



# OPERATOR

May 2008 Edition

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All the Aussie Tourists at the Morrinsville WTP. Read more about the tour - pages 5-7.



Anthony Burrell from AWMA showing off their penstocks at the weekend seminar. Full report page 4



Meet our newest idiots - Ian Bicknell (far left) and Owen Braybrook. More on page 8

## From the EO's Desk

Since producing the last edition of Operator in February we've been kept very busy in the WIOA office.

The Weekend Seminar and AGM at the Warrenmang Winery Resort in Moonambel in March was heaps of fun as usual, and there were some really excellent presentations this year. A new initiative – the open discussion forum on water treatment issues was described by many as the highlight of the event. Our congratulations are extended to Neil Healey for chairing the session and keeping everyone contributing. A report on the event by Kristy Bourke appears on Page 4 of this edition and there is also some information on the newest batch of "IDIOTS".

WIOA in conjunction with our Technical Advisor Peter Mosse, have continued to lobby for the introduction of a treatment plant rating system similar to that in place in the US, Canada and New Zealand. In conjunction with the plant rating system, WIOA has also been pushing for the implementation of an Accreditation/Licensing system for operators. Once implemented and operational, this scheme will provide a positive mechanism to help increase the level of skills and competence of operators across the board. An additional benefit is that it should also provide expanded career opportunities for all operations staff. We are now working with Regulators in Victoria to develop such a system and we hope to have something ready to report to everyone at the Bendigo Conference in September.

In April we staged our second New South Wales Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference in Newcastle. A full report on the Conference and all the prize winners appears on Page 10. I want to pass on our sincere thanks to all the helpers from the WIOA Committee, many of whom took annual leave to attend, and also to thank Ron, Tony, Pat, Stephen and Ian who assisted us to run this event. We'll be sorting out the venue for the 2009 event in the next couple of months with last week in April or first week in May the likely date.

We were very excited about the distribution of the third book in our series of Practical Guides – "Practical Guide to the Optimisation of Chemical Dosing, Coagulation, Flocculation and Clarification". Unfortunately, all the chapter and page headings mysteriously disappeared from the printed copies. The books have been reprinted and replacement copies have been mailed to everyone that ordered them. In the interest of maintaining quality, we ask that all previously supplied copies (those without the chapter and page headers at the top) be destroyed. An Order form/Tax Invoice for the Chemical Dosing Guide and the previously released "Filters" and "Distribution" books, can be downloaded from the WIOA website. Remember, each book is only \$30 + GST and they are a great resource to have in your treatment plant library.

Writing of the fourth book in the series – "Practical Guide to Understanding and Managing Surface Water Catchments" is proceeding well and it is planned to be released soon. A fifth edition on Disinfection issues is also well under way and we hope to release it early in the second half of this year.

In relation to training issues, a few representatives of the GSA Water Industry Advisory Committee met with our counterparts in New Zealand at the WIOG conference recently to discuss the possibility of developing a system to allow the recognition of qualifications

either way across the Tasman. There was support in principle for such a system but obviously some mapping of the each qualification against the other will be required. WIOA has asked to be kept in the loop on any discussions in this regard and we'll report more on this in the future. As part of the continual improvement process for our qualifications, the proposed changes to the water and wastewater treatment units at Certificate IV level have been posted to the GSA website for comment. Comments can be sent by email to Prue Madsen at GSA - [prue.madsen@governmentskills.com.au](mailto:prue.madsen@governmentskills.com.au) and should be sent by 10 June 2008.

In mentioning New Zealand, the Operators tour of the North island followed by the WIOG NZ conference in early May 2008 was a resounding success. We asked one of the tour Members in Jason Whittaker from Goulburn Valley Water in Victoria to pen a few lines for the Newsletter. Once Jason got going there was no stopping him. As we had plenty of space in this issue, we have decided to print his whole report. Obviously you had to be there to fully appreciate some of it, but I'm sure the other tour members will get a laugh. It is also a good insight to the success of the trip for everyone else – enjoy.

The final item to report on is the planning for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Queensland Water Industry Operations Workshop to be held at the Carrara Indoor Sports Stadium on the Gold Coast from 3-5 June 2008. We have had a staggering response to the Trade Exhibition with all 119 available sites allocated to exhibitors and once again we have a waiting list of companies. The most important thing now is for all Members to lobby your respective employers to make sure they send representatives to the event and return the faith that the exhibitors have shown in us.

In most WIOA publications we ask all Members to help promote the benefits of joining the Association to their colleagues – an ongoing challenge. I'm really pleased to report that after the NSW conference, a few trade companies have taken promoting WIOA to a new level and have committed to each signing up 20 Members from both NSW & Qld. They intend to pay the Membership fees for the 40 people as a sponsorship for their professional development and to ensure that WIOA gains more contacts at the grass roots level of the industry. We think this is an excellent idea and hope that other companies will consider doing the same in the future. If anyone would like Membership forms or WIOA information packages, please drop me a line and we'll send them out.

Until next time,

George Wall  
**WIOA Exec Officer**

## Past Kwatye winners



**Anthony Evans (2006), Graham Thomson (2007), and Eddy Ostarcevic (2005) at the weekend seminar**

# Profile of a Member

## Name

Glenn Clifford

## Position

Treatment Technician / Water and Sewer

## Employer & Location

Dubbo City Council – Dubbo NSW

## How long have you been a member of WIOA?

12 months.

## How long have you worked in the Water Industry and where?

I joined the water industry on the 12th November 1988 as an apprentice water/sewer operator working for Central Tablelands County Council in Blayney but was stationed at Tottenham NSW. In that time I worked in many different towns such as Lake Cargellico, Forbes, Canowindra and many more. In 1992 there was a boundary commission taking place and I was transferred to the Lachlan Shire Council and was based in Tottenham permanently. In 2003 I applied for a position with Dubbo City Council with the process team and began working at the John Gilbert water treatment plant and the Troy Junction waste water treatment plant and have been there ever since.

## What fields of the water industry have you worked in?

Reticulation, waste water and water filtration.

## How did you get into your current role?

It was time to move from Tottenham and give my children opportunities which they may not receive in a small town so I rang the supervisor of the water treatment plant in Dubbo and asked if there were any positions available and there was a casual position going at the old Bunglegumbie waste water treatment plant which has been since decommissioned. A permanent job was advertised about 10 months after I started and I was lucky enough to obtain that position within Council.

## What does your current job involve?

The testing and treatment of water from the Macquarie River to the residents of Dubbo and surrounding area. Water sampling, SCADA operation, Data input. The treatment of raw sewage, testing, sampling, dewatering, liaison with contractors, conduct school and adult tours of both plants, and much more.

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

The biggest change for me in the past 5 years is the upgrade of the John Gilbert water treatment plant. From 50 megalitres/day to 80 megalitres/day and at a cost of \$23M.

Also the decommissioning of the old waste water treatment plant in Dubbo.

## What do you think you will be doing in 5 years time?

Hopefully staying in the water industry and furthering my qualifications and staying with Dubbo City council.



## Ok, a few quick questions to finish with.

Age ..... 41

Nickname ..... Cliffo

Family Status ..... Married with 3 kids

Pets ..... 1 snake, 1 Cockatiel (bird) and 1 Labrador.

Favourite Food ..... Roast dinners, Indian.

Least Fav Food ..... Chiko Rolls, Yuk

Favorite TV Show ..... CSI

Worst TV Show ..... Survivor

Favorite Movie ..... Shawshank Redemption

Current C.D in stereo ..... Pub Rock

Ambition in Life ..... To see my grand children marry and be healthy.

Hobbies ..... Cooking bbq and spending time with family and friends with a beer of course

Best Trait ..... Easy to get on with

Worst Trait ..... Impatient and balding head.

Favourite Book ..... Anything that Stephen King wrote.

Four People to invite to a BBQ ..... Billy Connolly, Mr Bean, Jennifer Hawkins, Eddie Murphy. What a barbie!

# The Lighter Side

## How To Properly Place New Employees

1. Put 400 bricks in a closed room
2. Put your new employees in the room and close the door.
3. Leave them alone and come back after 6 hours.
4. Then analyse the situation
  - If they are counting the bricks, put them in the Accounting Department.
  - If they are recounting them, put them in Auditing.
  - If they have messed up the whole place with the bricks, put them in Engineering.
  - If they are arranging the bricks in some strange order, put them in Planning.
  - If they are throwing the bricks at each other, put them in Operations.
  - If they are sleeping, put them in Security.
  - If they have broken the bricks into pieces, put them in Information Technology.
  - If they are sitting idle, put them in Human Resources.
  - If they say they have tried different combinations, they are looking for more, yet not a brick has been moved, put them in Sales.
  - If they have already left for the day, put them in Marketing.
  - If they are staring out of the window, put them in Strategic Planning.
  - If they are talking to each other, and not a single brick has been moved, congratulate them and put them in Top Management ...
  - Finally, if they have surrounded themselves with bricks in such a way that they can neither be seen nor heard from, put them in Government.

## Weekend Seminar & AGM Report

The WIOA weekend seminar was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of March at the Warrenmang vineyard resort near Avoca. As a first timer to the event I was a bit nervous about attending – what was I getting myself into? – A weekend away with some of the smartest people in the industry, mainly male, all of whom knew each other? How would I get along with these people? What if I didn't know any one? What if I looked stupid in front of everyone?

My initial apprehension about attending the event quickly disappeared as I drove into the picturesque vineyard and walked into a dining room full of smiling faces and loud conversation – some of the people in that room I had met before, many I had not - but everyone was friendly and welcoming (and there were even some other girls there as well!!)

The weekend commenced with lunch and then the Annual General Meeting and election of the office bearers and committee of WIOA. Whilst there are many old faces that were re-elected to the committee, some departed, and new members were elected in their place. There was a video welcome from President Peter Tolsher that was well received by everyone in attendance and quickly the business of the meeting was completed.

An afternoon of activity followed the meeting. There were presentations from operators, demonstrations about valves, there was a very fast car, a decked out truck and more, all followed by a nice spot of wine tasting – the black puma was very well received by the delegates.



Some of the members at the weekend seminar

However, I think that the highlight of the afternoon was an incredibly informative open discussion session chaired by Cactus (aka Neil Healey). The session covered issues that were common problems for water businesses right around Australia. The discussion began with the problem of aluminium and THM exceedences and moved through problems encountered with water quality when an external party manages a catchment, DHS audits, soil aquifer treatment and who owns the water once it is returned to the ground. For me, the open discussion was the most beneficial event of my career as it stands

– the knowledge, wisdom and practical ideas that were suggested by operators from other areas were invaluable to my learning and appreciation of the industry. And yes – this talk fest did even outshine the wine tasting for me.

Then, once again it was time for food – the dinners provided by the resort were sensational and animated dinner conversation was had by all – the presentation of the IDIOTS awards and a strange and unusual initiation of the “virgins” followed. From there we were left to “network”, and network we did, with one brave soul ending up in the spa.



The ‘Virgins’ undertaking the initiation ritual

After discussing issues well into the night, the Sunday sessions turned out to be just as beneficial as the Saturday, although the coffee pot got worked over well and truly by all. Overall the experience was sensational and I would highly recommend that all other WIOA Members get along to this event. I would like to thank the WIOA committee and in particular Cynthia who put so much effort into making the weekend a success.

Contributed by: **Kristy Bourke – Wannon Water**



Editors note: **We like to keep the weekend seminar a casual affair and although it was a really hot weekend, we think Russell Mack took things too far – where are your shoes??**

# The Great Aussie Operator Invasion of New Zealand - May 2008

**April 30 – 9pm** and it's about time to get packed. What to take... 10 days in New Zealand??? Here we go, all my jocks, socks, jeans and tee shirts. Maybe a few jumpers (4 or 5 should do), a couple of coats, beanie, peak cap, a few pairs of shoes (sand shoes x 2, casual shoes x 1, dress shoes x 1). Will I need to get dressed up? Better to be safe, so in goes a couple of dress shirts, trousers and a jacket. Pyjamas?? OK, a couple of pairs of boxer shorts and tee shirts. That should do, chuck in some toiletries and I'm done. Now for hand luggage.... In goes the passport, itinerary, a pair of work boots, diary, camera, mobile phone, some reading material, thermo mug. Now I'm done and it's only 9.20pm.

**Thursday May 1 – 5.30am** and the alarm goes off. Strange song to be playing at this time of the morning.... "We're on a road to nowhere". What is that supposed to mean? Better hit snooze a couple of times and reassess later. 6.15am now I'll get up. Time for the four s's... s#%t, shave, shammy and shampoo. Breakfast and coffee was nice, packed the ute and headed to the Shepparton WTP to meet Darryl and rendezvous with George to bum a ride down to Tullamarine. Arrived at Tullamarine and checked in the luggage, all 25.7kgs of it. Met up with Leo and headed through customs. We all ventured through customs unscathed except for Darryl (thanks to a tip off from George to a female customs officer who required a more detailed inspection of his person and belongings). We then met up with the other guys (Tony from Earth Tech and Craig from Wannan Water) flying out of Melbourne and boarded the A330 bound for the Land of the Long White Cloud.

The flight to Auckland was smooth and uneventful, if not a little noisy at times as Darryl thought he needed to speak loud enough to hear himself while wearing the headphones. Arrived in Auckland at around 4.30pm, collected luggage and attempted to pass through NZ Customs. Again all went smoothly except for Darryl. Somehow he had managed to smuggle a blow fly into the country and during the inspection of his hand held luggage, out it flew. As you could imagine, this gave the NZ Customs Officer quite a surprise as he swatted it away and was heard to say, "what the F&#K was that?" Eventually all made it through and we met up with the remaining members of our party (or so we thought), Mal and Glenn from Dubbo, Mark from Gippsland Water and one of our hosts Dave Neru, the Executive Officer of WIOG (Water Industry Operators Group) NZ.

Now, that makes a total of ten, good (actually not so good as we were to find out later). After a couple of NZ ales we found our two transit vans, loaded 300kgs of luggage and 1000kgs of bodies and headed into the city to our hotel. An hour or so later we reached our accommodation and checked in. During check-in the receptionist informed us there was one member unaccounted for. George had counted to 10 OK but he wasn't meant to include Dave in the total. We'd left Michael from North East Water at the Airport. Now, that makes more sense, 10 Aussies and 1 kiwi. A \$64 taxi ride later and Michael joined the party. We set out for dinner in Auckland and soon realised that everywhere we go is uphill. This can't be right, it seemed like it was uphill going somewhere as well as returning back again. Surely not, that's impossible isn't it?

**May 2 – 7.30am** and we're off. It's here we leave Dave as he heads home prior to the conference in Hamilton the following Wednesday. We head back out towards the Airport to the Mangere WWTP. The plant had undergone a \$451 million upgrade from a lagoon based system to a BNR process including UV disinfection. The tour was very informative and for a novice in wastewater I was impressed with the processes utilised in treating the effluent of a capital city prior to discharge in the Papakura Channel in the Manukau Harbour, including dealing with the issues of odour and biosolids disposal back to landfill. From the word go it was evident the professionalism, knowledge and ownership the Operators (NZ Technicians) had of their facilities was something that was going to stand out for the remainder of the tour. Following lunch we were introduced to our tour guide for the next 8 days, Gil Miers. Once Gil had the NavMan set up, we were off on the next part of the trip, headed for the Waikato WTP. This was a brand new state-of-the-art 35ML/day Membrane Filtration Plant drawing water from NZ's largest river, the Waikato and providing fully treated water to supplement Auckland's supply. Again we saw the knowledge and pride from the operators as they presented their plant and we soon discovered that some of the water and waste water treatment problems present in Australia are similarly faced by operators in NZ (even if a bad turbidity event is 10NTU). We then headed off to Waitomo for the night. After tea at the Caves Motel Restaurant (which took quite some finding) we turned in for an early night before a big day on the road.



**Stuart going over the intricacies of the Waikato Water Treatment Plant**

**May 3 – 9.00am** following a restful night we headed to the Waitomo Glow Worm Caves for a touristy jaunt through the limestone caves discovered in 1887. Back into the mini vans and we're off to the Taupo region to inspect the magnificent Huka Falls from Lake Taupo and the start of the Waikato River. The falls discharge anywhere between 32 – 270 kL/sec – amazing sight. As I was a total "Occa" and having no idea of where I was in NZ, while driving around the lake (and after asking some stupid questions), I was quickly informed that the lake foreshore was actually not the NZ coast line, but still, it was big. We also inspected the Wairakei steam fields feeding the Wairakei Geothermal power station. An amazing sight to see steam escaping from fissures on hill and mountain side as well as the miles and miles of stainless steel.

A road trip to Chateau Tongariro at the base of Mt Ruapehu to start our next tour was a chance to take in some of NZ's north island



**The Huka Falls at Taupo on a 'slow' day  $\approx$  9000 ML/d**

mountain scenery. A stop off at the Turangi WWTP to inspect the new membrane plant constructed to replace settling lagoons again showed modern technology employed to treat an age old problem. The journey continued and we kept our eyes glued to the mountain ranges as we had been informed before arriving that Mt Ruapehu was still an active volcano and had just starting to rumble once more. Great! We arrive and headed up the mountain (this is actually where part of Lord of the Rings was filmed) for a lesson in providing water and wastewater services to the Whakapapa Base Area (Chalets and Clubs) at 1700m. Having not seen anything like this, it was hard to comprehend trenching through volcanic rock, flying trenching sand in via helicopter, installing the infrastructure and controlling downhill flows back to the WWTP.

To say it was cold up there would be an understatement, but it didn't seem to concern our guide



**Chateau Tongariro at the foot of Mt Ruapehu - a still active volcano that last erupted in 1995**

Warren as he chatted away in his short sleeved shirt and casual jacket. Crazy Kiwis. Following a tour of the WWTP we were back at the magnificent Chateau Tongariro (constructed in 1929) for dinner and our nights accommodation.

**May 4 – 10.00am** and we travel back past Lake Taupo (and a quick stop to visit the Tangariro National Trout Centre) before spending the rest of the day in Rotorua. And yes, it really does smell that bad. Fortunately the rain had set in which managed to dampen the odour, but it did restrict the chance to go to any of the more famous tourist attractions. We lunched on the shore of Lake Tarawera and then toured around the city looking at the bubbling mud pools and steam vents coming from the ground (these were everywhere, even in backyards). We finally returned to our Motel for a night of Burger King, Dominoes Pizza and chicken rolls. Mark was quite surprised by getting someone else's meal from Burger King but was even more impressed by the fact he didn't understand a word the lady serving him was saying. Admittedly she had a very strong Kiwi accent and in truth she probably didn't understand him either. (She was very polite however).

**May 5 – 9.00am** and we tour the Rotorua WWTP (which amazingly is located in the middle of the city ... no need to be concerned with odour issues here) and then venture through the pine plantations, mountains and mountain bike tracks to the Rotorua Land Treatment Scheme (Effluent Irrigation to Pine Plantation). Amazingly, mountain bikers and bush walkers are free to roam through this region (I didn't see too many signs that warned of drinking the water, but I was told there are plenty around). We then got to check out one of Rotorua's pristine drinking water supplies (Waipa Spring) which is a natural spring pumped directly into one of the rich list suburbs of the city unchlorinated (they don't want it, so they don't get it). As George says, "with water like this, who needs treatment?" After departing Rotorua the tour heads for Tauranga and a tour of the brand new 35ML/day Oropi Membrane WTP (one of two WTP's servicing the "Gold Coast" city of Tauranga). The plant was a classic example of modern design, forward thinking to allow expansion and latest membrane technology.

The WTP buildings, space and equipment had

to be seen to be believed. The city currently has a population of 110,000 and is expected to be 140,000 by 2015. Plant tour over, we were shown the million dollar plus houses along the foreshore and Mount Maunganui overlooking the city and capped all this off with an afternoon BBQ and a few cleansing ales. The rain has again set in and we head back to our motel. It's hard to believe this place could ever suffer any form of drought!



**The Oropi WTP and there is tons of room to add more membranes in future.**

**May 6 – 9.00am** travel down the road to tour the new BNR and Membrane WWTP at Te Aroha. Our Kiwis hosts have a strong sense of ownership of their plants and it shows in the way they present their tours. This is made even more evident during our next inspections, firstly of the Te Aroha WTP (which was the location of one of the best feeds of the 10 days in NZ) and then the newly automated Morrinsville WTP where Charlie Crews and his apprentice Jason showed us the ropes. It was particularly impressive at Morrinsville as we were informed that Charlie was doing a paper at the Hamilton conference on the experiences and lessons learnt from the DIY upgrade. We headed for Hamilton in the afternoon and believe it or not, we got to spend the next two nights and three days in the same place at the very impressive Kingsgate Hotel and Conference Centre. The evening presented an early opportunity to meet some of the unique Kiwi delegation attending the conference (G'day Peekie), start some networking and attend the WIOG President's Dinner.

**May 7, 8 + 9** – Operator Conference begins and we hear from a broad range of Professionals and Operators over the next couple of days and get a greater understanding of the challenges faced and techniques used to provide quality water and wastewater services to customers in NZ. The papers were all well delivered with Charlie Crews the much deserved winner of the best operator paper (announced at the final evening dinner). The entertainment at the conference was second to none with an opening night appearance from the Fawley Towers crew (Basil, Cybil and Manuel) who performed a hilarious stand up restaurant skit amongst the 200 plus diners. The final night saw Austin Powers, Freddy Mercury, ABBA, Cher and Madonna entertain the crowd with an action packed comedy cabaret show. Their performances were world class but may have been slightly overshadowed by some of the dance moves brought out of the closet by some of the crowd (no names but there was an Aussie ring leader).

**May 9 – 2pm** return to Auckland. Back into the city for tea before tormenting the Kiwi's at the sports bar in the casino as we watch the Kangaroos belt the living suitcases out of the All Blacks in the Rugby League International. It was quite amusing to see some not very happy

locals leaving quite early. Even those of us who are not that rugby minded enjoyed watching the Aussies belt another country.

**May 10** – Everyone back to the airport, we're heading home. Following our goodbyes and a last minute attack on the Duty Free we all caught our respective flights home. What a 10 days!!!!!!

### Interesting NZ Discoveries –

- Everything is uphill, never down.
- After travelling 1600km we discover Everything is “around a corner” or “an hour away”.
- There are no straight roads in the entire country – It took us 4 days to find a road long and straight enough to be able to do 100km/hr.
- “Choice Eh Bro” actually means something is pretty good.
- A drought is below average rainfall for 4 months, not 10 years.
- NZ appears to have unlimited water but does appear to have a limited beer supply.
- Don't try to pronounce any words (you'll just make a fool of yourself).
- Mini vans become smaller and smaller the longer you spend in them.
- NavMan's don't understand Kiwi's either.
- A trolley is actually a Trundler. An esky is a chilly bin. A bit of PK is chitty.
- WH is pronounced F, there are no E's in the language and in most cases an I is pronounced U.
- Bar glassware consists of Schooners, Handles and Jugs.
- Tui is a beer pronounced Toohey.
- Even the Kiwis won't drink Waikato beer.

### Famous Last Words or Lack Thereof

1. It's so greeeen over here, my cows would love this place.
2. From the movie the Castle - Ah the serenity, Tell 'em they're dreamin', Darryl dug another hole.
3. So, are you going Duck Shooting?
4. It costs 20 cents to go to the toilet at the Huka Falls.
5. Darryl choking on his dinner – Complete silence while eating, followed by uproarious laughter.
6. Murray Clayton after three dinner servings – “It takes a lot of food to fuel this machine”.
7. Whiskers – Have you got any room in your suitcases for me?
8. I didn't order onion Rings.
9. What's White Bait?

On behalf of the Aussie Operator contingent, I would like to thank George Wall, Gil Miers and Dave Neru for a fantastic 10 days touring a quite remarkable country. The hospitality shown by everyone involved was fantastic, particularly the staff involved in all our water and wastewater plant tours. It was great to see the pride each of them had in their facilities and the real sense of ownership they displayed. Congratulations to all award winners at the Hamilton Conference and we look forward to catching up with Charlie and Gil at the Victorian Conference in Bendigo in September.

Contributed by: **Jason Whittaker – Works Supervisor Central Water Treatment - Goulburn Valley Water.**

# Induction of More IDIOTS

In keeping with tradition, we inducted some more well known WIOA identities into the fold of IDIOTS - one at the Weekend Seminar / AGM and the other at the President's Dinner at the NSW conference.

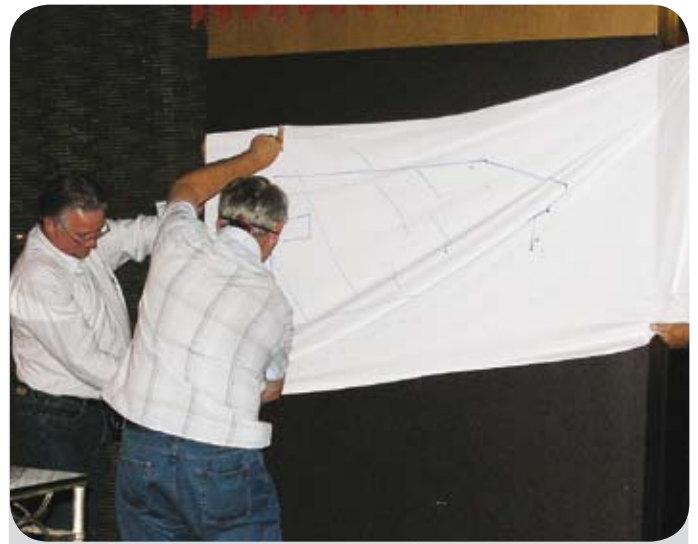
This award is designed to recognise the contribution of members and is only surpassed in prestige by the Associations top award of a Life Membership. This year three members were proposed to be inducted. Owen Braybrook and Ian Bicknell were presented their awards and one mystery recipient will be inducted the next time he/she makes an appearance at a WIOA event.

Owen Braybrook, that nationality muddled Zimbabwean with the Kiwi accent was inducted at the Weekend Seminar. Owen has been a long standing supporter of all that is WIOA since he lobbed in Australia (or was he deported from NZ?) some years ago. He has been a great ambassador for WIOA through his role with Grundfos Alldos and there is rarely an event that goes by without Owen present and pitching in to help or providing positive feedback. Owen has put pen to paper describing what the award means to him. For his induction, Owen was required in Rockwiz style to select who owned what music records (the Wiggles Tony???) and who went to which concert. Thinking that he had got out of that easily, he was shocked to find out that he had to follow Will Anderson and sing the Australian National Anthem to the tune of Working Class Man. Surprisingly, he managed to get quite a few of the words and a bit of the melody right and he proved he really was an IDIOT by ripping his shirt off and swinging it in the air for the finale. Well done Owen.



**Owen accompanied by last years IDIOTS - Cynthia and Jacko - belt out the national anthem**

It was then off to Newcastle for the NSW conference and there we caught up with Ian Bicknell. Ian has been a long term Member, supporter and sponsor of WIOA. His companies G-Tech and now DMI Australia have sponsored the entertainer at one of the Victorian dinners for many years and he has now extended that support to each of the other States as well. Ian has arrived like clockwork to each conference to help set up, drive a forklift, pack satchels, run the conference competition and generally do whatever was required, all at his own cost. Ron Bergmeier said a few positive words of intro and for Ian's challenge projected an image of a centrifuge that Ian had unwittingly provided us earlier in the day. Ian had to describe what the parts of the centrifuge were and roughly how it worked. Not too bad so far. The challenge then followed - Ian was blindfolded and a sheet held up for Ian to recreate the centrifuge using a marker pen. The



**A blindfolded Ian doing a terrible job of reproducing a centrifuge onto a moving canvas**

problem was that the sheet didn't stay in the same place and a four year old would have been disappointed with the resulting drawing.

The input from Members such as Ian and Owen is what keeps WIOA ticking over so successfully. They are in there to help wherever and however they can with no expectations other than to see the industry and their colleagues in the operational side prospering. We are pleased to have them involved and they are now proud to be officially called IDIOTS.

## Being an IDIOT

During the recent WIOA Weekender Steve Wilson, himself an IDIOT, announced that there were 3 initiates to be Inducted as a Delegate of the Inextricably Obstructed Tap Society. One inductee, Steve noted, was present, one was based in Sydney and the 3<sup>rd</sup> wasn't mentioned at all. A quick scan, and scattered around the room were at least 8 people whom I had noted as probable inductees.

Barry Waddell, who for his sins was the inductor, followed the tried and tested tradition of introducing the inductee in as general terms as possible, becoming more specific as the introduction wore on. One by one, slowly but surely the 'probable 8' were eliminated - too tall, too much hair, not graying, not anal enough, IT savvy, wasn't in Bairnsdale during the recent fires, etc - until Barry mentioned that specific identifier pinpointing the inductee. At that moment the heart races, the palms sweat, logical thought isn't, minor interest becomes major panic, the brain freezes, and that trusted inner voice of common senses becomes suddenly mute.

Nomination and selection by ones peers and colleagues for inclusion into this august group in recognition of services and support to the industry is, in and of itself, humbling and an honour.

### **Owen Braybrook.**

Inducted as a Delegate of the Inextricably Obstructed Tap Society  
WIOA Weekender, 15-16 March 2008

ps: I won't mention the Challenge if you don't!

Contributed by: **Owen Braybrook**



## Corporate Member News - Odour Control Systems (Aust)

Odour Control Systems (Aust) Pty Ltd operates in a specialised niche in the water industry – as the name implies - odour control.

Before joining OCS, General Manager Tony Ryan had 27 years as a technical officer with Hunter Water Corporation (HWC). During that time he had a wide variety of experience covering design, construction and operations of water and sewage systems.

During the latter years at HWC Tony found an increasing amount of his time was being spent solving sewer odour issues. Mostly, he was just responding to operational issues as they came in, but odour gradually became a more common problem and Tony's knowledge increased as he worked through the various issues. It wasn't long before he became known as the "Minister for Odours" at HWC and found himself co-ordinating HWC's odour control strategies.

Tony says that it is common for sewer authorities to have a somewhat ad hoc approach to odour control with individual problems treated in isolation rather than adopting a more co-ordinated approach. Typically there are many different types of technologies spread throughout the area of operations and often some interesting solutions were developed by resourceful operators.

Odour control can certainly present challenges unlike for example, a broken pipe where a crew is sent out to dig it up and repair it. How do you respond quickly and effectively when someone phones in an odour complaint? Maybe you go and shove a sand bag in a vent pipe? Come on you've all done it.

Tony prefers a more co-ordinated approach that assesses the cause of the problem rather than just the site specific symptoms.

In 2001, Tony was recruited by Odour Control Systems (Aust). OCS operates in a specialised field where it can be difficult to find suitably qualified and experienced operators. Tony certainly has the right mix of experience and ideas and OCS continues to increase its profile in the water industry. Tony can be contacted at [tonyryan@odours.com.au](mailto:tonyryan@odours.com.au) or on 02 4961 6185.



The OCS guys on the job

## Government Skills Australia – Training News

### National Learning Resources Project

We need volunteers from technical experts to give feedback on the learning resources as they are being developed. If you have experience in any of the specialist areas, please register your interest in being part of a technical advisory panel to help us develop the best quality training resources for the benefit of everyone in the water industry. Fill out the form with this newsletter and fax it to GSA 08 8410 2842.

### The Water Training Package

The Water Industry Advisory Committee of Government Skills Australia is looking forward to a very busy and demanding year ahead. The focus will be on both continuous improvement of the national qualifications and the development of national learning resources to promote continuing skills for water operators

### Progress on review of national qualifications

Although the Training Package was only endorsed at the end of 2007, some of the qualifications are already in need of further review.

**Certificate II in Remote Essential Services** will be included in the Training Package. This qualification will suit the needs of workers in water and power operations in remote and indigenous communities. A meeting of the steering committee will be held in Darwin in late May to finalise the submission to include the new qualification. The qualification will be available early in 2009.

**Certificate IV in Water Operations** has been reviewed to provide more details, and more competencies for optimising water quality systems, and the unit of competency NWP435B Coordinate and monitor the optimisation of water treatment processes has been broken into smaller units to assist operators in achieving the qualification. These draft units are available on both the GSA and the WIOA websites. We are keen to have feedback from technical experts in water treatment before the end of June 2008.

GSA has sponsored a technical team for Hydrography which has recommended and developed some new units for the Certificate IV. These are available for consultation through the GSA website and will be included in the new version of the Training Package for 2009.

Hydrography is an area of increasing demand, and GSA will advise that increased allocations of training places be made available for the hydrography specialisation at Certificate IV.

Contributed by: **Prue Madsen**



## The Lighter Side

A notice posted by Japanese students in Melbourne looking for the owners of a lost cat.

# NSW Conference Report

The 2nd Annual WIOA NSW Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference was held in Newcastle from 8th to 10th April.

A big thank you from WIOA is extended to all the sponsors of the event including our Host in Hunter Water, the NSW Water Directorate and our Prime Partners in Rad-tel Systems, ITT Water and Wastewater and Acromet Australia. In addition Bürkert Fluid Control Systems, CRS Industrial Water Treatment Systems, DMI Australia, Merck, Grundfos Allidos, WME Media, Iwaki Pumps Australia, Odour Control Systems (Aust), Peerless Industrial Systems, Royce Water Technologies, Ciba Specialty Chemicals, Southern Cross Laboratories (Actizyme), and Environmental and Process Technologies all took out some form of sponsorship for which we are extremely grateful.

In all there were 150 registered delegates and 93 day visitors in attendance – a significant increase from 2007 numbers. As advised in the April edition of Words, our event calendar has been reorganised so that depending on Easter, school holidays and other events, the NSW conference will now be held in April or May annually and the Qld Workshop will be held in the first week of June. Making this change forced us to hold two events in NSW in the same financial year. A number of Councils we contacted advised that they had attended the Dubbo event and had spent their 2007/08 training budget so couldn't attend Newcastle as well.

We have had forty-eight different NSW Councils represented at either the Dubbo or Newcastle events, along with reps from sixteen other Water Authorities and nine Government Departments. These two events combined have managed to attract 240 separate delegates and 161 visitors, all of whom now have a taste of what WIOA has to offer. The challenge as we go forward is making sure we get even more Councils represented at the event on an annual basis.



**Winner of the best Trade Exhibit at the NSW Conference – Rad-tel Systems**

Booths for the trade exhibition sold out within 4 weeks of advertising them for sale and again we were forced to turn away a number of companies that wanted to attend. In the end we had 93 companies displaying their products and services from the 107 booths. We would like to thank all the companies involved for the time and effort put in to making the exhibition so impressive.

The WIOA Prize for the Best Trade Display was won by Rad-tel Systems. For their efforts Rad-tel won a complimentary 12 month Corporate Membership of WIOA and a half page ad in the WME

Environment & Business Magazine to the value of \$2,500. The Rad-tel guys were seen celebrating their award well into the night.

The technical paper sessions were very well attended and it was refreshing to listen to a number of the papers from operators talking about how they fixed day to day problems. In his Keynote address, Steve Posselt relayed his experiences and visions consolidated on his paddling and walking trip covering the length of the Murray Darling system. Steve challenged all delegates to think about the footprint they leave behind on the earth as a result of their own resource use.

We were also joined this year by a contingent attending the WSAA Workshop on sewer blockages. This collaborative project is the first of several that WSAA are undertaking in the asset classes of pressurised pipeline systems and gravity sewerage systems. Graham Thomson provides a summary of this event in his Kwatyte Report on page 12.

Congratulations to all the people awarded prizes at the Conference including:

**1st - Actizyme Prize for best Operator Paper** – John Stevens from Hunter Water who spoke about the cleaning of diffusers at the Edgeworth sewage treatment plant. John will be presenting this paper again at the Victorian conference in September.



**John Stevens (r), winner of the Actizyme Prize for Best Operator Paper being congratulated by Alex Maderasi from Actizyme**

**2nd - Actizyme Prize** – Pat Davis from Riverina Water County Council.

**3rd - Actizyme Prize** – Shaun Clews and Justin Watts from Hunter Water. In a very generous gesture, Shaun and Justin donated their third prize money from Actizyme to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service – well done guys.

The winner of the **Iwaki Australia Prize for the Best Paper Overall** was Yolanda Sztarr from the Hatlar Group. Yolanda's paper covered measuring colour in trade waste.

Unfortunately, we didn't receive any poster papers from Operators this year so this award was put on hold temporarily.

For the second year, the NSW Water Directorate sponsored and presented the NSW Operator of the Year Award. There were two excellent nominees this year and an article about the achievements of the winner – Peter Hales appears on Page 11. Congratulations also to Peter Catelotti from Dubbo City Council who was the other nominee.



**Yolanda Sztarr (r) winner of the Iwaki Pumps Australia Prize for Best Paper Overall being congratulated by Ian Jesson**

Unfortunately, Peter couldn't attend the conference due to his wife's illness. We hope things are OK and she's on the road to recovery.

Congratulations to all the winners of the Trade Competition and thanks to Tony Hourigan for organizing it again. A very special big thanks goes to Royce Water Technologies for sponsoring the competition and thanks to all the other companies that participated.

Overall the conference was a huge success and we look forward to 2009 being even bigger and better.

## Water Directorate, NSW Operator Of The Year 2008

Congratulations to the winner of the Water Directorate, NSW Operator of the Year for 2008 in Peter Hale. Peter is a long term employee of Shoalhaven Water and has worked at 8 STPs that vary widely from trickling filters to tertiary treatment plants with chemical nutrient removal.

Peter's experience, level of expertise and significant technical ability in the operation of different plants has been invaluable to Shoalhaven City Council and has been used to great effect mentoring new staff.

Peter is responsible for the day to day operation and maintenance of Callala STP which has a high community profile as a result of numerous public visits and being the main water storage for the Reclaimed Effluent Management Scheme (REMS).



**NSW Operator of the Year 2008 Peter Hale (right) being congratulated by NSW Water Directorate Chair - Stewart McLeod**

Peter has developed and introduced a program of tours of Callala STP and REMS for schools, community groups and industry leaders. The tours have been so successful that they often attract overseas visitors. The tours have contributed significantly to the positive image of Shoalhaven Water and Shoalhaven City Council in the community. Peter is instrumental in proposing a visitor centre which is currently being further investigated.

Peter has developed job descriptions and has participated in initiating benchmarking within Shoalhaven Water and was a member of a small team that visited various sites in NSW establishing benchmarks.

Due to Peter's plant management ability and high maintenance standards he was called upon to provide the hands on perspective at the design and construction level stages at Callala, Sussex Inlet and St Georges Basin STPs to identify potential operational issues.

Peter has been a contributing member of the OH&S Committee for many years and has been instrumental in developing and implementing many Safe Work Method Statements.

Peter is committed to training and continued learning and his staff record shows that he has attended some 64 training courses.

Peter is involved in a wide range of community organisations such as the Shoalhaven Ornithologists Club, Pyree Literary Institute and the Vintage Car Club.

Peter has been a member of the Shoalhaven City Council Consultative Committee since its inception and a number of sub-committees and gives tirelessly of his time out of hours to assist fellow employees. Peter will be retiring later this year and this award is a true testimony to his contribution to the water industry.

## **WANTED** **Applications for the** **2008 KWATYE AWARD**

**A reminder to all Members** that applications for the 2008 Kwatye Prize, close on July 18, so there is only a few weeks left to get your application in. ***This extremely generous prize of \$6000*** from award sponsors - Environmental & Process Technologies (a Division of Biolab) can be used for a range of purposes. There are no hard and fast rules on what sort of project would be acceptable and practically no idea would be considered "stupid".

*Below are a few ideas that the WIOA Committee have come up with:*

- **Attendance** at an international conference or trade show to research up-to-date technologies for your plant or water authority;
- **Training** for personal or professional improvement;
- Prize to assist in the **development** of an idea – New Inventors style! – and to take the idea to the industry;
- **Investigation** into requirements for training and report on levels of skill required in various countries;

Feel free to call George in the WIOA office if you have any idea at all that you would like to discuss.

# 2007 Kwatye Report NSW Visit and Workshop

As part of my project I have teamed up with the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) who are undertaking a collaborative blockage project. This collaborative project is the first of several that WSAA are undertaking in the asset classes or pressurised pipeline systems and gravity sewerage systems. In addition to the involvement of 15 WSAA members, the collaborative blockage project will also involve the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

In order to establish the guidelines and objectives for this project, it was necessary to hold a planning workshop in April. Following my discussions with the project coordinator, Eve Rodrigues, it was decided to hold the workshop at the same location as the WIOA NSW conference in Newcastle.



**Delegates at the WSAA Workshop held in conjunction with the NSW conference.**

The WSAA workshop had representatives from CSIRO, WSAA and several water authorities from around Australia. The initial phase of the workshop was to establish a common understanding of issues relating to sewer blockages. During this phase I gave a presentation from an Operation and Maintenance perspective. Later the workshop dealt with the scope of the project and assignment of various roles and responsibilities. One of the early outcomes appears to be a need to establish common terminologies associated with this project.

Also while in Newcastle I again called on Hunter Water where I was able, with Ken Wilson, to undertake a site visit of contractors undertaking chemical treatment of reticulated sewer assets. Ken also showed me around some of the suburbs of Newcastle where he was able to explain some of the unique problems faced by Hunter Water. I also visited Debbie Selden who was able to show me the process Hunter use to evaluate conditions of sewers.

Contributed by: **Graham Thomson**

## Coming Events - 2008

<b>3-5 June</b>	33rd Qld Operations Workshop, Carrara
<b>2-4th Sept</b>	71st Vic Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference, Bendigo
<b>14th Oct</b>	Distribution Seminar Qld (Date and venue to be confirmed)
<b>18th Nov</b>	Chemical Dosing Seminar, NSW. (Date and venue to be confirmed)

## 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

Andrew Kennett, Brady Schmidt, Ming Chua, Grant Donnelly, Roger Poole, Tony Hanley, Peter Cullum, Rod Morton, Andrew Naughton, Sarah Angel, Jessica Howard, Peter Barwick, Peter Outtrim, Mark Walker, Michael Porter, Jason McManus, Barry Young, Ron Burke, Peter Redman, Peter Schmidt, Jon Gooding, Chris Seam, Peter Anderson, Greg Cashman, Siva Preeyadarshanam, Peter Gall, Tony Scarborough, Michelle Pankhurst, James McLean, Danny Ross, Paul Johnstone.

### New Corporate Members include

Tyco Environmental Systems, Rod Bain Plumbing, Mactek Radiodetection, Gutermann, Thomas & Coffey, C-Tech Services, Pacific Hire P/L, Hydro Innovations, UAT Pacific, Epsom Environmental Services, B2P Australia, Gilgandra Shire Council, Odour Services Australia, AGFAB Engineering, Action Instrumentation & Controls, Allflow Supply Company, Macleay Water (Unit of Kempsey Shire Council), Ashland Water Technologies, Acrodyne, Redox, Technical Projects, Industrial Pumping Solutions Australia, Festo Pty Ltd.

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## Next Edition

**Article Contribution Deadline for the August 2008 Edition 18th July 2008**

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