

LOG TRUCKER

VOLUME 45 NUMBER 3

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MARCH 2018

PHILBRICK

TRUCKING



REPORTING IN FROM...



PHILBRICK TRUCKING

Jerry Philbrick has been log trucking since 1961. He currently has nine trucks including **Peterbilts**, **Western Stars** and **Freightliners** and hauls around the North California area. He lives in **Ft. Bragg** where he lives in a ranch house built by his grandpa in the 1900s. "[My employees] work with me instead of work for me and I don't know what I would do if I didn't have these people," Philbrick said. "They're wonderful men and a great group of people."

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IN THIS ISSUE



ON THE FRONT: This monster log has been placed on the front bunk of Philbrick's 2016 Freightliner and Antone Schlafer's John Deere 2054 log loader is preparing to place the log on the rear bunk. See "Longtime Log Trucker"

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PHILBRICK TRUCKING by Brandon Hansen

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LONGTIME LOG TRUCKER

NEW TRUCK IN TOWN

Jerry Philbrick poses with his newly delivered Freightliner ready to haul around northern California.



JERRY PHILBRICK HAS BEEN LOGGING AND LOG TRUCKING SINCE 1961 AND HASN'T RUN OUT OF WORK

Story by Brandon Hansen
For Loggers World

Jerry Philbrick must enjoy log trucking, as its something he's done since 1961. The longtime Ft. Bragg logger and log trucker grew up in the industry and continues to keep logs

rolling in the northern California area.

"I guess I just kind of fell in love with it," Philbrick said. "As a kid I would watch the log trucks

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See "Philbrick"

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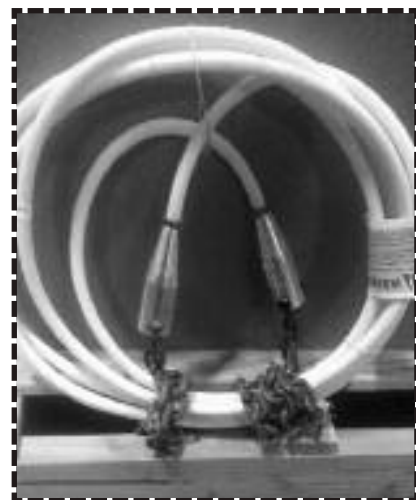
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Driver Bud Turney is getting the 2016 Freightliner ready to be loaded with a nice parade load. Antone Schlafer Logging was working on the site near Comptche, California.



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NICE PARADE LOAD

This 2016 Freightliner is loaded and ready for the 2016 Labor Day Parade. The load was loaded by Anderson Logging of Fort Bragg and took was the first place winner. Located in Mendocino County, there is a wide range of land and terrain. Home of the massive Redwoods that make northern California famous, there's also Douglas Fir and western white pine to harvest. "It's definitely Redwood country," Philbrick said. "I remember we would fall trees so big that you would have to saw them in half just to get them on the truck. You had some 20,000-board feet logs." While logging, Philbrick would have to use a bladed machine to make layouts or beds for the trees to fall. It was so there would be soft dirt to catch the trees so they wouldn't fall and shatter.

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1988 PEERLESS Log Trailer, Spring Susp, 11R24.5 Tires, Outside Alum Wheels, 8'6" Bunks, 60" Gun Barrel Stakes, Vulcan Scales, Truck Bunks, Hitch, Headache Rack**\$15,500**



1983 PEERLESS Log Trailer, Spring Susp, 11R24.5 Tires, Outside Alum Wheels, 8'6" Bunks, 60" Gun Barrel Stakes, Vulcan Scales, Truck Bunks, Hitch, Headache Rack**\$15,500**

"I'm a big animal person, I've always had a dog all my life. Horses and dogs, you lean on them quite a bit. It's a great feeling seeing them obey you or work for you."

JERRY PHILBRICK

Philbrick

(Continued from Page 4)

go by and see the wheels bump up and down on the road. I just like being in the truck, feeling the power of the engine and the smell of diesel smoke."

Philbrick grew up in Comptche, California. With just a population of 35, the town had a store and a post office. As a ranching and logging community, the town had a lot of old loggers who lived near the town.

"They were retired from the days of logging with horses and steam," Philbrick said. "As a kid, they were fun to visit with, they could tell you about the old days of logging."

It was during this time he met Dave Sverko, a cowboy and a cat skinner that knew everything about horses. He taught Philbrick how to shoe and raise a horse.

"Every kid should get a chance to meet a mentor like Dave Sverko in their life," Jerry said.

When Jerry caught pneumonia four years ago, he got a visit from Dave's son Smokey and the two were

able to reunite and talk about Dave.

Jerry's father Donald owned a saw mill, but it burnt down so he moved out into the woods and logged. Jerry started out setting chokers for his dad Donald.

Along with logging, Philbrick worked at a few other jobs while getting involved in the rodeo circuit and ranching life.

"I'm a big animal person, I've always had a dog all my life," Philbrick said. "Horses and dogs, you lean on them quite a bit. It's a great feeling seeing them obey you or work for you."

Philbrick competed in rodeo for about 12 years, but he said making long trips, getting home late all beat up from the events and then waking up early in the morning to go to work got a little long in the tooth. Philbrick rode bulls and got pretty beat up doing that. One time he had the bull hit his jaw and broke it. When he returned to work he couldn't talk and his fellow CAT operator said it was the best

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See "Philbrick"



BIG LOG

Driver Bud Turney watches as Antone Schlafer's John Deere 2054 log loader gently handles this nice sized log. You can see they had the grapples full so they were being very careful loading Philbrick's 2016 Freightliner.

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MARCH 2018

LOG TRUCKER

week of work he had. Since going to rodeos meant trips of 200-300 miles one way, he stepped away from the circuit.

In 1961, he bought his first log truck and began hauling for his dad's logging company. Along with John Strauss, Philbrick helped log some ranch timberland where Strauss would fall and skid the trees while Jerry would load and haul them.

He then hired Raymond Merrit to haul in another truck and then expanded to three trucks.

He also enjoyed opening up country with his John Deere 650G and D6 Cats. He made a point of also focusing on safety on his landings as well. He's happy that he hasn't lost any of his employees out in the woods because of an accident.

About that time his dad passed away, and Philbrick took over the logging and trucking operations. He would eventually move over to Ft. Bragg during this process. He would do work for Union Lumber Company, Georgia Pacific and Boise Cascade. He would also work for MRC before finally selling off his logging side.

Located in Mendocino County, there is a wide range of land and terrain. Home of

the massive Redwoods that make northern California famous, there's also Douglas Fir and Western White Pine to harvest.

"It's definitely Redwood country," Philbrick said. "I remember we would fall trees so big that you would have to saw them in half just to get them on the truck. You had some 20,000-board-foot trees."

While logging, Philbrick would have to use a bladed machine to make layouts or beds for the trees to fall. It was so there would be soft dirt to catch the trees so they wouldn't fall and shatter.

Eventually his company would expand to employ 40 people and three yarders along with nine log trucks. He eventually decided to downsize and simplify his business so a few years ago he sold off his logging sides but kept his trucks, shop and office, along with a loader - because you never know when you'll need one.

Currently he has nine trucks including Peterbilts, Western Stars and Freightliners and two dump trucks. He also has a 1988 International with a 440 Cummins and a 14-speed.

"It was a real nice truck and we're still using it," Philbrick said of the Interna-

(Continued on Page 13)
See "Philbrick"

"It's definitely Redwood country..."

JERRY PHILBRICK



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Philbrick

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tional. "It's a head-turner and it still catches your eye on the road."

Philbrick married in 1962 and had three children, he married again in 1989 to Terri and the two have been together ever since.

"I'm pretty lucky to have a gal like her, she puts up with a guy like me," Philbrick said.

Philbrick lives on the same place his grandpa built in the early 1900s. It's 60 acres and it has its own timberland.

Ranching and logging has been his life, and while he doesn't drive truck anymore, the 65-year veteran of the industry keeps his company running and said there's always something to do.

"There's a lot of work here, but there isn't a lot of trucks," Philbrick said.

When he was still driving, Philbrick said he remembered getting started at 2 a.m. and

sometimes not getting to bed until 10 p.m. "After about four days of that, however, you'd get pretty tired," Philbrick said. "But I loved it."

He's battled through one bad wreck that split his scalp open when he had nowhere to go after a logging road was blocked by two trucks that were stopped because of another wreck on the road.

"We slid about seventy feet," Philbrick said. "I knew the guy in the pickup and he lept up on his seat, and the engine of the truck went into his seat. I asked him if he was okay and he said 'yeah, but I'm not sure about you.' and I looked down and my white shirt was all red from my scalp bleeding."

Philbrick was happy, however, that his truck had minor damage, except for one knocked off fuel tank and a bent fender. He was able to get it into a shop to get repaired in just a day and he was back on the road.

A sheriff tried to write him

up for the accident, but once he went to court, it was thrown out and another law enforcement officer said he did some great driving to save lives on a blocked road.

Like many logging and log trucking companies, finding new help is somewhat hard. Philbrick said he could probably have up to 15 trucks and they still wouldn't meet the demand of the work in the area. There's just not enough trucks and not enough drivers to keep up demand.

To keep his trucks running, he has one mechanic Mario Gonzalez, who works during the winter. That number goes up to 2-3 during the busy part of the summer.

"Mario started for me cleaning trucks and then went to school to be a mechanic," Philbrick said. "He showed back up with about \$15,000 worth of tools and said he wanted to work for me."

Along with Mario, Logan Dunlap and Miguel Lopez also

work on trucks.

In California if it rains, the clay soil gets wet and slick and per regulations, trucks have to stay off non-rocked roads for 48 hours if it rains over a half an inch.

"By that time another storm has rolled in," Philbrick said.

The newest additions to the fleet have been two Freightliner log trucks last year and two new Freightliners this year from Redding Freightliner. He's got another Freightliner coming in April as well.

They're severe duty trucks that are versatile and get the job done.

Philbrick initially saw the new Freightliners and decided he wanted to add some.

"I've never been unhappy with them," Philbrick said. "They have really good engines, good jake brakes, air bag suspensions, cabs that are unbeatable and the visibility is

(Continued on Page 16)
See "Philbrick"

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Lady Log Trucker, Kiah Silveria, drove the 2016 Freightliner in the Labor Day Parade.




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MARCH 2018

LOG TRUCKER

nice with the sloped hoods. You sit up high in them while some guys in other trucks sit so low you can barely see them sit over the wheel."

Philbrick also likes the fuel-efficient Detroit motors on them. All his trucks are long loggers and one turkey rack for short logs in a pinch.

The company currently has eight drivers including 30-year veterans George Whaley and Bud Turney. Larry Salo also recently retired from the company and was a classmate of Philbrick.

With Ft. Bragg near the coast, Philbrick's trucks find their way through the thick underbrush of the coastal forests and the inland forests as well. They typically haul to Ft. Bragg, Scotia, Fortuna, Cloverdale, Eureka and Willits.

Currently his drivers haul for Anderson Logging, Schlafer Logging, Sanchez Logging, Barnet Logging and H&M Logging plus others.

He gets his tires from Les Schwabs and gets his truck parts from Fleet Pride.

In the office, secretary Debbie McCoard keeps the ship in the right direction.

"She's like the sheriff around here and I can't believe I'm so lucky to have her do the job she does," he said.

His son Donald does hauling too. Well... hauling of people as he's an Uber driver in San Francisco.

"He's a hard worker and he did come out and set chokers and work on the yarder but he doesn't do log-

(Continued on Page 18)

See "Philbrick"

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(Continued from Page 16)

ging anymore," Jerry said.

Uber probably has less hauling regulations and there's no lines at the mill.

Daughter Stacy lives in Trout Creek, Montana and works at Trails and Tracks magazine. She's been known to pack a mt. lion out of the brush.

Lindsey is married to a member of the coast guard and has two athletic sons.

Daughter Carla also has five daughters and they have all had boys, so Philbrick gets a kick out the fact that all his great grandkids are boys. Carla also has her Class 1 driver's license and can drive heavy trucks just like her father.

His brother lives in Ukiah, California and and sister in

Covelo.

"I feel really blessed and have a great family," Philbrick said.

Philbrick feels blessed with a lot of things. He felt blessed to be able to log for 65 years and keep pretty busy along the way.

"I guess we did a good job we never left a mess and never stole a log, we worked hard and kept our nose clean," he

said.

Along with that he feels blessed with his employees.

"They work with me instead of work for me and I don't know what I would do if I didn't have these people," Philbrick said. "They're wonderful men and a great group of people."



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