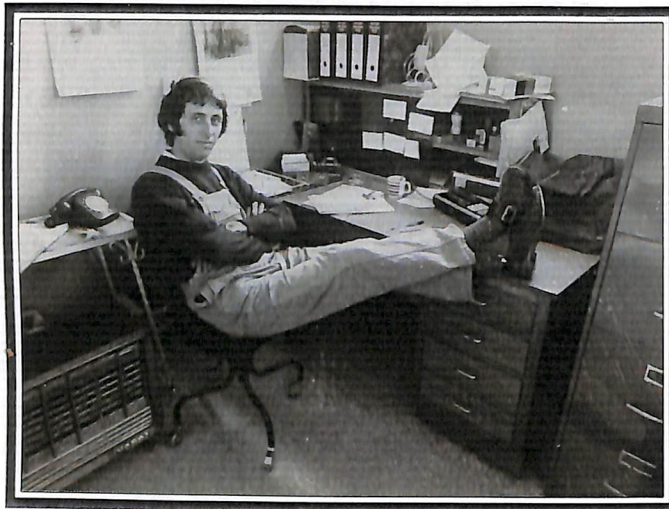


Our son Michael approached me for some extra work as he had recently married and needed extra money. Michael was working with accounting firm Hunt Frame and Partners; he was doing his brothers Paul and Kevin's tax returns. He informed me they were paying more in tax than he was earning.

It was then decided he would come and work with me and we would fire up the Aluminium business, Seelite Windows and Doors. After 12 months we formed a partnership with the understanding I would retire again. Also we had a loan that we had been paying 22% interest on, paying interest only, these were worrying times.

In the meantime we had purchased a property at Greens Road Cnr Lanyon Sts. Dandenong and employing 27 at this time.

Then everything fell in a heap. We could not get a job or even buy one, so we laid off all the staff except Tony O'Donovan, who is still with Seelite today as production manager. Work eventually picked up and Seelite started to pay rent to Carmel and myself. After some 3 years I decided I would retire again. Just call me Nellie Melba!



In 1990 with the recession we had to have, we did not have one job. There was a door handle to fit at Cowes on Phillip Island so Tony and I went to fill in the day. Also during this time we were asked to price a job at Malvern, the cost was \$6800 for the shop front, we had just \$100 profit on it, but

we did not accept the job until we were offered an extra \$200.

In 1996 Michael had outgrown Greens Road; he purchased a property in Star Crescent Hallam.

Paul and Kevin were not standing still either. Wonthaggi was progressing fast and Kevin moving to Leongatha, and now also Korrumburra. Paul worked at both Wonthaggi and Inverloch.

Over 50 years we have been able to pay wages every week, even if it meant calling on the bank. I can remember the wife of an employee sending a card and a bottle of Scotch, thanking us, as it was the first year her husband had been paid every week, in the last 10 years.



Our original shed we started our business in, on the farm at Bangholme, has now become the East Link Freeway, running right through where our house and shed stood. The balance of farm is now Bunurong cemetery.

The firm would not have been the success it was without the help of my wife Carmel, especially in the early days, with not only running the office, as well as bringing up the 5 children. Carmel still to this day rising at 5.00am to prepare my breakfast and lunch for me as a workaholic.

Mark Dobbie has been employed at Wonthaggi for the past 28 years, Tony O'Donovan at Seelite for the same amount of years.



Michael Taranto
Director
Seelite Windows and Doors.

Seelite Windows & Doors commenced operations some 28 years ago, following the sale of Taranto Glass.

One of the conditions of Vin Taranto selling his glazing business was that he was unable to start a similar business within 5 years of the sale. Not being one to rest on his laurels, and too young to retire, Vin decided to commence business fabricating Aluminium Windows and Doors. The Taranto Glass business had dabbled in Aluminium Windows, so this sector of the building industry was not uncommon to Vin.

At the time, his eldest son Michael, was working as an accountant and completing an Economics & Law degree at Monash University. Having witnessed first hand the things that running your own business had afforded the Taranto family, Michael approached Vin and suggested that if he was serious in his new business venture that maybe he could help make it a success. Out of this conversation, Seelite Windows & Doors was born.

Seelite commenced operations with Vin and Michael in a small factory off Kirkham Road in Dandenong. Ironically this factory was immediately behind the premises occupied by the recently sold Taranto Glass. Given the vast list of contacts Vin had established, it wasn't long before business took off. Seelite put on it's first employee in Tony O'Donovan and soon thereafter purchased their first truck. Ironically both Tony and the truck are still 'in service' at Seelite.

From these humble beginnings, Seelite has now grown to employ over 70 people, has relocated to purpose built premises at Hallam, and currently services all of the major Commercial Builders in Melbourne. Whilst based in Victoria, Seelite has installed projects in South Australia, Western Australia and New South Wales.

They have also been involved in the renowned Meydan Racetrack Grandstand in Dubai. Seelite has established outstanding business relationships with major suppliers such as Century Glass, Aluminium Industries and Dorma Automatics just to name a few.

Seelite Windows & Doors owes it's existence to Vin and Carmel Taranto, and all it's employees wish them well and thank them for their contribution.



Tony O'Donovan
Factory Manager -
Seelite Windows and Doors

Vin has asked me to contribute some memories to his book of Memoirs. I have known Vin for the past 28 years and in that time he has become a loyal and trustworthy friend. If you haven't learnt something from him, whether it be life experience or work experience, you were just not listening. Fortunately for me, I did listen and I've learnt a lot.

I think we share the same sense of humor, which I find hilarious. To talk about a work horse would be an understatement. Vin, being the age he is, still puts people a third of his age to shame and I think most of us would be kidding ourselves if we all didn't want to be that active at that age. (Not that he's old)

There are a number of funny and interesting moments.

When I first started working for Vinnie. Job after job, I would return back to the factory. There without fail, Vinnie would ask "What had taken me so long", so eager to please then, I tried to do the jobs even quicker than I was already doing them. On my return, Vinnie still said "what took you so long".

In the early nineties during the recession ("that we had to have") Seelite was very quiet as expected. The staff numbers got down to only three, Vinnie, Michael and myself. I got to work one morning, Vinnie asked me to grab a pair of stainless steel handles, and get behind the wheel and drive. You never question "The Man" so I just drove. I drove to Phillip Island with Vinnie in the passenger seat asleep. Once there, the pair of handles took only 5 minutes to fit and you guessed it, I then drove all the way back.

Once, back in the day, we had an Apprentice, Rowan Crossley (who to this day is still employed by Seelite) Vinnie sent both of us to do a job in King Street right next door to a strip club.

Knowing Vinnie I instantly thought, it must be a test, so being the two good boys that we were, the job was done and we went straight back to the factory. Where Vinnie still asked what took us so long.

Vinnie got me good, one morning, having me return an urgent phone call that he had taken. I was to phone back a woman named Sue Ridge. A man answered the phone and after minutes trying to convince him to put me through to Sue Ridge, he kindly informed me that I had in fact called the Thompsons Road Treatment plant.

The thing that I love about Vinnie is that he will give anything a go. I have taken a lot of that on board myself over the years and it has served me well. WIN LOOSE OR DRAW.

Just on closing, some of Vinnie's favorite quotes are,
"Possession is nine tenths of the law"
"Rules are for other people"





*Paul Taranto
Taranto Glass & Screens*

TARANTO GLASS – 50 YEARS

Two great things happened in 1963. No 1 I was born and No 2 an amazing business journey began in a shed on a farm in Bangholme.

I have quite a few childhood memories of my time spent as a youngster helping out Mum and Dad in the business.

I used to ride to the factory after school and clean the factory or help to load and unload trucks. Ever Saturday morning I would help out cleaning and loading trucks and eventually learning to cut glass.

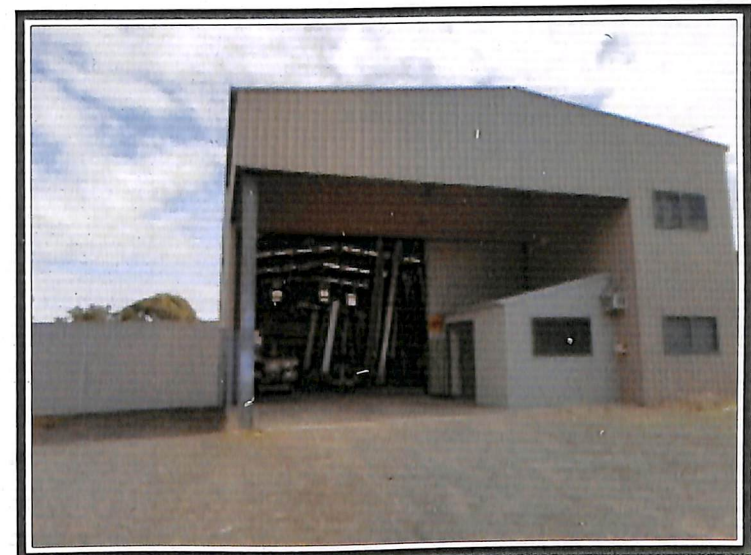
I remember my grandfather Felix always standing at his little cutting bench with his off cut rack behind, cutting all the cash sale orders. As the business got bigger and his off cuts off the jumbo sheets got bigger I remember my grandfather shaking his head in disgust at the wastage going in the bin.

A couple of things I remember quite vividly. One day we had just had a block of jumbo sheets of glass delivered, and while I was standing at the air table cutting, the whole block slipped off the free fall rack and smashed around my legs. I ended up waist deep in broken glass and came out without a scratch on me.

Another day Dad and I were carrying a sheet of glass to load on the truck, and I turned the corner too quick, hitting the corner of the bench. The sheet of glass broke putting a 6 inch gash in Dad's back. I am not sure why we didn't carry much glass together after that.

Probably my most vivid memory is when Dad took Kevin and I to help glaze a job in Eden. We were driving up in the "Pride of the Fleet, the Chevrolet C30", unfortunately someone forgot to do up the clamps, and we didn't even get out of Langhorne Street before we lost the lot. Luckily for me I had just pulled my arm in that had been hanging out the window, moments before the glass all came flying past.

I followed my passion for cooking when I left school, but once I got my licence and discovered girls, I found the long hours and weekend work interrupted my lifestyle, so I decided to go and work in the family business. After working in Dandenong for a short time, Dad asked me if I would like to go to Wonthaggi and take over as manager, as Keith Gray the manager at the time was leaving.



The business expanded to Wonthaggi in 1976. It was originally set up on a site on Inverloch Road, purchased from W.S. Purvis & Co.

I moved to Wonthaggi and took over as the Manager in 1982. At that time we were the only Glazing Company around, so we serviced the whole of South Gippsland from Phillip Island to Yarram.

The Business moved to larger premises out on Bass Highway at the entrance to Wonthaggi.

My Brother Kevin and I became partners in the business and we expanded to doing glazing work around Melbourne. We had purchased a 5 Tonne Isuzu Glass Truck and proceeded to work on many sizable glazing projects.

We then purchased Wickham Glass in Leongatha and shortly after that decided to dissolve the Partnership and go our separate ways.

Kevin and Leanne took over Leongatha and I continued on with Wonthaggi.

After the split up, I sold the Bass Highway premises and moved to a rented factory back on Inverloch Road, opposite to where it all first began.



As plain as glass

HURSDAY, November 3 was a big day for Jones State Bank. On that morning, three of the largest panes of glass in the South Gippsland area were fitted to the State Bank's front windows. The massive sheets were fitted by Taranto Glass, Wonthaggi, who used a crane-truck for the delicate operation. The panes, weighing 20kg each, have dimensions of 4.2m high, 2.2m wide with a thickness of 8mm. This was definitely a situation where one slip could have led to disaster, but the Taranto fellows used their well-tuned skills, and the panes were fitted successfully. Workers lift the large panes of glass from the crane-truck.

Around this time we started to do our own Commercial Aluminium Work. As this side of the business expanded, I decided it was time to build our own purpose built factory. I purchased a vacant block beside our rented factory and in 2000, T.S. Constructions constructed an 1100m tilt panel factory with showroom and offices.

The Aluminium and Commercial side of the business grew rapidly and so did the workforce with fabricators and installers.

After scaling back the business in 2006, closing down the aluminium side of the business, we are now back into the aluminium side of things after purchasing the AWS Window equipment from Dahlsens.

So current day Taranto Glass sees Taranto Glass and Screens operating from 40 Inverloch Road, Wonthaggi where we cut to size, manufacture Shower Screens, Wardrobe Doors, Security Doors & Flyscreens, Balustrading and Splashbacks.

Taranto Window Systems operating from 1 Bear Street, Inverloch where we manufacture the whole range of Vantage & Elevate Window Systems.

Everything I have I owe to my Mother and Father from the amazing guidance, work ethic and a massive part of that all comes from the incredible little business that started in a tin shed in Bangholme 50 years ago.

Strong demand for glass
Strong demand locally from builders caused Taranto Glass to set up shop on an Inverloch road site, in Wonthaggi, in 1974.

Five original, Vin, started the business in Wonthaggi in 1962. A Leongatha branch opened in 1966, and the Wonthaggi premises moved to its current site on Inverloch Road in 1974. The first glass outlet in the area. The first in each trade in shower screens, commercial aluminium shopfronts, mirrors, and more. Wardrobe doors and glazed roofs also form part of the company's business. The firm also gets a lot of requests for special jobs. In recent times, they have concentrated only on mirrors, rather than commercial work, the bulk of the operation.

New stock includes shower screens with pivot doors that actually open out, rather than slide. At the same time, prices have dropped, and some good deals are available. Owner, Paul Taranto, says the firm's screens are among the cheapest in South Gippsland. He says now is the time to be thinking about changing shower screens... particularly if people are sick of old, stinky shower curtains. The firm offers a free measure and quote and a wide variety of colors and patterns. A similar range is available at Leongatha, where Paul's brother, Kevin, is the owner.

Sick of that old sliding shower screen or the curtain sticking to you?

NOW IS THE TIME FOR A FREE MEASURE AND QUOTE.

10% off ALL SHOWER SCREENS AND BATHROOM MIRRORS FOR ALL ORDERS PLACED BEFORE AUGUST 31, ON PRESENTATION OF THIS COUPON.

TARANTO GLASS

348 White Road Wonthaggi, Phone: (056) 72 2177 - Paul or



Mark Dobbie

For me Taranto Glass started 28 years ago in a tin shed with an old mine building attached to the side, without a flushing toilet. Originally it was only Paul and myself, but that has changed a lot over the years. At last count, it was up to over 30 blokes that have come and gone. I don't want go near how many office girls there have been.

Early on Paul would say on the way out on Friday night, "Come in tomorrow and we will do this." So I would turn up the next morning, Paul nowhere to be seen, half hour passes, I get on my push bike, ride to Paul's and finally get an answer from the door. A blearily eyed Paul saying "I forgot, here's the keys I will be there in an hour".

Another story about Paul, coming back from a job, we drive into the factory to find Paul feet up on the desk, leaning back in his chair sound asleep. So things won't change.

Over the years we have worked from Sale to Torquay, Seymour to King Island and everywhere in between.

Over the time I have gotten to know Vin, first as Mr T the boss, to now Vin the worker – just one of the boys. His sayings “Silicone fix”, “It’s not a church or a pub” and “Can’t see it from my place”.

Vin and Carmel, Congratulations on 50 years of Taranto Glass. You should be proud of what you have created and achieved!!!



*Kevin Taranto
Taranto Windows & Glass*

In 1985 Taranto Glass, Dandenong was sold by my parents to Oliver Davey Glass. My future gone I thought, not taking over the family business, so on with life. In 1987 I started working at Wonthaggi with my Brother Paul, we eventually became partners in that business. In 1989 we opened a branch in Leongatha in the rear of a motorbike shop. By 1992 both businesses were about the same size, so we decided to split them up with Paul retaining Wonthaggi, Leanne and I taking on Leongatha. At the time we had 3 young children, taking on a business was very time consuming, however Leanne did a great job managing the business and the family. I concentrated on getting the work done.

In 1993 we moved to a new location in Leongatha before out growing that and having premises purpose built on the highway in Leongatha in 1996. At this stage I was onsite most days with Leanne running the business and family which now had grown to 4 children.

In 2002 Leanne and I attended a small business-seminar run by our local Shire. It was then that we engaged a Consultant to try and improve our Business.

When we first started our business being a good Tradesman was enough, however as the business grew we realised that you needed to have good business skills as well and surround yourself with efficient staff. The first change was for me to come off the tools. I was not keen on this idea, but we gave it a go! On my first day in the office I saved about \$5,000.00 in one order just by getting a few quotes. This might work, I thought.

As we put our business plan into action, Taranto Windows & Glass started to grow significantly as we moved into large residential and commercial projects. In 2008 we outgrew our Leongatha Factory and purchased a second Factory deciding on a Korumburra site as it was that bit closer to Melbourne and a new client base would not hurt either.

With this came a whole new business structure to work through. Eventually deciding I would run Korumburra, focusing on manufacture and installation of windows and doors. Growing both locally and with our expanding Melbourne work, due to our strong relationship with Capral Aluminium, and our willingness to fabricate some of their new innovative products such as Genesis Windows & Doors, 900 Series Sliding Doors and Euro Tilt and Turn Windows. Michael & Catherine's business Seelite Windows & Doors also grew rapidly at this time, with Michael passing on some of his smaller clients to us, so the reputation and contacts of both Michael and Vin's also expanded our work in Melbourne.

This left Leanne in Leongatha to run the Specialised Domestic work Shower & Security Screens and local re glazing. Not sure she signed on for this but has grown into the position, and together with each others support we seem to be able to run both sites effectively. The set up seems to be working, we are now supplying windows to other window company's and the Leongatha operation stepping up specialised domestic services. In terms of our turnover, commercial windows are the core of our work.



Having said that our specialised residential work, being locally focused is valuable as it really impacts on our reputation in the region.

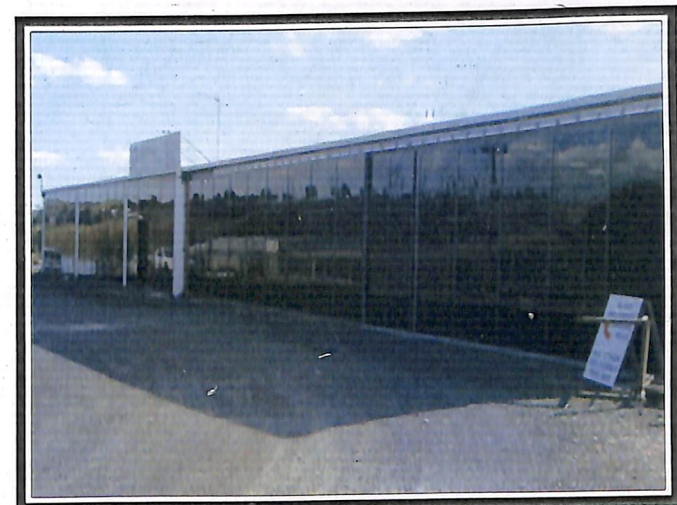
Now employing 25 people between the two factories offering efficient service is our competitive advantage, while providing quality workmanship is hopefully our guarantee of longevity for the future ensuring the Taranto Glass reputation is upheld.

In the vein of the original Taranto Glass, Vin and Carmel started 50 years ago, our business today remains very much a family affair. Two of our Sons work full time in the business with 25 year old Scott Project Managing Commercial Sites and 23 year old Mark a qualified Glazier in charge of our Commercial Glazing Team. Our 20 year old Daughter Elise is away studying to become an Accountant, but still opens the factory on a Saturday morning attending to Superannuation and Employee payments. 17 year old Anthony helps out over the school holidays. Father Vin also helps out regularly, dividing his time between his three sons Window businesses. The experience he brings is very valuable particularly the knowledge he is able to pass on to the apprentices.

Our 5 Qualified Glaziers are currently training 7 Apprentice Glaziers, which hopefully ensures our future in the Industry with Quality Tradesman getting harder and harder to find. All our staff proudly wear their uniform and our vehicles are sign written, showing the community who we are and giving us a bit of mobile advertising.

We both still enjoy what we do, and having the boys involved allows us a little time away occasionally. I am a committee member of the Glass & Glazing Association and the Australian Window Association enjoying access to like minded business people and working towards the future of our Industry.

We would like to thank Mum and Dad for starting all this and hope we all continue to service the Glass and Window Industry well into the Future.





Thank You

The Taranto family would like to sincerely thank everyone for attending this evenings celebration and to acknowledge all of those who were and are a part of the growth and success of our business.





50th
ANNIVERSARY


1963 - 2013



