

"THE JOHN TURK STORY"

by Steve Connard

for

CREATIVE WORKS.

Running Time 18 mins

Audience and Intention

John R Turk and Sons is one of the largest privately owned electrical wholesale companies in Australia.

The audience for this video is the staff, selected clients and suppliers that will be present during the company's 21st birthday celebration. Leonard Teale, who had already been engaged as the MC for this event, became the Presenter in the video.

The video's function is to explain to new staff how John Turk created the company, why his style of business was so successful and why his approach should never be forgotten.

The video also is a motivator for staff and an assurance for them that there is a great future with John R Turk and Sons.

VIDEOAUDIO
Part 1

1. Black screen

JOHN'S VOICE SPOKEN BY DAVID TURK
"My satisfied customers are my sales Reps. I don't have to pay them wages or chase them out of the pub."

2.
LEONARD TEALE to camera at outside the branch at Silverwater as Customers arrive.

LEONARD TEALE 100%
The founder of this thriving business and its satisfied customers was an extraordinary man called John Robert Turk.

He was born a battler, with an eye for opportunity and a nose for business. But what separated him from the rest was the way he dealt with people and his love for his fellow man.

2A. TITLE: "THE JOHN TURK STORY" over photo of John.

MUSIC.

3. B&W CUT TO
Old photos of Denman, farmers at work and town traders.
Old Photo of all the children, and John as child.

LEONARD TEALE VO
John Turk was born in 1925 in the Hunter Valley. His parents were struggling share farmers, living on the outskirts of the bustling town of Denman.

John grew up the only child with a crippled leg and stubbed fingers in a family of ten...

4. LEONARD TEALE
to camera at Silverwater.

LEONARD TEALE 100%
John Turk quickly realised that if he were to be self sufficient with his disability, he would have to be one jump ahead of the rest.

5. B&W
Old Photo of John Turk as a teenager.
Old Photos of Denman traders.

LEONARD TEALE VO
So by the time he was ten, John was up at dawn, growing vegetables, trapping rabbits, and busily selling his produce to the townsfolk. If a sheep died, he'd be there before the crows!

6.
LEONARD TEALE to camera.

LEONARD TEALE 100%
His fledgling business quickly grew. John Turk was already doing his apprenticeship in wholesaling.

7. Ext Castle Hill Head office. DISS to shots of other branches, staff.

LEONARD TEALE VO
Later he would go on to create a multimillion dollar business with 23 branches and a staff of 160.

8. B&W
Old photo of Denman
railway station.

LEONARD TEALE VO

At 13 John left Denman and took off
to Sydney in search of a regular job.

9. LEONARD TEALE to
camera at
Silverwater.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

He found a position running messages
at Eric J Gray Electrical Wholesale.

With his extrovert nature, fearless
rapport with people and three years
of selling already behind him, he
quickly established himself as an
extraordinary salesman.

9A. FLASH CUT of
Silverwater Manager
with Customer

LOUD NATURAL SOUNDS OF BUSY BRANCH.

10. B&W
archival interview
SUPER: "Peter
Rheuben" (1.01.40)

PETER RHEUBEN 100%

"He had a good common touch with
people and could mix with people at
all levels and that's what made a big
difference".

10a. FLASH CUT again
-Silverwater Manager

LOUD NATURAL SOUNDS OF BUSY BRANCH

11.
B&W archival
interview.
SUPER:
"Jim Charlton "
(2.10.12)

JIM CHARLTON 100% ?

"He was the greatest salesman that I
have ever seen in me life. Before I
left the building I had an account
with them and I went in for about 2
bobs worth of connectors."

12. B&W
Photo of diggers
going to war.

LEONARD TEALE VO

But the 2nd World War had broken out
and materials were scarce.

13. B&W
Old electrical stock
from Caringbah
collection.

It was difficult for the contractors.
There was always a shortage of
something- someone had cable but no
conduit, or switches with no cable.

14.
LEONARD TEALE to
camera at
Silverwater.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

With his eye for opportunity, John
saw a chance to help these
contractors, and his company.

He began buying off some to sell to
others to complete orders. The
contractors loved him for it, and
Gray's business boomed.

With his product knowledge and
rapport with clients, John felt he
could do more.

15.

B&W

Old photos of John with his car.

LEONARD TEALE VO

So at the age of 21, John began working as commercial traveller between Sydney and Gosford.

16. B&W

Old clients lists or map superimposed with white road lines flashing by ?

LEONARD TEALE 100%

For 25 years, he serviced Gray's customers with an efficiency and reliability they were not used to. He soon became the top traveller in Sydney.

17. B&W

More lists or map and white road lines.

LEONARD TEALE VO:

He relentlessly pursued more new business and his client base swelled!

18.

B & W archival interview

SUPER:

"Peter Rheuben"
(1.00.52)

PETER RHEUBEN 100%

"He built up a rapport with his clients and they stuck to him. When he said that he'd have such and such there on time, he had it there."

19.

B&W

Old photos of John's wedding and the houses they lived in.

LEONARD TEALE VO

In 1948 John married Lois Armour and they moved into a flat in Neutral Bay. When John felt secure enough with his job, they bought a house in Wahroonga and later moved to Pennant Hills.

20.

LEONARD TEALE to camera at Silverwater.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

The responsibilities of a wife, five sons and a daughter fuelled John's wish to create a secure environment for his clan.

21.

B & W Archival interview

SUPER:

"Russell Judd"
(3.54.5)

RUSSEL JUDD 100%

"That was a big thought behind John at all times- my family will be secure!"

22.

B & W archival interview

SUPER: "Lois Turk"

(1.36.14)

LOIS TURK 100%

"He was a very determined person and very sure of himself. I felt secure in the knowledge that I knew he was always going to be a very good provider"

23.

LEONARD TEALE to
c a m e r a a t
Silverwater.
CUT to PAN along
diagrams from old
catalogue of
electrical equip-
ment. DISS in old
map.

24.

B & W a r c h i v a l
interview
"Lois Turk "
(1.48.32)

25.

B&W Old Still
photographs of John
with clients and in
social and sporting
situation.

25A.

B&W Old photos of
John playing sport.

26.

B&W Old photos of
bowlers at Hornsby
Bowling Club.

26A.

CU Trophies that
John won.

26B. B&W DISSolves
of Old photos of
bowlers playing at
Hornsby, John giving
s p e e c h e s ,
participating in
festivities and
entertaining the
children.

27.

B&W a r c h i v a l
interview
SUPER: "Bob Noyes"
(3.00.40)

LEONARD TEALE 100%

He threw himself into his work with
such a passion that by the early
1950's his clientele expanded at an
extraordinary rate.

With John Turk as their middleman,
Eric J Gray became the major supplier
of electrical goods between Sydney
and Gosford.

LOIS TURK 100%

"His mother said he had two sets if
brains. ..Everything he worked at
succeeded.....it was sheer
determination, he was a very, very
forceful man.

LEONARD TEALE VO

As John's clientele increased, so did
his confidence and he was persuaded
to take up a sport, something that he
previously thought impossible with
his disability.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

He chose carefully. Whatever he did,
he had to excel at- despite his
affliction.

LEONARD TEALE VO

He decided upon snooker and lawn
bowls and having made that decision,
John learnt these games with the same
fierce determination to succeed.

And succeed he did, winning many
bowling trophies in his early 20's.
Again, John had set a goal...and
achieved it.

In this social environment, John
again displayed his wonderful
people skills.
He delighted in ad-libbing poetry,
playing the commoner,
and clowning with the children at
Christmas.

MIX IN FX OF CHILDREN'S PARTY.

BOB NOYES 100%

"John was a magnificent talker, a
great teller of stories, one of the
great people mixers, John could mix
with people from any walk of life..."

28. B&W
Old photos of John
residing and giving
speeches.

B&W
New footage of
tournament team
photo.

29.
B & W archival
interview
SUPER: "Peter
Rheuben", (1.02.45)

30.
LEONARD TEALE to
camera at
Silverwater.

31.
Bowlers playing
poker machines at
Hornsby Bowling
Club.

32. B&W archival
interview
SUPER: "Lois Turk"
(01.42.01)

33.
LEONARD TEALE at
Silver-water. He
watches one of the
staff piling empty
beer cans into a
box.

LEONARD TEALE to
camera.

34. B&W
Old photos of
festivities at
Hornsby Bowling
Club.

LEONARD TEALE VO

In 1958 at the age of 33, John became
president of the Hornsby Bowling
Club.

By 1966 John was a major force in
bowls. He became a selector for the
NSW Bowling Association and hosted
the Rhodesian Team for the World
Tournament.

PETER RHEUBEN 100%

"You wouldn't get a better tournament
organiser than him."

LEONARD TEALE 100%

No matter what he did, John Turk did
it well!

LEONARD TEALE VO

During his presidency at the club, he
took a controversial stance in
banning two shilling poker machines
when spouses complained of their
husbands losing their wages.

LOIS TURK

"He really objected to people wasting
their money."

LEONARD TEALE 100%

What are these for?

STAFF 100%

These...they go to charity.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

For John Turk, wasting money and not
being able to provide for those under
one's care, was almost a crime. He
was also very conscious of the less
fortunate and other people's
suffering.

LEONARD TEALE VO

During his bowling presidency, John
saw an opportunity to raise some
money for charity and he introduced
the annual Electrical Trades Bowling
Day.

35.
Hornsby hospital and
the John Turk
lounge.
CU Name of Lounge.

LEONARD TEALE VO
Hornsby Hospital was the chief
benefactor and John's endless
charitability led to the naming of
the John Turk Lounge at the hospital.

Part 2

36. Leonard TEALE to
c a m e r a a t
Silverwater LEONARD TEALE 100%
In 1971 Eric J Gray sold out to
Telcon Electrical. John realised that
he would probably lose 32 years of
business contacts. Those clients were
his family's livelihood.
37. B&W
Old photo of
original premises. LEONARD TEALE VO
So John decided to go it alone and
began trading himself from his first
branch in Whiting St, Artarmon.
38. Leonard TEALE to
c a m e r a a t
Silverwater LEONARD TEALE 100%
John announced the opening with
hundreds of letters and followed it
up by a personal phone call. He knew
that personal touch was important.

The family of course did the entire
shop fitout. After all, that's what
his family was for, weren't they?
39. Customers and staff
at Silverwater. LEONARD TEALE VO
This first branch was initially very
different from the current outlets.
- 39A. B&W Archival
interview TERRY TURK 100%
SUPER: "Terry Turk "
(3.56.18)
"There was no shelving... no where to
put anything. All the bakelite was on
the floor. His counter was a desk
with a phone on it, no cash register,
there was a card board box with what
cash there was.... "
40. CU Staff picking up
phone and searching
for stock on
computer. LEONARD TEALE VO
Like today, the telephone was his
lifeline....
41. Black screen. JOHN'S VOICE SPOKEN BY DAVID TURK
Now listen to me, those phones aren't
to ring any more than three times".
42. The Manager
having a beer and a
Sao with a Customer. LEONARD TEALE VO
And the Sao biscuits were his PR.

43.
Black screen.

JOHN'S VOICE SPOKEN BY DAVID TURK)

"I ask a bloke in for a cup of coffee and we've got no Sao biscuits! No Saos! Go down to the shop and get some Saos and some vegemite."

44.
LEONARD TEALE to
c a m e r a a t
Silverwater.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

The image was rough, but the stock and service quickly became the attraction to many.

45.
Contractors arriving
at Silverwater with
their orders.

LEONARD TEALE VO

He knew that the contractors required unusual items and that they were not being adequately serviced by the big national companies.

He focused on this group and believed that his reputation for stock and service would win their loyalty.

46.
Leonard TEALE to
c a m e r a a t
Silverwater

LEONARD TEALE 100%

Only when he was sure that the business could offer security did he bring his eldest son, Robert into the company.

Robert was soon to discover what a day in the life of John Turk was about!

47.
Black screen.

(JOHN'S VOICE SPOKEN BY DAVID TURK)

"It's not the hours you put in to the day, it's what you put into the hours!"

48. B&W Archival
interview
SUPER: "Robert Turk"
(2nd tape 00.23.02.)

ROBERT TURK 100%

"Dad got up with the fowls and wanted everybody else to be with them too..."

49.
H I G H S P E E D .
Silverwater Manager
opening up the
branch.
Manager on the
phone.

LEONARD TEALE VO

They would arrive at work at 5.30 most mornings to ring contractors for orders before they got out of bed and before the first customer walked in the door.

50. HIGH SPEED
Staff serving staff
as a sandwich and
c o f f e e l i e
untouched.

Lunch was on the run....

51.
HIGH SPEED closing
up the branch.

52. M a n a g e r
collapsing on his
car bonnet.

53.
LEONARD TEALE to
c a m e r a a t
Silverwater.

54. HIGH SPEED Staff
at Silverwater
working frantically.

55.
B&W.
CU Old Photo of his
desk.?

56. B&W
archival interview
SUPER: "Gail May"
(1.10.16)

57. B&W archival
interview
SUPER: "David Turk,
Executive Director"
(4.18.48.)

CUT TO Staff doing
non sales work eg
sweeping floor,
stacking shelves
etc.

58. B&W archival
interview
SUPER: "Peter May"
(1.15.54)

FLASH CUT of
branches and
trading.

LEONARD TEALE VO

...and the doors would close at
7.00pm when the evening delivery run
would begin.

Thirteen hours days were common. For
John, there was no substitute for
hard work.

LEONARD TEALE 100%

When his business grew and he knew
that there was a future for them, he
invited three more of his sons to the
business.

Stephen, Gregory and David and son-
in-law, Peter May then got their
lesson on how to run a Turk business.

LOUD NATURAL SOUND FX

LEONARD TEALE VO

His daughter Gail held the fort in
the office and tried in vain to
organise his escalating paper work.

GAIL MAY 100% "Piles of it on his
desk and I always used to go down and
sort it out and he went crook cause I
sorted it out neat and tidy".

DAVID TURK 100%

"Dad's style was to get up and go and
you were to show initiative, ... in
not standing around doing nothing,
but initiative to get up and get
stuck into your job and if something
needed doing, whether it be cleaning
the toilets out or ringing a customer
chasing some money or ringing a
customer to try an get an order out
of the guy....

PETER MAY 100%

Even in those early days I could see
that it was going to be a company of
the future.

LOUD NATURAL SOUND FX