



OPERATOR



November 2007 Edition

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WIOA's newest life member Barry Waddell being congratulated by President Peter Tolsher. Read all about Barry on page 9

Find out what was so funny at the Vic Conference on page 5



Jill Busch presenting at the WIOA distribution seminar at Pipes Wagga Wagga. More on page 11



From the EO's Desk

With the 70th Victorian conference now done and dusted, we've shifted our focus to 2008 and beyond. After many phone calls and lots of tripping around the country looking for conference venues, we are pleased to report that we have finalised all the dates and venues for 2008.

The 2nd Annual WIOA NSW Engineers and Operators Conference will be held at the Newcastle Jockey Club (racecourse) on 8-10 April 2008. The 33rd Qld Water Industry Operations Workshop will be held at the Carrara Sports Complex on the Gold Coast from 3-5 June 2008 and the 71st Annual Victorian Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference will be held in Bendigo on 2-4 September 2008. Please note these dates into your diaries now and start planning how you or your team can contribute to these events. To assist the planning processes of both delegates and exhibitors alike, we are now working hard to locate venues and set dates for 2009 as well. More information on the 2008 events will be sent out shortly.

This quarter's Operator has turned into a bumper edition and we've had to extend it from the normal eight pages to twelve. I'm really excited that we have received contributions from a number of Members outside the Committee! Whoopee! and a big thanks to everyone who has contributed. Here's hoping the momentum keeps going and we are inundated with items for the February 2008 edition.

Along with a heap of other interesting articles, this edition contains reports on the Victorian conference, the Pipes Wagga Wagga event and write ups on a number of award winners. I'm sure you'll read all these reports so I won't go into detail here.

There are however, two significant items that warrant some extra comment. The first is to offer our heartfelt congratulations to Barry Waddell who became just the fifth Life Member in WIOA's 35 year history. Apart from being WIOA's longest serving Committee member ever, Barry is one of those likeable, fun, happy people that we love having around and he has done a power of work for the water industry and our Association over many years. It is a well deserved honor for Barry and there is a summary of what he has achieved on Page 9. The second is the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with our cousins from across the Tasman which we intend to use to foster the development of an even more co-operative relationship between WIOA and WIOG NZ. A summary of what the MoU is all about is on Page 3.

It is great to hear from Prue Madsen at GSA that the endorsement process for the updated Water Industry Training Package has been completed and once the implementation guide is finished NWP 07 will be ready for RTO's to deliver. As part of the continuous improvements process, further reviews of the Certificate IV & V level competencies, and some other specific projects will be undertaken over the next few months. WIOA is keen to see enough units at the appropriate level added to allow both a "Technical" and "Front-line Management" qualification to be completed at Cert IV level, and we have been working with a number of others on a steering Committee to see this happen. If anyone wishes to contribute anything to this process please give me a call.

I must tip my hat to David Barry from Aqualift Potable Diving. David is a long time Member and supporter of WIOA with a wealth of knowledge and experience gained over many years in the water industry. Over a drink or two recently, David confided that as part of his job he spends a lot of time on the road, living in motels. When he gets bored or after he has taken an interesting photo, he scribbles down a few notes to go with it. Much to my surprise, David presented me with a CD chock full of photos and short articles about jobs that his company has undertaken at sites all over the country. The thing that strikes me the most is that the stories are not sales oriented, rather they

are practical fixes to common issues that many of us may be confronted with and contain some good ideas. One of David's articles has already appeared in the August edition of Operator and we intend to use quite a few more in coming editions. Well done David.

This prompts me to challenge all our other WIOA Members – why not do the same thing? We know there are many Members, both Individual and Corporate, who work at multiple sites or who undertake a diverse range of projects on a day to day basis. If anyone has to do a difficult job or has had to undertake works in difficult conditions, or even if you see or find something unusual on a job site, why not take a photo or two and jot a few lines down. These days most mobile phones have good quality cameras built in, so it shouldn't be that hard. We'd be happy to do some of the writing to make a few lines into an article so please give it a go.

We have received requests to expand the Practical Guide series of books from four to five with the addition of a Disinfection title. We see this as a positive extension to the project and will do everything we can to make it happen. The Coag/Flocc book is progressing well and we hope to have it completed and ready for a December launch. Keep in mind that the "Optimisation of Water Distribution Systems" and "Media Filters" books now are available for purchase at \$30 (+ GST). Order forms are on our website. www.wioa.org.au

The December edition of our Journal **WaterWorks** is coming together well and contains many of the best papers presented this year at our conferences around the country. We believe it is important that everyone reads the editorial in this edition and we'd love to get your feedback. Although it may be viewed by some as being alarmist or controversial, it challenges us all to consider how we might do something proactive to ensure that our industry, its people, and the systems we collectively operate can reach their maximum potential.

Finally, the Committee has set the Membership fees for 2008 and we advise that they will remain the same as 2007 - \$20 for Individuals and \$165 for Corporate members respectively (GST inclusive). We have sent reminders to a number of Members who have yet to pay 2007 fees. If you are one of the slow payers, please get your money in ASAP or let us know if you don't want to remain a Member. Invoices for 2008 will be sent out early in the New Year and your prompt payment would be appreciated.

Until next time,

George Wall
Executive Officer WIOA

The Lighter Side



Profile of a Committee Member

Name

Peta Thiel

Position

Technical Director

Employer & Location

Activated Carbon Technologies in Melbourne



What is your involvement with the water industry (brief job history)? 4 years as Chemist at Australia's largest Ozone/BAC drinking WTP (Sunshine Coast, QLD) since then working as a consultant specialising in advanced treatment technologies, in particular activated carbon

How long have you been a WIOA member?

Hmmm... not sure maybe 3 years??

What made you consider becoming a committee member?

It's a great organisation and I wanted to contribute/ help

What are your expectations as a committee member?

To ensure that WIOA continues to serve the needs of operators

Where do you see yourself in the coming years on the WIOA committee?

Years??? Is this a long term thing??

Personal:

AgeNot telling

Spouse, kids, family, pets?Dogs and horses

Book you are currently reading?Reading!! Ha...
I don't have time to read

Favourite band or music style?The Killers

Worst band or music style?Rap, Hip Hop, 50 Cent

Favourite film?Love Actually

Worst film?Can't think of one

Favourite food?Champagne.... yes it is a food

Worst food?parsnips

Favourite meal you can cook?Pasta and sauce

Favourite town in Vic? Why?Melbourne – always something pretty to look at – bright lights, fashion, fire

Best Trait?Laugh

Worst Trait?Laugh

Four people to invite to dinner?Mum, Dad, Peter and Bec

Best advice you can offer anyone?Don't give advice!!

WIOA Signs MoU with WIOG NZ

For many years a strong relationship has been building between we Ozgies and our Kiwi “operations” cousins. We have been sending representatives to each others conferences, have arranged and hosted a study tour for operators on both sides of the Tasman, have advertised positions vacant on our websites and we have been having some interesting dialogue about training and qualification recognition issues in either country, to name just a few initiatives.

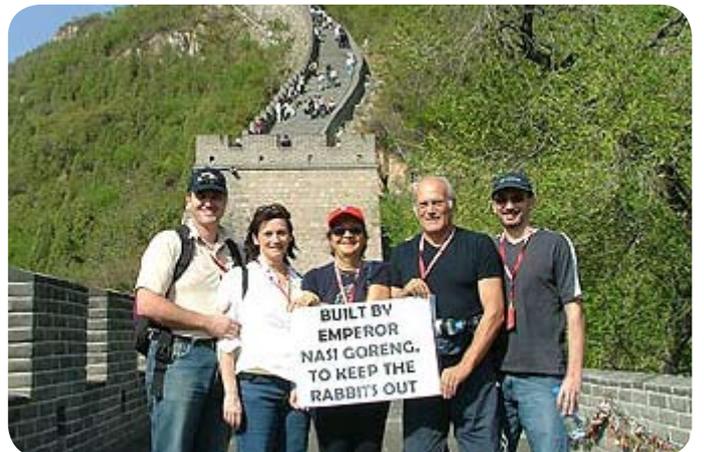
It was exciting for the Committees of both organisations that WIOA and the Water Industry Operations Group of New Zealand (WIOG) were able to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with one another at the recent Victorian conference. The document confirms our intent to establish a strong partnership relationship to allow the advancement of our common purpose of improving the quality of life through the protection and enhancement of the global water environment.

Importantly, both organisations have gone out of their way to make sure that the MoU has some tangible objectives designed to not only benefit Members on either side of the Tasman once completed, but also to solidify our collective standing in the “Australasian” region. We will provide reports on the progress of our initiatives from time to time.



Stu Craib, Dave Neru, George Wall and Peter Tolsher with the signed MoU

The Lighter Side



So it must be true!

Vic Conference Report 2007

The 70th Annual Victorian Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference was held in Bendigo on 5th & 6th September 2007 with a record number of 307 registered delegates and 292 trade visitors in attendance. The trade exhibition was also close to our largest ever with 166 booths occupied by the 136 companies displaying their products and services. There were more than 400 trade representatives present looking after the booths and providing excellent advice to the delegates and visitors. We would like to thank all the companies involved for the time and effort put in to making the exhibition so impressive.



The technical paper sessions were well attended and the papers presented were of an excellent standard.

Congratulations to all the prize winners at the Conference including: Mark Samblebe from Gippsland Water for winning the **Hepburn and Iwaki Prizes** for the Best Paper overall for his paper outlining the innovations used to treat highly turbid water at Licola as a result of heavy rains following the recent bushfires. In addition to the plaque, Iwaki Pumps presented Mark with a laptop computer.



“Mark Samblebe (L), winner of the Hepburn and Iwaki Prizes for the Best Paper Overall with Sulio and John”.

1st - Actizyme Prize for best Operator Paper – John Cameron from Southern Rural Water for his excellent paper on the impact of the bushfires on storage operations in the Gippsland Area.

2nd - Actizyme Prize – Greg Hall from Goulburn Valley Water.

3rd - Actizyme Prize – David Reyne from Central Highlands Water.

1st – Water Industry Training Centre (WITC) Prize for best Operator Poster Paper – Dale Yeates from Gippsland Water for his presentation on improved chemical phosphorous removal at the Morwell Wastewater Treatment Plant.

2nd WITC Prize – awarded to Andrew McPherson from Coliban Water.

3rd WITC Prize – Rachael Lawlor from Goulburn Valley Water.



“Winner of the WITC Prize for best Operator Poster Paper, Dale Yeates presented his plaque by Stephen Wilson from WITC”

The **AWA, Wal Whiteside, Vic Operator of the Year Award** was presented to Owen Roberts from ‘US’ - Utility Services. See Page 8 for more information on Owen’s achievements.

A new award was presented this year – the **IWA Young Operator of the Year**. The inaugural winner of was Craig Atwell from Wannan Water. As well as a plaque and trophy, Craig will receive an all expenses paid trip to the WIOG (NZ) Operations Conference to be held in Hamilton NZ in May 2008. Unfortunately, space restrictions in this issue mean we have had to hold over this article to the February 2008 edition of Operator.

The judges awarded the prize for the **Best Trade Exhibition** to NHP Electrical Engineering Products with honourable mentions going to Tyco Water, MJK Automation, Australian Valve & Filter Industries. In winning the award, NHP receive advertising in the WME magazine to the value of \$2,500.



“The NHP Electrical site – winner of the Best Trade Exhibition award”

Congratulations to all the winners of the Trade Competition (especially the Kiwi group who obviously bribed the judges and won the first prize) and a big thanks to Cynthia Lim for organising everything. Special mention to Omega Chemicals and all the other companies who donated prizes.

The third winner of the **Kwatye Prize** sponsored by Environmental & Process technologies (Division of Biolab) was announced at the Wednesday Dinner and the winner was Graham Thomson. A short outline of Graham's project appears on Page 12.

The entertainment at both Dinners was great value and we must make a special mention of the impromptu performance of Michael Wheaton from 'us'- Utility Services along with ventriloquist Darren Carr on the Wednesday night. Many have said it was one of the funniest things they have ever seen.



"Michael Wheaton getting frocked up"



"Michael Wheaton in full flight on stage with Darren Carr"

A big thank you from WIOA to all the sponsors of the event including our joint Hosts in Coliban Water & Campaspe Asset Management Services (CAMS), our Prime Sponsors in Transpacific Industries Group, ITT Industries and Acromet, as well as all our valued sponsors including Australian Water Association; Bürkert Fluid Control Systems; Grundfos Alldos Dosing & Disinfection; Rad-tel Systems; DMI Australia; CRS Industrial Water Treatment Systems; SMEC Australia; Peerless Industrial Products; Earth Tech Engineering; Merck; Iwaki Pumps; Water Industry Training Centre; Southern Cross Laboratories (Actizyme); Institute of Water Administration (Vic); CIBA Specialty Chemicals; WME Media; Omega Chemicals; Environmental & Process Technologies (Division of Biolab); CB & M Design Solutions; CSIRO Publishing; City of Greater Bendigo and last but not least Pharmac.

Overall the Conference was a huge success and we look forward to 2008 being even bigger and better.

Sediment Barrier

The Problem:

Redland Shire Council (Qld) had a continuing problem with sediment entering the reticulation system from one of their storage tanks. An inspection by Aqualift revealed that the large diameter outlet penetration was level with the floor of the tank, and sediments accumulating on the tank floor were being drawn into the outlet during periods of high demand.



The Solution:

For safety and water quality reasons, a protective screen was designed and manufactured to cover the outlet penetration. The screen was fabricated from HDPE, incorporating a raised section in the base area to allow sediments to accumulate and not be drawn into the outlet. The base flange had an external diameter of 1100mm and had to be sealed onto the floor of the tank due to



the uneven concrete surface. The screen was fitted by divers using an air-powered drill to place 16mm SS tru-bolts through the base flange and into the concrete floor. The tru-bolts were dipped in NMP 1720 epoxy to seal them into the concrete and avoid future 'Crevice corrosion'. The base flange area was also sealed to the floor using 1720 epoxy with good results.

The Result:

The water quality downstream of the tank has improved and a follow-up inspection revealed an undisturbed covering of sediment now surrounding the base area of the screen. Placing a protective screen over the outlet has also allowed isolation procedures prior to diving operations to be simplified

Article contributed by: **David Barry from Aqualift Potable Diving**

Reinstatement - Egyptian style

In September 2007 I visited Egypt and participated in the Keti Sharif Raqs Shari (Belly dance) tour. I have been learning to Belly dance for about 6 years, and this was a great opportunity to be exposed to several styles of Belly dance, including traditional Egyptian dance.

Amongst all the dancing, we did have time to do some sightseeing. The pyramids at Giza are mind blowing. The individual blocks weigh between 2 and 30 tons, and the gaps (no mortar) between them is no thicker than 2mm. Pretty amazing stuff seeing as though there was no laser cutting back then and some of the stones even had stone biscuits holding them at particular angles. Snorkelling in the Red Sea was great fun, but I think our Great Barrier Reef beats it hands down.

We also hot air ballooned one morning over the Nile River and the Valley of the Kings. It was amazing to see how green and lush it was where the irrigation channels from the Nile were, but go one foot further than the end of the channel, and it's as dry as chips, and as much like desert as you've ever seen.

The accompanying photos were taken at Kahn el Kallili, the busiest and oldest bazaar (marketplace) in Cairo. There were busted sewers leaking at various locations along the street too (suffice to say the aroma of perfume shops and spice stalls did nothing to make these smell sweeter). It was just crazy there, and in most places the alleyways were no wider than a hand cart.



Roadwork restrictions are less formal than Australia.

You literally had to clamber over the rubble to get into the shops. Nobody in Egypt seems to be in a hurry to do anything, and similarly, repairs to essential infrastructure like water and sewer assets didn't seem to get a high priority. The exposed repairs I photographed were that way for at least the week that I was there (and they are probably still that way!), and it was commonplace to drive thru streets that were partial lakes due to water main bursts.



Would you leave a tapping like this?

Our final days overseas were spent in Dubai. WOW!!!! What a contrast to Egypt. It's amazing what oil money can do. Such opulence. I would have liked to spend at least a week in Dubai, as 2 days was not enough to see all there was to see.

This was my first overseas trip to a non English speaking country, and in addition to learning just enough Arabic to get by, I believe I have contracted the travel bug (and it's not the one known as the Pharaoh's Revenge a.k.a. Bali Belly). Going overseas makes you realise just how well off we are in Australia, and how much we take things for granted. I can't wait for my next holiday, it's an adventure and a reality check, all in one.

Contributed by: **Michelle Colwell from Gippsland Water**

Quotable Quotes

The government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it.

Ronald Reagan

Money doesn't always bring happiness. People with ten million dollars are no happier than people with nine million dollars.

Hobart Brown

An intellectual is a man who takes more words than necessary to tell more than he knows.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

History will be kind to me for I intend to write it.

Sir Winston Churchill

It's hard to be nostalgic when you can't remember anything.

Anon

It's the process of striving that makes us grow - not necessarily the result. Running against the wind makes us better than running with it.

Herb Elliott MBE

All great achievements have one thing in common - people with a passion to succeed.

Pat Cash

Technical Tip #1



"Please be careful when you put revision clouds on your drawings, some contractors may not understand."

Profile of a Member

Name.

Bob Banning

Position.

Wastewater Treatment Manager

Employer & Location.

Bathurst Regional Council, NSW



How long have you been a member of WIOA? 6 months or so – I joined after the Dubbo conference. I was impressed with what WIOA was doing and being a member was a good way to improve my contact network.

How long have you worked in the Water Industry and where? I have worked in the water industry for 25 years and all at Bathurst in the wastewater side.

What fields of the water industry have you worked in? I started out at the gas works and did 6 months there before I changed to wastewater.

How did you get into your current role ? I was the only stupid bugger that applied for it. It looked like a much better job than I had at the time.

What does your current job involve? I run the biological P removal wastewater treatment plant to meet the EPA requirements. I also double as a psychiatrist, doctor, and social worker for my workmates and am the whipping boy for the boss.

What have been some of the big changes in recent years? Definitely technology – computers, testing equipment, PLC's; more pressure to perform well and also too much paperwork now.

What do you think you will be doing in 5 years time? I hope to be able to sit in the pub and have a beer and still be capable of doing all the things I can do now.

Ok, a few quick questions to finish with.

Age 59

Nickname Grand Poo Bah; TT (Top Turd)

Family Status Wife, 2 grown up kids (one of each)

Pets Daughters dog - Jack

Favourite Food Snags, chips & eggs

Least Fav Food Broccoli, Brussell Sprouts

Favorite TV Show MASH

Worst TV Show Dancing with the Stars or that other dancing one

Favorite Movie Green Mile

Current C.D in stereo Cat Stevens

Ambition in Life Make it to 60?
live long enough to be a pain in the butt to the kids

Hobbies Bush walking; motor bike riding (soon!!)

Best Trait Weird sense of humour

Worst Trait Too soft

Favourite Book True stories - on war heroes (etc)

Four People to invite to a BBQ Robin Williams
One of my workmates (so I can talk shit)
Anyone else that wants to come along

Kiwis visit the Victorian Conference

The first week in September saw 10 members of **Water Industry Operations Group NZ (WIOG)** attend the annual conference of Water Industry Operators Association (WIOA) in Bendigo, Victoria.



A varied selection of papers was presented including two from New Zealand with Maire Porter and Ken Jones showing the Aussies how it is done. As expected, a number of papers dealt with the huge problem of water conservation and dealing with the aftermath from bush fires. Of particular interest were the papers presented by the winners of "best Operator paper" awards at the Queensland and New South Wales events held earlier in the year. All papers were again of a high standard with relevance to today's demand in the water industry in New Zealand and Australia. Well done to those who took the time to present.

It was no surprise to us Kiwis that one of our teams took out the Operator team competition. At least we Kiwis' won something this year. Our Kiwi combination was made up of Kevin Bryson, Bridget Fitzgerald, and Sheryl Keenan.

Like past years, we Kiwis were treated to a well organised event and wish to thank George and the team from WIOA for a fantastic experience. To all our old and new friends, thank you for your hospitality and gentle banter. We would love the opportunity to reciprocate at our conference in Hamilton, NZ; 7-9 May 2008.

'... Without Operators, there is no water industry' – taken from WEF Presidents speech 2006

Contributed by: **Dave Neru Executive Officer - WIOG NZ**

Technical Tip #2



"Planning is everything"

Wal Whiteside, Victorian Operator of the Year Award

The highly prestigious Wal Whiteside, Victorian Operator of the Year Award has been presented to 28 outstanding Victorian water industry operators since the award's inauguration in 1980.

The award is presented to operators of water or wastewater treatment facilities in recognition of their continued high level of performance, initiative and all round attention to detail.

The winner is presented with a perpetual plaque, individual plaque and an award of \$2,000 towards professional development.



“Owen Roberts receiving the perpetual plaque from Andrew Chapman, President AWA Vic Branch”

In 2007 we received several outstanding nominations, demonstrating the commitment and professionalism of operators in the Victorian water industry.

The task of selecting a winner for the Award was thus very difficult. This is recognised by selecting an Award winner and three finalists:

Winner: - Owen Roberts, 'us'-Utility Services

Owen has been employed at treatment plants for 29.5 years and is currently the Lead Operator at South East Water's, Mt Martha STP. The presentation of the Award to Owen, recognises the exceptional initiative and flexibility he has displayed in areas such as:

- Maintaining 100% compliance during a difficult period when the treatment plant had reached its design capacity, by meticulous attention to a range of technical issues
- His input to the design and commissioning of a major plant upgrade, including leadership during the HAZOP phase of the design process
- Playing a key role in field work associated with upgrading the sludge drying process at the Mt Martha STP
- Driving the introduction of biodiversity initiatives at South East Water treatment plants including: tree plantings, the introduction of bird nesting boxes, feral fauna eradication, etc
- Developing good relationships with the community adjacent to the Mt Martha plant
- Initiating a staff exchange with ACTEW and implementing learnings from this exchange

Our congratulations to Owen and our thanks to 'us' Utility Services for submitting his nomination.

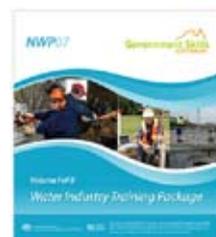
Finalists:

Melbourne Water Western Treatment Plant Senior Operators Team - Tony Cogo, Gary Flynn, Ian Meddings and Daryl Zimmer

Michael Goulding, Operations and Maintenance Coordinator, United Water Ballarat

Anthony Evans, Water Treatment Technologist, Wannon Region Water Corporation

GSA - Water Industry Advisory Committee News



The most important news from the WIAC is the final endorsement of the Water Training Package. This has been a long and complicated process and although there is a twelve months allowance for the change over, most Training Organisations will be keen to start delivering as soon as they can.

Although newly reviewed, the Water Training Package still needs some minor improvements to address concerns raised by the Committee during the endorsement period. These include:

- A further review of the Certificate IV in Water Operations to ensure that there is complete coverage of higher level technical specialisations, as well as supervision and management skills.
- The development of a Certificate II in Remote Services to replace the qualification previously used from the Electrotechnology Training Package, which is now not relevant to water operations.
- A further review of the competencies for collection and distribution at Diploma level and of the dam safety competencies at Certificate III level.

The Committee has also begun a project to develop a guide and tools for the recognition of current competencies which will promote a nationally consistent high standard of assessment of current competencies and assist in giving current staff access to the new qualifications.

Additionally, Government Skills Australia has just been contracted by the National Water Commissioner to develop a broad suite of learning resources and user guides to support the delivery of high quality training and skills transfer for the Certificate II – IV qualifications in the new Training Package.

Under the title "National Learning Resources Project" GSA will receive just over a million dollars over the next two years to develop a comprehensive range of skills development resources initially concentrating on Certificates II and III in Water Operations. The resources will support the training of new recruits and their progression to more advanced skills, using combinations of skills sets selected for their relevance to the nature of the work, the size and business of the organisation and the chosen career pathways.

The project will promote best practice within individual community needs and contexts, strongly focuses on new generation skills of problem solving, flexible work practices, creative technologies, experimentation and continuous learning.

The project to develop the resources will be managed by a steering committee representing all major water interests, who will, in turn, be contributing both existing learning resources and the expertise of their experienced operators and managers.

Essentially, this project offers the best solution to nation-wide reform in the content and delivery of knowledge and changes to attitudes and practice skills across all agencies responsible for implementing the National Water Initiative. Together we hope to employ nationally consistent standards for the delivery and assessment of certified and accredited training courses relevant to operational levels of the water industry.

For further information please contact:

Prue Madsen Industry Liaison Officer or Tamara Shinnars Project Officer
Government Skills Australia

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FAX: +61 8 8410 2842

EMAIL: info@governmentskills.com.

Life Membership Award to Barry Waddell

At the recent Victorian Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference in Bendigo the WIOA highest award was presented to Barry Waddell. In receiving the award, Barry became only the fifth ever recipient of life membership. It was great to have all four living Life Members present in the one place.



Barry is congratulated by the other WIOA Life Members, George Wall, Stan Franzi and Ron Bergmeier

A brief outline of Barry's involvement with AWWOA, WIOA and the Water Industry is as follows:

- 1979 Commenced employment with Tambo Water Board – now East Gippsland Water
- 1992 Elected onto AWWOA Committee
- 1995 Awarded AWA – Wal Whiteside Operator of Year award at Conference in Mulwala
- 95-98 Elected as Vice President
- 1997 Instrumental in bringing conference to Bairnsdale and greatly assisted with organisation of that event
- 99-00 Elected President
- 2000 Future Directions seminar held during term as Pres. Precursor for WIOA's strong current position.
- 2001- now Elected onto WIOA Committee
- 2004 Inducted as one of 5 inaugural IDIOTS awardes
- 2005 Presented 2 Poster Papers at Vic conference. Awarded 1st Prize in WITC award
Arranged Water Industry Charity Golf day at Kilmore GC
- 2006 Presented 2 Poster Papers at Qld conference. Took Annual Leave to attend and help run the Qld conference. Arranged Water Industry Charity Golf day at Kilmore GC
- 2007 Took Annual Leave to attend and help run the Qld conference.

Barry is the longest serving Committee person in the history of the Association - now well into his 15th year. This is a remarkable achievement when many in our industry seem to last in their job only a couple of years.

It is true to say that Barry much prefers to be an "Indian" than the "Chief" and it was a major test of his courage to take on the role of President. His major issue was his fear of the Public speaking side of the role, particularly at large events like the conference.

There is no question that he conquered his demons during his term as President and everyone on the Committee has observed considerable growth in Barry's character and confidence both during that time, and since.

Barry shared our vision to make the Association bigger and better and had the strength of conviction during his term as President to sound out the rest of the Members on the National issue, by running the first Future Directions Forum. Who knows where we would be as an Organisation now if we didn't do that soul searching all those years ago.

Barry's love of the Association and mixing with the Committee and Members is the stuff of legends. His athletic stature and Greek God like looks mean that he invariably ends up in the middle of many gags. He takes all this in his stride with a big smile and never carries a grudge.

Barry has freely given of his own time to travel all around the country in many cases using annual leave and RDO's to help the Association run events. This type of person is the backbone of a voluntary organisation and for this exceptional service we were pleased and proud to have Barry as our fifth Life Member.

Peter Tolsher – **WIOA President**

Technical Tip #3



“Make your signs as accurate as possible”

My NZ Experience

After convincing my wife that she would have no problems navigating her way out of Tullamarine Airport on her own, she agreed to drop me off and before long, George Wall and I were heading for the land of the long white cloud.

We arrived at Auckland Airport around 1am and I remember being surprised at how warm it was, while I watched George argue with a public phone that flatly refused to accept his New Zealand \$2 coin. Surprisingly, upon closer inspection George discovered that his NZ \$2 coin looked an awful lot like an Aussie \$1, complete with kangaroos and all - ooops.

After seeming to just get into bed, we were off again early Tuesday morning to catch another plane from Auckland to Queenstown. As we flew along the Southern Alps, I was amazed at the number of rivers and streams flowing from the mountains and even from 30,000 feet, it was obvious that our colleagues in New Zealand are not suffering from the same water scarcity as Australia.

After spiralling into Queenstown Airport nestled between the mountains, we were greeted by a friendly bunch of Kiwis lead by Stu Craib, WIOG Chairman.

As he drove us to our motel, Stu told us not to get too comfortable because we were booked in for another flight in about an hour. After dropping off our bags, we met up with Anthony Evans and Gerard Dooley and then, sure enough, we were whisked back to the airport. It wasn't long before we met our pilot "Bicky" (who's name translated to Rebecca in Aus), and the four of us were issued lifejackets and strapped into a little 7 seater that looked like it had had way too many birthdays!!



Off to Milford Sound we go

Okay... I admit that my heart rate may have increased by a couple of beats a minute already, but it wasn't until Bicky said that we were waiting for her "flight instructor" that it started skipping beats.

After a successful takeoff (well done Bic) we enjoyed a fantastic scenic flight across the mountain ranges and down to Milford Sound, where we took in some awesome views of glaciers and mountain lakes. Upon reflection, and discounting the moments where we nearly ran out of runway at Milford Sound and how our fixed wheels missed the chain mesh fence at Queenstown airport by mere millimetres, our scenic flight was a highlight of the trip.

Wednesday morning, time for serious business! George introduced me to the WIOG committee members, Dave Neru, WIOG's Executive Officer and a number of notable characters. Perhaps not surprisingly, these guys were all very welcoming and had clearly gone to great lengths to put on a well organised and very informative conference. Dave was even kind enough to offer to make it snow for me and bugger me dead, it did!



Snow on the "Remarkables"

After the opening formalities, the technical paper presentations commenced, with each and every presenter finding the mark. Although the overall event was smaller than the WIOA Victorian conference, in the absence of a large scale trade show, delegates had an opportunity to hear all of the paper presentations.

In my observation, the variety of presentations was fantastic with topics broadly ranging from water quality monitoring and public health through to trade waste management and asset maintenance & replacement.



Jason Presenting his Paper in Queenstown

Throughout the conference I had lots of opportunity to discuss the issues facing us at home with operators from right across New Zealand and while there were many similarities, not surprisingly the absence of drought, seemingly different environmental pressures and a different regulatory framework has in some cases resulted in quite different priorities for our Kiwi cousins.

A lot of my time is spent dealing with recycled water and responding to pressure from government, councils and regulators to recycle more water, yet the operators that I spoke with indicated that there is little effort being made to recycle water in New Zealand. It was also suggested that any attempt to recycle water for direct or indirect potable substitution would probably fail due to embedded cultural obstacles.

The apparent low importance of water recycling seemed to be a product of the relatively secure water supplies. As an example, Queenstown's drinking water is sourced from Lake Wakatipu and with a length of 80km, average depth of 230m and surface area of 291km²; it's not surprising that this glacier fed lake instils a degree of confidence.

At the end of the conference, I had identified with many of the issues facing NZ operators, yet still I could see that despite the many similarities, there is a clear opportunity for both WIOA and WIOG members to continue to learn from the experiences and differing circumstances of their colleagues from across the ditch. For what it's worth, I throw my full support behind the continued development of the relationship between both organisations.

I would also like to sincerely thank the IWA (Vic), WIOA, WIOG and CHW for making it possible for me to attend the 2007 WIOG Beginnings Conference (and my wife Tracey for agreeing to take on the Melbourne Airport car park).

Contributed by: **Jason McGregor, 2006 IWA Prize Winner**

Editors Note:

Whilst in Queenstown, Anthony Evans spotted this sign. Couldn't resist having a go at our Kiwi cousins



Pipes Wagga Report

Pipes Wagga is a forum held every 2 years in the regional City of Wagga Wagga designed to bring the industry together to discuss the latest advances in pipeline technology and what is happening within the water & wastewater distribution industry.

This year the forum was held on 16-18 October at the Wagga Wagga Stadium complex in the centre of town allowing delegates and exhibitors to walk back to their motels and also walk to the social functions of an evening.

There were approximately 45 trade exhibitors and 240 delegates over the three days.

The conference started with the official opening and then technology took over and tripped a circuit breaker but the keynote speaker Ross Young (Exec. Dir. WSAA) whose topic was "Managing Water in Australia – the big challenges ahead" met the challenge of no power by resorting to good old fashioned technology and delivered his paper to the delegates without the need for all this high technology.

The conference sessions took on a different theme for each session. Day one the themes covered "International Experiences, Operations / Maintenance / Asset life and Major Projects." Day two covered the "Operation and maintenance, Rehab, Technology and Innovation, Design and Assets" themes. Also on day two, WSAA presented a workshop on "WSAA code update, Revised Appraisal program, Asset Management initiatives and a discussion on how WSAA can better serve the industry."

Day 3 WIOA presented a seminar on "Water Quality Distribution Systems Management – Issues for Operators" which was a very thought provoking day and highlighted many points which as distribution people we need to take into consideration when operating our systems.

Overall the conference provided an excellent variety of papers on a number of projects being undertaken by different organisations covering environmental, safety and pipe line rehabilitation including water supply pressure pipelines. There were also a number of papers presented on different approaches to planning and modeling.

Speakers and delegates came from all around Australia and James Fisher from ADS Environmental traveled from the USA and presented two thought provoking papers on "Water Loss Reduction in a major American City" and "Oversize Water meters & Revenue Water Loss".

Social get togethers are a major part of these functions and it was good to see a couple of different events including a twilight bowls evening and a funny money night which got us up from tables, helped us to mix with other delegates and raised money to purchase a pump for a small village in Africa where the original organiser of "Pipes Wagga" Colin Ershaw is currently doing some aid projects.

Over all Pipes Wagga is one of the smaller forums held within the industry, but again it was a good way to network, gain knowledge, and pass ideas (including success and failures) on to other people within the industry. It was also good to see WIOA prepared to be involved in other forums and that they will endeavor to foster this type of relationship.

Looking forward to seeing more delegates in two years at the next Pipes Wagga and again encourage operators in the distribution sector to present papers at WIOA and other forums.

Contributed by:
**Pat Davis from
Riverina Water
County Council**



EGL Award for La Trobe University Student

EGL (Operations) and WIOA has again presented an award to a La Trobe University Albury-Wodonga third year Bachelor of Science in Environmental Management and Ecology student.

The award includes a ten week work placement with EGL, annual membership of WIOA and an all expenses paid trip to attend the WIOA Annual Conference in Bendigo. This year, the award was presented to Heidi Josipovic in recognition of her study excellence and keen interest in the field of wastewater management.

As part of her award, Heidi is working with EGL at the Wodonga Treatment Plant where she is gaining hands-on experience in Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) technology and undertaking daily sampling and monitoring. She is also assisting EGL with a study to investigate new, beneficial ways of re-using sludge, the bi-product of wastewater treatment.

EGL Manager Plant Operations and current WIOA President, Peter Tolsher, noted that by offering a wastewater management prize and opportunities for third year students to undertake industry placements, EGL hoped to nurture environmental managers for the future.

"It is a great way for local students to experience the industry first-hand and see local job opportunities. At the same time, EGL is able to draw on the skills of local students to conduct research and work on projects that staff may not otherwise have time to undertake. EGL has employed two La Trobe University graduates of the course who undertook placements with the organisation in previous years."

The EGL award is a great example of the industry and Associations supporting students studying environmental management and exposing them to the broad career opportunities open to graduates in areas such as the management of water resources, waste management, environmental protection and pollution control, catchment management, education and research.

We understand that Heidi has now been offered a full time position with EGL and after completing her studies will work at the Redcliff (Qld) wastewater treatment plant also operated by EGL.



Heidi Josipovic with WIOA President and EGL Plant Operations Manager, Peter Tolsher

Dear George,

I would like to thank you for providing me with the opportunity to attend the WIOA conference in Bendigo and for providing me with membership of WIOA.

This experience has helped me decide to pursue a career in water treatment. Whilst attending the conference, I met a lot of people involved in the water industry which could prove to be useful contacts in the future. Also, I witnessed first hand many different technologies available for water treatment operations, whilst talking to experts about their products.

By listening to the numerous paper presentations on different water treatment operation techniques and hearing about new and improved ideas on water treatment options, I gained some important background information on the water industry.

Thankyou again for this opportunity it has been one of the most beneficial experiences in helping me decide my future career path, and I hope that you can provide this award for future students so they to can benefit from it just as much as I have.

Looking forward to attending the annual conference in Queensland next year and for many years to come.

Thanking you

Heidi Josipovic

Kwatye Prize 2007

As you may have already read in this edition of the Operator, or heard from other sources, I am the recipient of this years Kwatye Prize. The aim of my project is to "investigate the possibility of improving the reliability of service" regarding reticulation sewers.

In particular, I am investigating the techniques being used to reduce sewer blockages due to tree roots. As part of my role at Barwon Water, I was aware that our blockage rate was increasing and that a large percentage (90% on average) was due to tree roots. In order to reduce the rate and quantity of blockages, Barwon Water has increased its proactive maintenance programs.

One of the questions I often asked myself was "are the processes being used the most effective and are they providing the best solution for our customers". As I was unaware of the answer to this rhetorical question, and the many other related questions, I decided to apply for this years Kwatye Prize.



Graham Thomson being congratulated by Rohan Latham from Environmental & Process Technologies (Division of Biolab)

Since the award was announced at the 2007 operator's conference, I have been busy deciding how to go about achieving the aims set out in my application.

One of my first tasks was to establish contacts with those I knew in the industry who could either directly or indirectly provide me with information regarding blockages due to tree roots. I then developed a survey form that could be circulated to interested parties so I could gather what I considered relevant information.

At the time of writing I have just finished arranging my first site visit, to Hunter Water at Newcastle, and have circulated the survey to about 8 people - I have even had one returned!

Now that I am off and running, I want to say thanks to those who have, or intend to assist me in this project, as hopefully we can all benefit from sharing our knowledge. My special thanks to Environmental and Process Technologies (Division of Biolab) and of course WIOA for making this award available and for giving all of us the opportunity to broaden our own horizons.

Contributed by: **Graham Thomson from Barwon Water**

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

John Stevens, Kenneth Fuller, Kerry Chapman, Ross Chandler, Julie Brady, Peter Field, Greg Hall, Gary McLay, Leanne Hastings, Rex Humphreys, Stewart Shipard, Richard Jones, Lincoln Dibben, Penny Van Reenen, Li Lern Lau, Michael Sun, David Heritage, Edmund Dunn, Robert Jeffery, Peter Kay, Ronald Crafter, Peter Davison, Chris McKay, Peter Miller, David Cashen, Adam Burton.

New Corporate Members include

Corrocoat Engineering, Grating Company, WEG Australia, Aquatec-Maxcon, Kyabram Rewinding Service, Dubbo City Council, Bartlett's Waste Management, United Group Infrastructure, Bathurst Regional Council, Royce Water Technologies, Process Systems.

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Next Edition

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