



OPERATOR



February 2009 Edition

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2008 Charity Golf day - Winning team ABS - John, Bob and Les. More on page 4



Qld "Operators of the Year" 2008. Read all about them on page 7



Luxury Gazebo at Brunos Ocean Lodge in WA. More on page 5

From the EO's Desk

After a bit of a break for Xmas, the WIOA team has returned refreshed and raring to go for 2009.

When lots of other organisations gradually wind up into the New Year, January and February have now turned into really busy months for WIOA. As usual, we have sent out membership renewal notices to all Individual and Corporate members. Our thanks are extended to Royce Water Technologies who have generously offered a coffee making machine valued at nearly \$4000 which will be awarded to one lucky Individual member who pays their 2009 fee before 27 March 2009. Make sure you pay your fees early – that will automatically get you into the draw to have a chance to win the coffee machine.

The books have all been audited and our 2008 Annual Report and Members Information booklet has also recently been distributed along with the Committee Nomination forms and notice of the AGM. The program and rego forms for the Weekend Seminar and AGM in Lakes Entrance on 14-15 March have been distributed. Remember to return your form quickly, as places at this free event are limited to the first fifty members who register.

Preparations are well under way for our three conferences in 2009 kicking off in Tamworth in the first week of April. Tamworth Regional Council has confirmed their involvement as Hosts and Major Sponsors and they have been fantastic with their support thus far. We look forward to working with them to deliver a bumper event.

We are excited to report that Rad-tel Systems, ITT Water and Wastewater, Acromet Australia and ABS Wastewater Technology have signed on as Prime Sponsors for all the 2009 events. There have been a number of other companies that have taken up options to sponsor all three events and a few have taken just one event. We really do appreciate the support and commitment of all these companies and trust that our members will consider them when undertaking works or purchasing products.

The papers program has been finalised for Tamworth and the delegate registration forms are being distributed right now. More copies are available from WIOA or via our website. Thanks to all those people who chased up potential presenters or gave us tips on who we should talk to. There are a couple of notable additions to the NSW event this year. On Tuesday 31 March we'll be holding a one day seminar covering the "Operation and Optimisation of Media Filters". The presenters - Peter Mosse and Bruce Murray, really know their stuff and reports from delegates at past events are that they learned heaps by attending. The other addition is that of a papers stream dedicated entirely to training related issues. There are a couple of presentations from Government Skills Australia followed immediately by an open forum session of around 30mins to discuss any specific training related issues. There will also be an opportunity to continue discussions into the afternoon, if not everything gets covered. We invite all WIOA NSW members to alert their HR or training managers about this important session and to invite them to come along and participate.

The trade exhibition is also filling fast with well over 90 booths allocated in just the first two weeks. All up there are 129 booths and based on past events it looks like the expo might be a sell out yet again. There are heaps of other details about the conference on the WIOA website- http://www.wioa.org.au/nsw_conference/index.htm. If any member, either Individual or Corporate, could help distribute the delegate rego forms around NSW, please let us know and we'll send some copies out.

With organisation of the NSW event running pretty well to plan, we can now move our attention straight over to the Qld event in Caloundra in

June. The Call for Papers closes in early March and we need quite a few more operator abstracts yet. We'd love to hear about issues in your area so once again, if you know of someone or an organisation that has done some good work, let us know and we'll approach them. Whilst on the Qld event, we look forward to working with our friends at Sunshine Coast Water in June.

The writing of the fifth Operator resource guide covering "Disinfection" issues is progressing well. It is anticipated that it will be released in early March 2009. Once this book is finished, we will more than likely get under way in producing a similar range of books covering wastewater treatment issues.

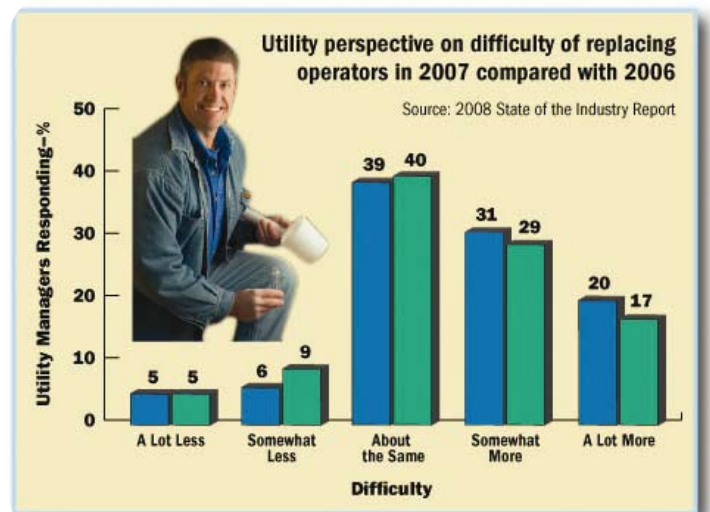
Finally, for some time WIOA has been very busily investigating and discussing the possibilities for the development and implementation of an Operator Certification scheme. We believe that there is ample scope for such a scheme and its successful implementation will bring a number of benefits to the water industry and all the participating operational staff. The main thrust of the Scheme is that to qualify to be "Certified", operational staff must have a minimum of a Certificate III in water operations, with all the appropriate Units of Competence for the particular role completed. To maintain Certified status, an appropriate amount of "professional or skills development" training and refresher points must be obtained in a set period of time. There is a wide range of activities which will be eligible for points and the key to the system is to ensure that all operators actively pursue "excellence" in their level of knowledge and how it is implemented in the workplace. The system is about to be trialled in Victoria in conjunction with the Department of Human Services through the adoption of a "Code of Practice for Water Treatment Operator Competencies". We'll keep Members informed about how this is going and on any future developments in due course.

Until next time,

George Wall
Executive Officer WIOA

Difficulty replacing operators

Members may find the following chart of interest. It appeared in a recent edition of the US AWWA Newsletter - Streamlines. If Australia is following the US trend then skilled Operators are most likely getting harder to find!



Source: AWWA Streamlines Newsletter: Infrastructure Stimulus dated 7 January 2009
American Water Works Association
6666 West Quincy Avenue Denver, CO 80235-3098

Profile of a Member

WIOA would like to welcome one of our newest members. We took the opportunity to learn more about David and Hope Vale, Queensland.

Name

David Barrett

Position

Water Sewerage Manager

Employer & Location

Hopevale Shire Council, 46km North of Cooktown or 346km north of Cairns



How long have you worked in the water industry and where?

Been a plumber all my life, since 15 when I started my apprenticeship. I've mainly been self employed until the 1990's. Went back to Victoria for a stint then travelled back north. Worked at Mornington Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Now I've been at Hope Vale for about two years.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I report directly to the CEO. There is no middle management. I am a bit of a control freak – like being in charge of the whole lot! There are 1200 people in the community..

How did you get into your current role?

Cultivated a friendship with a guy in Natural Resources who told me about the position.

How long have you been a WIOA member?

3 weeks. Heard about WIOA through my friend in Natural Resources and he mentioned that it would be good to get involved. It's difficult to get good information up here. You have to look for information to help you with your job.

What does your current job involve?

There are two plumbing apprentices and an experienced TA who can find any pipe or valve in the place. There was a major upgrade in 2001 and the water system is now all computerised. I deal with local consultants and just completed some training and hope

to get my Cert III soon. Water testing became mandatory on 1 Jan but getting information up here is hard – we're still waiting. Since I've been here I've been putting procedures in place – sharing information is the key and make things easy to find – I'm a lazy person the more procedure put in place the less I have to do

What have been some of the big changes in recent years?

Long overdue - new legislation for water testing has just become mandatory. Have worked in indigenous communities – good that now things are coming in place but taken too long. Need to keep following up on the people I train to ensure that things are being kept up. I see my job as a trainer to ensure that systems are kept in place.

Ok, a few quick questions to finish

Age:61

Nickname: Pelican

Family Status: Married

Pets: Dog that thinks she's a human

Favourite food: Pasta

Least favourite food: No food I don't like

Favourite TV show: Top Gear

Worst TV show: Don't watch them if I hate them!

Current CD in stereo: Queen, David Hobson

Favourite book: Any adventure type story

Ambition in life: Just to be happy

Hobbies: Fishing, 4 wheel drive, anything outdoors

Best Trait: Like training side of things. Making things happen – 'Can do' person!

Worst Trait: Get a bit cranky – low tolerance of fools!

Four people to invite to a BBQ: David Green, Valentino Rossi, Jennifer Hawkins, Wayne Bennett

Membership Draw

In 2009 we are pleased to announce a fabulous additional benefit from being a WIOA member. WIOA corporate member Royce Water Technologies has generously donated a Jura coffee machine valued at \$3,895 which will be given to one lucky financial Individual member.

Renew your Individual membership or join as a new member and pay by 27 March 2009 to be in the draw for a Jura Imprezza Z5 Aluminium coffee machine. Go to www.wioa.org.au to find out more or call the office.

Reminder: pay your membership to be in the draw



WIOA Charity Golf Day 2008

Major sponsors



Gold sponsors



Silver sponsors



There was an impressive turn out to our 10th annual charity golf day in October 2008. We played again at Kilmore and our thanks are extended to Taylor, Kevin and the crew at the Kilmore Golf Club for putting on a fabulous lunch and assisting in the running of the day. The 2008 winners of the Tradies Cup were: ABS WasteWater Technology with an impressive score of 63 less 10.3 handicap for net 52.7 which will be difficult to beat in the future. The runners up were the team from North East Water. Our other winners were; Nearest the pin - Bob Malone, Jason Shaw, Dave Aitken, Brad Heyme & Tim Keegel; Longest drive - Wayne Degering & Gary Swift. Congratulations to all our winners.

To liven things up for our 10th birthday we gave out some lolly bags to boost players' energy levels but to receive a bag each player had to complete a challenge. We had grown men waddling and quacking like ducks, yelling their passionate love of other players, howling like wolves or saying three times fast, one of WIOA's previous names: the "Wastewater Purification Plant Superintendent and Operators Association" amongst other things!

Our warmest thanks are extended to all our valued sponsors for donating money and prizes to the day. It is rare for anyone to walk away from the golf day without a prize! The proceeds from the 2008 event will be donated to a deserving charity at our 2009 September conference. To date we have now raised \$22,000. We look forward to sharing the 2009 golf day with you – look out for the date which will be announced later in the year.



Golf day - Barry Waddell setting the rules for the day



Golf day - Runners up - North East Water Team



Golf day - Winners of the 10th birthday surprise packs

Distribution of Charity Proceeds

Year	\$ Donated	Recipient
1999	\$ 500	Lindoch Warrnambool
2000	\$ 850	United Way Geelong
2001	\$ 1,500	Camp Quality Bendigo
2002	\$ 1,900	Tonkin Family Appeal Relay for Life – Anti Cancer
2003	\$ 3,000	Albury Wodonga Diabetic Kids Camp
2004	\$ 3,500	Tsunami Appeal – Assisi Aid Projects Bendigo Health Care
2005	\$ 3,000	Cystic Fibrosis Bendigo State Emergency Service
2006	\$ 3,900	Cystic Fibrosis Bendigo State Emergency Service Camp Quality (Qld)
2007	\$ 4,100	Cystic Fibrosis (Vic) Red Cross (Qld) Dubbo Rescue Squad (NSW)
2008	\$ 4,000	Christmas Party for Special Children (Albury branch) Hunter Region Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service (NSW) Teenage Adventure Camps – (Qld)
TOTAL	\$26,250	Recipients are announced at the WIOA Annual Conferences & Workshop in Vic, NSW & Qld

Life as a Trainer in WA

Editors Note: The following article was sent to us by Rob Namestnik who does most of the water industry training in WA on behalf of Water Corporation.

I thought I would share with you and your members the things that we must face when travelling around Australia to deliver training. There is a critical shortage of adequate accommodation in the North West of WA due to the current mining boom - in this case, in Port Hedland.

It was after sunset when I arrived and I could not find any premises with the name Bruno's Ocean Lodge (very dark, no lights and no signage). I needed help from the barmaids at the local pub to point me in the right direction. In fact, I had passed the premises three times and did not recognise it as a place fit for human habitation (at least not from the street front view).



Street view of Brunos lodge

The owner/manager was not on site when I arrived - I was helped by one of the Lodge's occupants.



Dongle at rear - my room, extreme left (top security - spare keys for each room kept in an open meter box at all times) I used a chair wedged against the door for extra security at night.

The Lodge was the only accommodation that could be found for me, even though the booking was made about 6 weeks prior to the training session. The lodge had been hit by several cyclones earlier in the year and no effort had been made to make any repairs.

I believe that it has now been bulldozed out of existence.



The ore carrier that woke me on Friday morning around 1.00 am at high tide as it was manoeuvred by tugs out of port - sounded like the tugs were in my room.

Overall it wasn't that bad, (better than no accommodation) and the room was clean.

Rob Namestnik

Christmas 2009! Charity donations.

Even though Christmas 2009 is the last thing on our minds right now, it is worthwhile to note that many companies and individuals now choose to donate money to charities instead of sending Christmas cards or buying gifts. Noel Stewart from MJK sent us a quick note to utilise our WIOA network and urge WIOA corporate supporters to consider doing the same in 2009 and WIOA believe it is a very good point worth consideration.

There are many local, national and international charities that rely on the generosity of the public to continue offering their services to those in need. It's not too early to identify that charity now that your company decides to support in 2009.

WIOA would like to take this suggestion one step further. As most of our members would know, WIOA holds an annual charity golf day in Victoria and sells caps at our various events. We donate the proceeds from these activities to a charity at each of our three conferences as nominated by the conference Host.

If WIOA corporate supporters are interested in directly supporting the water industry, WIOA could collect donations and add this amount to our own contributions. This would make a larger impact on the areas that we visit for each conference and each participating company would be assisting charities over three states.

An alternative is that WIOA could work with one of the many NGO charity organisations such as Oxfam, Red Cross, Water Aid or others to establish an aid program overseas specifically designed to improve water supply and sanitation services in an underprivileged country.

Recognition of any donations provided can be made on our website, in our conference books and at our various Conference Awards Dinners. WIOA will develop an e-mail Christmas card that can be used by all participating companies.



So why not give back to the water industry! Send an email to Cynthia (Cynthia@wioa.org.au) if you wish to participate in 2009.

Pictured here is a supplier that went that extra distance over Christmas and dressed up as Santa. Do you know who it is? (Answer on back page)

GSA News - National Learning Resources Project

WIOA Update January 2009

The project is proceeding in accordance with contract timelines. Following is an update on key components of the project.

Certificate II

Resource materials have now been developed for the majority of units in the Certificate II Water Industry Operations qualification.

Originally, it had been intended that resource material development would be complete by the end of December 2008, however, resource materials are still being developed for several units. This delay is the result of a couple of unforeseen circumstances.

The process for completion of resource materials is as follows:

- Technical Writers complete draft resource materials;
- Draft resource materials are posted on the GSA website for review by registered Technical Review Group members;
- Feedback and comments from Technical Review Group members are evaluated by Technical Writers and changes made;
- Resource materials are submitted in Final Version;
- Resource materials are submitted to Editor and Proof Reader for review, and changes incorporated where appropriate;
- The next stage is to conduct quality assurance of all Learner Guides to ensure that materials meet; underpinning knowledge and skills, performance criteria and range statement requirements, of the corresponding unit; and
- The final stage in the process involves a Desktop Publisher taking resource materials through a Post Production exercise, to ensure consistent and suitable look and feel. This process also ensures resource materials can be customised.

The process outlined above will also be utilised for all resource materials developed for Certificate III and IV.

So, taking into account the development and production process, along with delays experienced in development of some resource materials, we expect resource material to be available to the industry, in their entirety, by early March 2009.

Certificate III and IV

Technical Writers have been contracted to develop resource materials for the majority of Certificate III and IV units. We are currently sourcing several others to round out the Technical Writer team.

The majority of Certificate III resource materials will be completed by June 30, 2009, however, due to the sheer number of treatment units, treatment resources will be complete by August 31, 2009.

Certificate IV resource materials will be completed by September 30, 2009.

Technical Review Panels

The Technical Review process for Certificate II resource materials did not achieve the level of activity and feedback we had anticipated.

We remain heavily reliant on utilising; subject matter experts, operations personnel, supervisors, training and assessment practitioners, to conduct a technical review of Certificate III and IV draft resource materials.

This is to ensure currency of terminology, accuracy of content, as well as, confirming content is relevant to industry practice and is not redundant.

Again, we strongly encourage WIOA members to participate in the review of resource materials. You can review as many, or as few materials, as time and expertise permits.

If you can also encourage your workmates and network of contacts to participate, that would be of great benefit.

If you, or any of your contacts, are willing to participate in the review process, or if you are interested in registering as a Technical Reviewer please contact Wayne Morling either by email wayne.morling@bigpond.com or phone on 0419 804 734.

Wayne Morling

Manager National Learning Resource Project - GSA

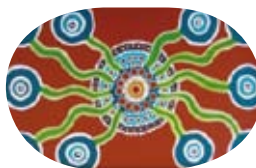
The Kwayte (Water) Prize open for 2009

WIOA and Environmental & Process Technologies (a division of Biolab Aust.) encourage all people in the water industry to consider applying for this prize. Up to \$6000 is available to make your idea a reality. All ideas and projects will be considered. The rewards are fantastic personally and for the water industry overall. Visit the WIOA website www.wioa.org.au to download an application form.

What our previous winners have to say....

2007 Winner
Graham Thomson
Sewer blockages due to tree root intrusions are a big issue in my job. Undertaking the project has provided opportunities, knowledge, networks & great personal satisfaction!

2006 Winner
Anthony Evans
Kwayte allowed me to gain a knowledge of the methods used to track water loss & implement changes in my workplace & at home.



2005 Winner
Eddy Ostarcevic
My project allowed me to travel around the world and investigate: "How do other water businesses use Nanofiltration membranes as 21st century colour & organic carbon removal solutions?"

2008 Qld Operator of the Year

In early 2008 employers/employees were invited to nominate operators from their organisations to be considered for the 2008 AWA Queensland "Leon Henry Operator of the Year Award". Nominees could come from all operations staff from the water and waste water industry in recognition of team work, initiative, attitude, reliability, environment and safety. Several nominations were received by the Queensland Branch of AWA and they were all of a very high standard. It was good to see that a nomination was also received from North Queensland for the first time. After much deliberation two nominees could not be split and John Paulger, Toowoomba Regional Council and Ian Cuthbertson, Redland Water & Waste were chosen as the joint 2008 winners. The presentation was made at the WIOA conference on the Gold Coast.



The joint winners of the 2008 Qld operator of the year Ian Cuthbertson (L) and John Paulger (R) with Don Mackay

John Paulger is responsible for the operation of the Wetalla Water Reclamation Plant. This plant is an advanced Biological Nitrogen and Phosphorus Reduction Plant with a capacity of approximately 240,000 EP. Prior to the decommissioning of the Stage 3 plant, Wetalla had been the second largest point source of nitrogen in the Murray Darling Basin. It now ranks seventh as a point source and contributes less than 0.02% of the nitrogen load. For phosphorus, the plant has gone from the largest single point source to 14th largest behind many smaller towns. This level of performance is achieved without any chemical back up for nitrogen or phosphorus removal at the plant. John has been instrumental in optimising the plant to achieve exceptional performance with very high influent nutrient concentrations (generally twice that of domestic sewage) due to a large trade waste component.

The appearance of the plant is extremely good and it is difficult to believe that the Stage 4 plant is now over 10 years old. The plant is very tidy and the grounds well kept.

Ian Cuthbertson joined Redland Council after leaving the Australian navy as a Marine Engineer, he completed his Certificate in Water Treatment Plant Operations with Distinctions and was appointed Shift Operator at the Capalaba Water Treatment Plant. Since that time he has been challenged by a number of significant process changes at the plant and at all times has ensured that the water quality objectives have been met or improved upon throughout this long period of service. Ian has throughout exhibited a significant capacity for analytical thought

and is exceedingly good at problem resolution at the plant, an attribute we all respect and admire.

Ian has also been appointed the Redland Water OH&S representative and has ensured that all council staff not only have access to the required safety equipment but have been adequately trained in its use, much of which he does himself. He is now also responsible for OH&S audits within Council treatment facilities and this has contributed to an increasing awareness of OH&S issues amongst all treatment staff.

As Senior Operator Ian has taken upon himself the role of Mentor to all beginning operational staff and is an effective teacher of the core attributes required of these personnel. He has also contributed over many years to the State wide development of Operators at OLI (now Skillstech) by taking a leading role in conducting plant visits and knowledge transfer at Redlands sites and in doing so instilling in trainees both the operational and attitudinal knowledge required as a foundation for their future career. He has also been active in pursuing the workplace interests of Operators through being their representative in Enterprise Bargaining negotiations with Council and their various Local Area Agreements.

Mick O'Hanlon, Supervisor at Redlands has stated "Ian's greatest triumph was when the Water Treatment Plant at Stradbroke Island burnt to the ground. He worked extremely long hours to keep Capalaba WTP operating 24 hours a day and at the same time ensuring the recovery staff at Herring Bone Lagoon WTW had all the resources needed to bring the bore operation system back to life. This was no mean feat as the Leslie Harrison Dam had a Blue Green algae bloom and the plant was at half capacity due to the size of the PAC plant. Ian was using manual and telemetry control to divert water to areas which were in danger of running out of water while trying to cope with management demands." He added "If there was fire, flood earthquake or cyclone I would have no hesitation jumping in the trenches with Ian".

Information about the nomination process for the 2009 award will be available early in the new year and will be forwarded to everyone but if you want to ensure that you receive the information please contact Kathy Bourbon by email awaq@bigpond.net.au.

The Lighter Side

International Signs



There are backhoes and then there are backhoes.....!

Backhoes are the real workhorse of our section and are predominantly used for water mains repairs, pipeline work and other odd jobs. The main things we look for in a backhoe loader is their ease of serviceability, maintenance and accessibility to spare parts. For us backhoes must be easily transported on a trailer for jobs in outlying centres. Some backhoes provide an advantage over others in the capability of high ground speeds, enabling them to move quickly between jobs which are closer in the town.

Other features we look for are power to perform rigorous loading work at low revs and low speeds and to climb steep gradients. The backhoe must be a powerful, self –levelling loader with high lift capacity and breakout forces to maintain the load level during raising and lowering cycles.

Floating front buckets provide stability control which is ideal for rough terrain jobs, ensuring a smooth ride over railway lines and other ground obstacles.



Goulburn Valley Water have been operating six JCB backhoes since the 1980's and this is mainly due to costs however there are many features we deem to be important to get the job done quickly and safely are also a consideration. The newest model recently added to our fleet, the model 3CX, incorporates JCB's Precision Control System which allows the operator to use the controls in whichever direction they are facing meaning the machine is very user-friendly and accurate in its tasks. This assists us with training of operators who have had experience in using other types of plant.

Summary of an article recently published in the Australian Equipment Guide 2009

David Heritage

Works Co-ordinator, Goulburn Valley Water, Shepparton Vic

New Members

Welcome to the following people and companies who have recently joined our Association as a Member or Corporate Supporter.

New Individual Members include

Micah Pendergast, Neill Cremins, Neville Chapman, Peter Kitney, Glen Rowlands, Michele Flick, Steve Webb, Matthew Stewart, Uri Lan, Colin MacKay, Rhonda Bostock, David Barrett, Tim Rodman.

New Corporate Members include

Sperian Protection Australia, Rylson Pty Ltd, Vic Pits, Research Laboratory Services, Clearbore, Franklin Electric.

From page 7: Who is Santa?

None other than Brian Mc Carthy from MJK Automation.

Coming Events - 2009

- 14-15 March** WIOA AGM & Weekend Seminar, Lakes Entrance
- 27 March** Last date to pay Membership fees to be in the Royce coffee machine draw
- 31 March** Media Filters Seminar, Tamworth
- 31 March to 2 April** 3rd Annual WIOA NSW Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference, Tamworth
- 13 to 15 May** WIOG NZ conference, Dunedin
- 16 June** Distribution System Optimisation Seminar, Caloundra
- 16 to 18 June** 34th Qld Water Industry Operations Workshop, Caloundra
- 1 to 3 Sept** 72nd Annual Victorian Engineers and Operators Conference, Bendigo

2008 Office Bearers & Committee

President

Peter Tolsher
Phone (02) 6059 5726
Mobile 0419 337 151

Vice President

Anthony Evans
Phone (03) 5564 7608
Mobile 0419 103 885

Executive Officer

George Wall
Phone (03) 5821 6744
Mobile 0407 846 001

Committee

Barry Waddell

Phone (03) 5152 4221
Mobile 0419 878 085

John Harris

Phone (03) 5562 9275
Mobile 0417 338 688

Stephen Wilson

Phone (03) 5244 0800

Russell Mack

Phone (03) 5177 4659
Mobile 0427 331 586

Tony Davies

Phone (03) 5483 7625
Mobile 0428 694 012

Graham Thomson

Phone (03) 5226 9109
Mobile 0408 993 756

John Day

Mobile 0409 959 841

Peta Thiel

Phone (03) 9437 2600
Mobile 0419 765 189

Next Edition

Article Contribution Deadline for the May 2009 Edition **April 17 2009.**

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Editor
PO Box 6012,
SHEPPARTON, VIC. 3632
or email: Cynthia@wioa.org.au
Website: www.wioa.org.au

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