



A Nationwide Affair

One partner with whom RVL is delighted to be associated is leading contract hire specialist, Petit Forestier Refrigerated Vehicle Rental. The two businesses have enjoyed a successful working partnership over the last few years and RVL feels privileged to have been selected to design and build numerous vehicles for the company.

In addition to purchasing the finest insulated equipment, Petit Forestier also operates a strict vehicle maintenance policy to ensure its vehicles remain in first class condition. As one would expect of a professional fleet owner, Petit Forestier has service and maintenance schedules in place for the engine and mechanical elements of the vehicle. Less common though is the company's practice of including the vehicle bodywork in its schedules and, unusually, its awareness of the importance of maintaining an insulated body and the long-term benefits of keeping it in the best possible condition. To this end, Petit Forestier regularly calls upon RVL's vast expertise in the refurbishment and repair arena,

taking advantage of both its workshop and mobile services. RVL's comprehensive Refurbishment and Repair Service caters for anything from minor accident damage, re-paints and chassis renewals, through to complete refurbishment of box bodies, chassis cabs and transport refrigeration systems.

Due to the increased volume of business secured by both companies over the last five years or so, RVL saw it as essential to offer nationwide coverage on vehicle repair. In addition to its head office in the South East, which itself has a sizeable repair facility alongside the temperature-controlled vehicle manufacturing plant, RVL has opened up a number of remote depots across the country. Dedicated depots are now operational in Manchester, Birmingham and the South West, which, along with a specialist mobile team, enable RVL to provide a truly nationwide service.

Eric Forestier, Managing Director of Petit Forestier UK, commented, "We saw this as a very positive move that would bring us untold benefits and allow us to support the needs of our own customers. If one of our vehicles is unfortunate enough to suffer accident damage, for example, we have confidence in the knowledge that we can rely on RVL to provide an effective and professional repair with the all-important quick turn-around time. We particularly like the fact that its rapid response mobile team can visit our depots or those of our clients and repairs can be undertaken with minimal down-time."

The mobile operation is served by RVL's team of highly skilled insulated and dry freight body repair specialists who work from fully equipped repair vans. Paying prompt attention to repairs helps avoid longer-term damage to bodywork, which in turn helps reduce Petit Forestier's overall maintenance costs. Additionally, undertaking repairs at a customer's site minimises vehicle down-time and maximises operational efficiency.

Eric continued, "Should the damage be more significant, we can arrange to have a vehicle dropped into one of RVL's repair depots for the work to be done. Either way we know the repair will be done to a high standard; one which will satisfy us and, more importantly, our clients."

As Petit Forestier has continued to grow its customer base among frozen and chilled food manufacturers the need to monitor and control both repairs and associated costs has increased. RVL's proactive working relationship with Petit Forestier enables these standards to be exceeded irrespective of a vehicle location.



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Difference

The Foodservice Company with a

Oxfordshire based foodservice provider, Savona Provisions Ltd, has recently taken delivery of a number of new RVL Insulated Box Bodies. This order expands Savona's fleet in line with the growth of its business in response to increased demand for its products from an ever-broadening client base.

Savona's inception as bakers over 40 years ago paved the way for an interesting and fruitful future that would see the company competing with some of the major players within the foodservice sector. The early days enabled Savona to build up successful working relationships with local caterers in and around the Oxford area. Over the years Savona's reputation for supplying high quality wholesale foods, coupled with outstanding service, soon spread, leading to greater interest from other trade sectors. It was not long before Savona was also supplying schools and colleges; hotels and restaurants; pubs and clubs; and takeaway outlets and cafés. Today, the company serves customers in West London, Surrey, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Bristol, Leicestershire, Birmingham and Gatwick, along with, of course, several loyal customers in the Oxford area from yesteryear.



Ken Knowland, Managing Director of Savona, explained, "We believe that the key to our success at acquiring and keeping our customers is offering exceptional levels of service, along with an extensive and competitively priced product range."

One of many benefits in dealing with Savona is the fact that the company is not 'virtual' or faceless; instead it offers a very personal service – something that, regrettably, seems to be more associated with the past. The company employs real and friendly staff, each one

as knowledgeable and passionate about its food products as the next. Placing an order with Savona's Telesales Department is, in fact, something of a pleasure. The team genuinely knows what the food products look, feel, smell and, more importantly, taste like. This is a result of Savona's comprehensive staff training programme that also, rather refreshingly, includes product tasting sessions. So when a client asks questions on a particular product line, the response is not only factual in terms of product content and nutritional information, but also personal with genuine, unscripted comments.

The same level of customer focus is evident with the product range. Over 4500 standard lines are stocked, ranging from the leading brand names to quality, own brand alternatives, including the Country Range and Savona products. A selection of dry goods, chilled and frozen foods, snacks and beverages is available, as is a broad range of non-foods items, such as toiletries and cleaning products.

Savona also takes great delight in sourcing more specialist food products from around the world for clients, and this is another factor that truly illustrates the company's commitment to providing a personalised service. Indeed, several top chefs and restaurateurs have been known to pick Savona's gastronomic brain for specific foods and ingredients. It is this adaptable approach to customer needs that enables this innovative company to stand aside from some of its foodservice rivals.

Savona's extensive fleet of temperature-controlled vehicles handles its busy distribution operation which also includes a rapid response service to cater for those unexpected emergencies. The latest bespoke vehicles illustrate RVL's ability to provide innovative solutions to meet customer requirements. Both the 7.5 tonne and 14 tonne

vehicles feature triple compartment bodies and twin evaporator systems. A fixed longitudinal bulkhead with through door divides the nearside chilled compartment from the offside frozen section. Full width folding shelving sits beneath each evaporator in these pallet-width front sections, whilst a side door provides access to the load space from the kerb. Both lanes are sectioned off from the rear ambient compartment with the use of movable bulkheads. These RVL bodies have been designed to provide Savona with internal configuration flexibility according to the load requirements on each distribution run. A myriad of other user-friendly and safety-related design features has been incorporated into these high specification bodies, including elements such as half and full width tail lifts with safety gates; load restraint; aluminium protection; sack trucks with stowage; and special side-guards, to name just a few.

Savona also utilises state-of-the-art satellite tracking systems on its vehicles. This useful feature helps the company provide good customer service, with rapid response to queries relating to the whereabouts of goods out for delivery, whilst temperature monitoring and in-cab messaging terminals add further benefit.

To further underline its commitment to quality, Savona has Higher Level CMI accreditation; Certificate of Conformity from CMI for the wholesale, storage and distribution of chilled, frozen and ambient food products and of catering and disposable products. This helps provide customer assurance that Savona's facilities and supply chain are of the highest standards.

Ken commented, "Our fleet consists entirely of RVL bodies and van conversions, illustrating our trust in the brand. Any teething problems we have experienced have been swiftly resolved, and the vehicles have proved to be extremely reliable. Furthermore, these new vehicles look superb, finished in our corporate colours."

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Loseley

New LDV Chassis and RVL Body for

Over at the Loseley Park Estate in Guildford, Surrey, Steve Cheeseman and his team can be found busily working away creating the most divine range of confectionery bakery products and tea room cakes. The 1400 acre estate is home to Loseley Bakery, the wholesale bakery company established by current owner, Steve Cheeseman, over 22 years ago. The entire range of retail cakes and quiches is made and hand finished on the site and then distributed to farm shops, tea rooms, garden centres and delicatessens within an approximate 30 mile radius of Guildford. In addition to this, a selection of Loseley ice creams and dairy products is also distributed.

When Loseley Bakery required an extra distribution vehicle, Steve made contact with RVL to put wheels in motion on a body design concept which would suit the newly-introduced LDV Maxus chassis cab. Already a fan of the vehicle brand, Steve had in fact delayed his new vehicle purchase until the release of this completely new chassis cab.

Steve commented, "LDV is my favoured brand and I knew this new release would be worth waiting for. My new vehicle may even have been the very first refrigerated truck in the UK to feature the new chassis."

RVL designed the new 3500kg vehicle around Loseley Bakery's operation, taking into account, amongst other things, the type, volume and temperature of the goods to be carried, length of

working day, number of drops and loading/unloading practices. The 3500mm long body was configured as dual compartment, to accommodate both chilled and frozen goods, and temperature control was provided with the use of a Hubbard 520AELT/1 twin evaporator system.

Loseley Bakery takes great care of its vehicle fleet and is fully aware of its importance to its six-day week operation. The company has a rolling vehicle turnover programme and as part of this is looking to buy another RVL Body in the next few months.

This most recent vehicle to go on fleet, which is finished in Buttermilk with livery featuring the famous Loseley House, is one that has clearly impressed Steve Cheeseman, "Since going into service I have only positive things to say about the vehicle. I am

delighted with the performance of all three key elements – the Maxus chassis cab, the RVL box body and the Hubbard refrigeration unit. It is a good drive and reliable – all really very pleasing."



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'Damage Watch'

RVL Launches 'The Repair Network' and

On the front page of this newsletter you read all about RVL's repair and refurbishment service. You also read all about its nationwide capabilities and mobile operation, as well as about one client who regularly takes advantage of the service. What has not been revealed, until now, is that this sector of RVL's business has undergone its very own refurbishment and re-branding and henceforth will be known as 'The Repair Network'. The Repair Network will still, of course, be part of the RVL group, but will now operate with its own corporate identity.

The company naturally still offers complete repair and refurbishment solutions accompanied with ever high standards of professionalism and customer service. And remember, The Repair Network's services are not restricted to insulated vehicles or to any brand, indeed they cover many types and makes of commercial vehicles, such as dry freight and curtain-sider vehicles, for example. In short, all there is to adjust to is the new company name. Customers can expect all the existing benefits, plus more besides.

Not wishing to do things by halves, the launch of The Repair Network provided the perfect opportunity to introduce an exciting new product. The Repair Network is proud to unveil its latest offering, Damage Watch; the free nationwide service that health-checks vehicle bodywork.

Damage Watch provides operators with a simple way of ensuring that their fleet of vehicles is kept in pristine condition for maximum efficiency. This is done via free of charge monthly visits to the client's site by The Repair Network's technicians to visually inspect areas of bodywork damage. These fleet audits will check the healthy condition of vehicle bodywork and internal components, and could help operators save money and needless vehicle down-time. By monitoring a fleet, The Repair Network can advise a Transport Manager of areas of damage and provide professional advice on how urgent it is that an area of body damage is repaired.

Set up could not be easier; The Repair Network simply requires a list of fleet registration numbers and a preferred day on which the checks can be carried out. This visual inspection service will involve a three-tier reporting system – complete with photographs and estimates – for minor repairs, temporary repairs and VOR. Equipped with this information, a Transport Manager can then make an informed decision on authorising and scheduling any repair work.

Other services may also be added to the basic bodywork inspection, if required, such as fluid checks and tyre pressure checks. Likewise, if there are certain other services that may be required, The Repair Network would be only too pleased to assist in such cases.



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Order M&J Selects RVL for Repeat

Fish and seafood specialist, M&J Seafood has once again placed its van business for the year with RVL. Having designed and built for the company for many years, RVL is pleased to have retained its business since the very first order, reaffirming a successful long-term working partnership between the two businesses.

M&J, part of the Brakes Group, serves the catering market – as well as fishmongers and other wholesalers – with a vast selection of fine quality seafood. The company is proud to be able to offer the UK's largest range of fresh, frozen and chilled seafood products to clients nationwide.

As one would expect, the company's local and international buyers have a strong passion for fish and source the best of the catch from both the UK and overseas. The selection is quite staggering and encompasses cold and warm water round species, such as haddock, monkfish, sea bass, bream and red snapper; flat fish, including turbot, sole and halibut; some game fish favourites, such as tuna and swordfish; a delicious range of fresh water fish, amongst which wild

Pacific salmon and Arctic char can be found; plus crustaceans and shellfish specialities, such as blue and brown crab, lobster and langoustines; as well as popular mollusc varieties: mussels, clams and scallops. In addition to this, smoked fish is also available, as is a range of value-added products, such as breaded and battered fish fillets, along with some much-loved deli products, including anchovy fillets, caviar, gravadlax and smoked salmon. By no means exhaustive, the above list represents a mere fraction of M&J's product range.

M&J's ethos is about quality and consequently demands very high standards for its refrigerated vehicles. The company's long association with RVL has been based on the first class quality and reliability of its insulated products. RVL ensures that each conversion is designed to match M&J's operation perfectly, and, of course, with the highest regard to detail.

The latest Mercedes Sprinter 309 Cdi 3500kg van conversions have been specified for frozen and chilled operation with a 50/50 compartment split. RVL has designed many features uniquely for M&J, providing a bespoke specification that is both practical and driver-friendly.

Valerie Rands, Head of Group Capital & Service Purchasing for Brakes, said,

"Brakes has had a long standing relationship with RVL dating back to when the Brake family first owned the business and RVL have shown that they have been able to adapt and change as the Brakes business has evolved, proving themselves to be a reliable, competitive supplier with whom we continue to enjoy a good working relationship."



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Rewards

Long-Term Partnership Reaps

RVL has recently designed and constructed a number of 7.5 tonne box bodies and 3.5 tonne Mercedes Sprinter vans for H&B Foods Ltd. This latest order is one of many in the extensive history and long-term working relationship between the two companies. RVL is proud of its ability to not only grow its client base, but also retain business on a year on year basis. A considerable proportion of RVL's work is repeat business from existing customers, and this recent contract is a finer example of this than most.

H&B Foods Ltd is a wholesaler and processor of cheese products, selling into contract caterers, the travel industry, sandwich producers, hotels, restaurants and quality food manufacturers and retailers throughout the country. H&B Foods is well known as a reliable and efficient supplier of both speciality and ingredient cheeses and, with its extensive range of speciality foods, can give valued support to businesses. Naturally, cheese is the mainstay of its business, though its other offerings include key ingredients, patisserie products and bespoke chilled sauces and dressings.

The company as it stands today is a result of a 2003 merger of two long standing cheese businesses, Harvey & Brockless Ltd and The Huge Cheese Co London Ltd; the former established in 1979 and the latter in 1982. The merger brought together five directors and with it a combined total of more than 50 years' industry experience. Today, H&B Foods' strategy is to be the supplier of choice for the foodservice sector for speciality and quality foods with respect to cheese and dairy products and certain speciality food ranges. The aim is to focus on developing niche market areas supported by quality products and excellent customer service.

RVL's association with H&B Foods began when both companies had only just embarked upon their respective business journeys. At this point in time RVL was providing support on the body and

refrigeration repair side and when (the then) Harvey & Brockless decided to actually purchase its first refrigerated vehicles, it immediately turned to RVL for the design and construction. In fact, it would not be untrue to say that it was this demand for new vehicles that prompted RVL's entry into the mainstream arena of bodybuilding. Both companies can probably look back a couple of decades and consider how their respective futures may have been very different had they not crossed paths. This partnership approach has helped both companies expand and become leaders in their fields and RVL is delighted to still be working with H&B Foods today.

H&B Foods is proud to offer an extensive variety of cheeses to suit its clients' needs, from quality value brands to premium specialities. This includes British, Mediterranean and International specialities sourced from local farms and across Europe. Its cold stores are stocked with over 350 different cheeses, encompassing firm, soft and semi-soft varieties, blue and organic cheeses, as well as goat's and ewe's milk ranges. From special reserve mature cheddar and 24-month aged Parmesan Reggiano, through to Cornish Wild Garlic Cheese, and from Organic Cropwell Bishop Stilton, through to Oak Smoked Celtic Promise, the cheeses at H&B Foods are as varied as they are delicious. Crottin from the banks of the Loire and Mont d'Or are further examples of the fine cheeses available, as are some nose-tingling favourites, such as Raclette and Stinking Bishop. H&B Foods can bespoke manufacture to individual size and weight requirements and can provide various packaging and portioning options at its production facility, such as grating, slicing, dicing, shaving and wedging.

H&B also offers a selection of dairy products, as well as a diverse range of speciality foods that simply spoil the catering professional for choice; Valrhona chocolate, Viron flour, chefs' ingredients and a delicious range of the best Mediterranean foods. This vast cheese and speciality foods portfolio is enhanced through sister

company, Huge Sauce, which specialises in bespoke manufacturing of sauces, dressings, chutneys and oils for the foodservice industry. The product range is continuously enhanced through new and exciting products, providing clients with an unbeatable selection for their menus.

From its SW8 headquarters and two other strategically located depots, H&B offers fast and reliable delivery throughout the UK. With dozens of RVL vehicles distributing seven days a week, it is clear to see how the company has become firmly established as one of the country's foremost suppliers. H&B Foods has worked hard to gain its well respected position as a key provider to some of the nation's most noted names in the food industry; indeed its client list reads more like a culinary 'Who's Who'.

Commenting on the new vehicles, Transport Manager, Rod Loughran, said, "We are delighted with the performance and looks of our new RVL vehicles. Having dealt with the company since day one, we knew exactly what to expect and were not disappointed. As our vehicles are used constantly, we need confidence in their ability to maintain correct temperature throughout their working day. With RVL products, we have this assurance."

The vehicles are operated and maintained to the same high standard and professionalism as the rest of the business. Performance, safety, appearance, hygiene and cleanliness are all taken very seriously. H&B Foods is accredited under the internationally recognised Retail Consortium Technical Standard and is audited annually and continues to achieve the higher level certification. Hygiene standards are constantly monitored by an in-house technical team who are able to offer full technical support, including allergy status, specifications, microbiological data and nutritional information.

Rod concluded, "Our distribution and vans sales operations are such an important part of our business and our vehicles are a major factor in this succeeding. No more than we would offer second rate cheese, would we run second rate vehicles. There is always a very strong emphasis on quality."

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RVL NEWS



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