The Mix

wilmar

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Sisters *kickstart* careers in mills

Olivia (left) and Emily Biviano are excited to be launching their respective careers with Wilmar.

Biviano sisters, Emily and Olivia, wisely chose to ignore teachers who told them their career choices were best suited to males.

In fact, Olivia had already applied for an electrical apprenticeship with Wilmar last year when her home room teacher at school told her class that the Wilmar apprenticeships being advertised for 2021 probably wouldn't interest the girls.

But older sister Emily, who was already happily employed at Wilmar as a Cadet Draftperson, and their parents, encouraged her otherwise.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do and Mum said: 'What about this?' and I thought about it and I thought: 'That is actually what I want to do,'" Olivia said.

"The applications came out and Mum said: 'Why don't you just try? The only thing that can go bad is that you don't get it.'"

Olivia is among five females who started their apprenticeships with Wilmar this year – making up 20 per cent of the intake.

Meanwhile, Emily is into her third year of a six-year cadetship with Asset Management's Steam and Power team, which involves completing an Associate Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Emily said she and Olivia were both attracted to the practical aspects of their jobs.

"We both like doing hands-on things a lot,"

>> Story continued on page 2

Chelsea on target

The New Zealand Sugar team is on a mission to transition to 100 per cent recyclable packaging by 2025.

The target is one of five sustainability goals the team is committed to achieving to reduce the site's environmental footprint. The others are to reduce energy and water use, CO2 output and waste by 2030.

Two cross-functional teams have been set up to work towards the sustainable packaging and energy reduction targets.

Safety, Health & Environment Manager Bob Russell is part of the Sustainable Packaging project team and said a trial of paper-only bags for 25kg white sugar was in progress, with an end goal of replacing current plastic-lined packaging.

"Sustainable packaging has become a big focus in recent years, as we all become more aware of human impact on the environment," Bob said.

"We're hearing the call for recyclable packaging from our customers, as well as wanting to ensure we're putting out environmentally friendly products.

"One of the first projects involved working with our packaging supplier to replace the

>> Story continued on page 2

Tony Donnelly (left) and Atholl Flett are preparing to head to Rockhampton for Beef Week.

Heading to Beef Week

Wilmar's Liquid Stockfeeds team is getting ready to head to Beef Week.

The team has secured a site at Australia's premier beef industry event – Beef 2021, better known as Beef Week.

It runs from 2-8 May in Rockhampton and is expected to draw more than 100,000 visitors.

Stockfeed Product Manager Atholl Flett said Beef Week presented a great opportunity to further establish Wilmar's liquid stockfeed brand in the beef industry.

"Beef Week is only held once every three years, and it's a hugely important event for the Australian beef industry. We're excited to be able to showcase our Queensland-made liquid stockfeeds in this forum."

Stockfeed Relationship Manager Tony Donnelly said new collateral and product displays were being created to promote Wilmar's new SuplaFlo® plus phosphorus range.

"About 70 per cent of Queensland grazing country is phosphorus deficient, and Wilmar developed its SuplaFlo+Phos range to help graziers address that mineral deficiency.

"Beef Week is an ideal opportunity to promote the benefits of SuplaFlo+Phos for herd health and breeder success."

>> Story continued from page 1

she said.

Like Olivia, she is currently based at Victoria Mill, but lived in the Burdekin for six months last year while she worked at the region's four mills.

"I really enjoy the travel aspect of the role," she said.

"You get to spend time with other engineers. They've all got different experiences that they're really happy to share with you."

Olivia said she was eager to learn from Victoria Mill's many experienced tradespeople, who were equally willing to pass on their knowledge.

"Everyone here is really supportive and welcoming," she said.

It may not be long before both sisters are part-time students, with Olivia setting her sights on an Associate Degree in Electrical Engineering.

"In the workshop, the people who have done it say it's a really good outcome," she said.

Both sisters look forward to carving out long-term careers with Wilmar.

"There are just so many opportunities; so many different pathways you can look into," Olivia said.

"There are so many doors that can open for you in the business. You don't have to stay in the same spot for your whole career," Emily said.

"I can see myself being one of those people who ends up here for 40 years."

Olivia Biviano (right) is one of three female apprentices in this year's Herbert cohort. Christy Robino (left) is an electrical apprentice like Olivia, while Katelyn Smith is doing fitting and turning.

Chelsea Safety, Health & Environment Manager Bob Russell with one of the new paper-only 25kg white sugar bags.

>> Story continued from page 1

plastic liner in our 25kg sugar bags with a moisture proof paper-based coating that is easily dissolvable in the standard recycling process.

"We sent packed trial bags out to several key customers and have received favourable feedback.

"We are now planning a transition to the recyclable bag, which we expect to have completed by July this year."

The Sustainable Packaging team is already looking into recyclable packaging options for raw and soft brown sugar products.

Operations Manager Russell Fisher said both gas and electricity use were under review by the Energy Reduction team, with plans that include stablising refinery rate, increasing pan yields and improving boil out management.

"A primary focus of the Energy Reduction team is to reduce CO2 emissions, and we've developed a pathway to achieve this that involves reducing the baseload use of gas, and future conversion from gas to biomass," Russell said.

In-line water meters are being installed at Chelsea Sugar Factory to monitor water use in real time and identify potential areas for improvement. Plans are already in place to reduce water use within the factory's carbon plant.

Power of teamwork

Wilmar's two Yarraville-based businesses have proven the power of teamwork, delivering a high-volt solution to an electricity supply issue at the Wilmar BioEthanol site.

A new 500kVA transformer was installed on Sugar Australia's neighbouring Yarraville Refinery site in early February as a replacement power source for the BioEthanol facility.

Engineering and Maintenance Solutions contractor Jarrod Reardon said a fault was identified in the BioEthanol transformer during biennial servicing that was carried out on it and seven Sugar Australia transformers in September last year.

"Prior to reconnecting power to the BioEthanol transformer after servicing, we tested the integrity of the 320 metre high-voltage cable running from the transformer to the site's switchroom, and detected a fault," Jarrod said.

"We replaced the two-metre section of cable with the fault, and the cable was retested, but it failed after a very short time."

Generators were immediately brought in to power the BioEthanol facility while a permanent solution was sought.

BioEthanol Project Manager Gary Swan said the option to replace the failed 320 metre cable would have involved excavating 260 metres of ground on the Yarraville Refinery site, including across the only entry and exit road, through the main car park, and in a narrow corridor between the main office and site boundary.

"Replacing the cable was an expensive and disruptive option, and would mean we'd still be reliant on the existing on-site transformer, installed in 1977," Gary said.

"The preferred option was to replace the existing 175kVA No. 7 Sugar Australia kiosk transformer, which is adjacent to the BioEthanol boundary, with a new 500kVA transformer.

Yarraville Refinery National Engineering Manager Ray Clarke, Yarraville Processing and Packing Plant Operations Manager Stelios Liberatos and Engineering and Maintenance Solutions contractor Jarrod Reardon with the new transformer.

"This new transformer now supplies both the BioEthanol site and the Sugar Australia main office and amenities building, and involved installing a new low-voltage cable from the transformer to the BioEthanol switchroom."

Rolling out new *rolling stock*

The latest batch of fully-rebuilt locomotives has come off the production line at Pioneer Mill's loco workshop.

The four 40-tonne locomotives have each received a $1.7 million upgrade that includes a new cabin, engine, transmission, reversing box, electrical upgrade and remote shunting unit. New everything, in fact, from the chassis up.

The work is part of a 10-year strategy to upgrade Wilmar's entire loco fleet to achieve greater reliability, safer operation, better fuel efficiency and lower carbon emissions.

Significantly, the work is being carried out in-house by Wilmar's Integrated Workshop Management (IWM) teams at Pioneer and Proserpine mills.

IWM Assistant Work Execution Superintendent Renay Corlis said IWM's fabrication, diesel fitting and electrical teams had done a stellar job to complete four loco rebuilds ahead of the 2021 crush.

"This has been our biggest year since the upgrade program started five years ago," Renay said.

The Integrated Work Management team's Renay Corlis, Ross George, Alan Chatfield and Kieran Koppen with one of the newly rebuilt locos at Pioneer Mill.

"We've gradually built our capacity from one prototype ahead of the 2017 season to three complete rebuilds last year, and four this year."

The upgraded Kilrie and Rita Island locos will service Invicta Mill in the Burdekin, while the Cairns and Jourama locos will service Victoria Mill in Ingham.

So far, 15 of Wilmar's 40-tonne locos have been rebuilt with a new Mercedes Benz engine, Allison transmission and purpose-built Renk-Maag reversing box – a combination that delivers fuel savings of around 30 per cent.

The remaining nine 40-tonners will be upgraded by 2025. Wilmar's smaller Baldwin locos are also being progressively rebuilt.

Renay said he was proud to be part of the loco upgrade program.

"We'd be the first in the sugar industry world-wide to implement such a significant fleet overhaul.

"We produce a world-class standard and we do the work in-house."

Travel resumes after lengthy grounding

Derek Jarmaine, Gary Jack, Tony Caris, Maddy Portwig, Jason Riley, Chris Scully, Paul Roddy, Bernadette Cooper-Ellis, Jason Smyth, Paul Gregory and Kieran Seeto catching up at the Mackay Port.

Paul Gregory congratulates Shane Legood (left) and Bill Mayer on their service milestones.

After being grounded in Melbourne for a year due to COVID travel restrictions, four members of Sugar Australia's Leadership Team were finally able to fly to Queensland in March.

Led by Chief Operating Officer Paul Gregory, the team visited Racecourse Refinery and the Mackay Port during a two-day visit, which included safety walks, a review of site operations plans for 2021, and business updates with a question and answer session.

Paul was joined by General Manager Sales & Marketing Dallas Reid, Head of Planning, Projects & Procurement Bernadette Cooper-Ellis and Financial Controller Chris Scully. GM Human Resources Emma Forsyth and Auckland-based GM Operations ANZ Graeme Smith were unable to attend.

While in Mackay, Paul presented service awards to Racecourse Refinery employees Bill Mayer (40 years) and Shane Legood (35 years), and Mackay Port Team Leader Jason Riley (15 years).

Paul also visited the Glebe Island Terminal team in March for the first time since the COVID pandemic.

"It was just so refreshing to speak to our teams in person in an engaging way," Paul said.

"While video conferencing was good in 2020, nothing beats talking to people in person."

Meanwhile, the Cane Products Leadership Team held its monthly meeting at Kalamia Mill.

The team visited Wilmar's Technical Field Department, which plays a major role in the development of new sugarcane varieties.

The prefab building's 22 wall panels were poured on site and lifted into position.

Contractor Jeff Arnold, from Vesuvian, Mackay Region Work Execution Manager Sebastian Foti and Purchasing and Supply Manager Vaughan Jones check out progress on the new building.

Store reopening on track

The walls are up, the roof is on and work is on track for Proserpine Mill's new store to be open for business next month.

A team of Purchasing and Supply employees will move supplies and equipment into the new building from 6-9 April, with a view to the store being operational for site employees upon their return from Easter holidays.

The store occupies the lion's share of the new two-storey, prefab building that has been under construction since late last year.

The $2.8 million structure replaces the store and offices destroyed by fire in January 2020.

Purchasing and Supply Manager Vaughan Jones said the new store was built in a different location to improve traffic management on site, and featured a number of design improvements.

"It has a substantial increase in racking and shelving in the main storage area and has a climate-controlled storage space," he said.

The ground floor has amenities, offices and a first aid room, while the top level houses a training room and six offices.

Project Manager Ashely Sullivan, from Vesuvian, said work would continue on the rest of the building for a few more weeks.

"We expect to have the building fully completed and handed over by early May," he said.

Opportunity leads to 40-year career in *sugar*

New Zealand Sugar's Chief Financial Officer John Ellis spent his early career in North Queensland sugar mills, before transferring his industry and financial knowledge to sugar refining.

John was born and educated in New Zealand but came to Australia after finishing university.

"I had family on the Gold Coast," he said.

"I was a keen surfer so I came out and went surfing but I ran out of money, so I needed to get a job."

John was fortunate to secure a position with CSR – an opportunity that has led to a successful 40-year career in the sugar industry.

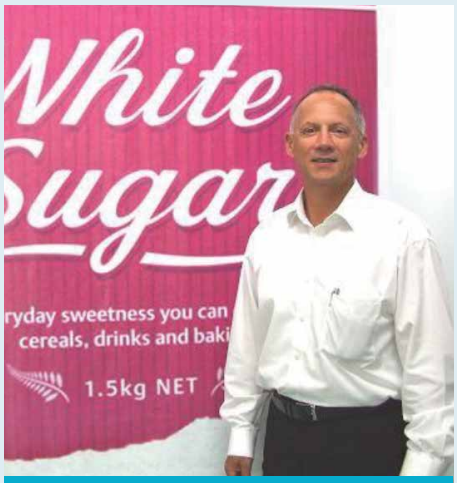
"I was recruited in Brisbane and started at Macknade Mill as a commercial officer," he said.

"I had the good fortune to work at a number of mills. I worked at Victoria Mill and also Kalamia.

"The training and support you got through CSR in those days was really great."

When John decided to head back to New Zealand at the end of 1985, he was offered a position at Chelsea.

"I was initially a financial accountant and went through the ranks," he said.



John Ellis achieved 40 years of service in March.

"I've been the Chief Financial Officer for about 15 years."

Along the way, John met his wife, Mary, who was also employed with New Zealand Sugar at the time.

"We were a bit of a Chelsea romance."

He said he was proud of how Chelsea had adapted in the face of significant challenges.

A key example was the deregulation of New Zealand's sugar industry in 1986, which nearly ruined the business when a flood of imported sugar hit the domestic market.

"We had to change the way we operated," John said.

"We got efficient on a global basis.

"It took us a few years but we really did improve the business.

"Today, we're still servicing the New Zealand market and exporting because we're globally competitive.

"Being a part of that has been fantastic."

John said it was a pleasure to work at Chelsea.

"People want to come to work and do a great job," he said.

"It's a really positive culture.

"That's why you get people like me who hang around so long."

John marked 40 years of service on 30 March.

He and his family celebrated another important milestone in March, with daughter Phoebe getting married on the grounds at Chelsea Bay.

"It all went brilliantly," John said.

"Just being able to have it there was really special for both Mary and me."

Economic contribution highlighted

Paul Giordani presenting at the Burdekin Industry Breakfast.

Wilmar pays an average of $75 million in wages and salaries to its Burdekin employees annually and last year spent $25.6 million with local suppliers on goods and services such as uniforms, boots, demolition work and crane servicing.

It also spends an average of $84 million on capital and maintenance in the Burdekin each year.

General Manager Cane Supply and Grower Relations Paul Giordani highlighted Wilmar's significant contribution to the local economy during a presentation at the Burdekin Shire Council's first Burdekin Industry Breakfast of 2021. The 17 March event attracted strong attendance from Burdekin councillors, council staff, business owners and other community members.

As part of his presentation, Paul played a video of the top cone of Victoria Mill's new $10.6 million evaporator being lifted into position, as an example of Wilmar's growing in-house manufacturing capability. The top cone was fabricated by the Integrated Work Management team based at Pioneer Mill.

"One of the many benefits of in-house manufacturing is that it supports more year-round employment for locals," Paul said.

A fact sheet highlighting Wilmar's economic contribution to the Burdekin was circulated after the presentation. It is available on the Wilmar Sugar ANZ website.

Icing Mix is cream of the crop

CSR Sugar's Buttercream Icing Mix range is a star performer, with sales tripling in the last 26 weeks, year-on-year.

A new Butterscotch flavour has also hit shelves just in time for Easter, joining the best-selling Vanilla, Chocolate and Strawberry flavours.

Exclusive to Woolworths, the all-natural Buttercream Icing Mix range can be found in 750 stores across Australia.

Goodman Fielder's Woolworths Account Manager Adam Furci said the team was excited to have secured an off-location store placement for the range for Easter.

"This promotion means that CSR Sugar's Buttercream Icing Mix will have increased shelf space in 300 stores in the four weeks leading up to Easter," he said.

Adam said he believed the increased popularity of the buttercream range was all about location.

When the range first launched, it sat with all of the other CSR Sugar products but, after a product review with the Woolworths buying team, it was moved into the baking aids aisle, where it now sits near brands like Betty Crocker and Goodman Fielder's own White Wings.

"In order to achieve the sales increase, we've won market share from competing icing products, which is something we're very proud of," Adam said.

To help share in the buttercream range's success, Goodman Fielder has donated prize packs for eight lucky readers of *The Mix*. The packs contain the new Butterscotch Buttercream Icing Mix, CSR Sugar specialty products and some new White Wings baking products.

WIN A PRIZE PACK

To go in the draw to win a prize pack, use the QR code below and fill out the entry form.

Entries close on Monday, 12 April.

Take five with …

Pieter Van Vuren

Position: Plant Manager

Length of service: I started in 2010 as an electrical engineer (looking after Yarraville and Sarina), then moved into an electrical project engineering role (Sarina, Plane Creek and Yarraville) and then became Plant Manager in October 2015

What is your role responsible for? As Plant Manager, I manage production and logistics for the Sarina Distillery, Oonooie fertiliser and harbour facilities, ensuring we safely and efficiently supply our customers with in-spec product.

What does a typical day look like for you? I start the day at either Sarina Distillery or Oonooie, checking on production and monitoring stock levels to make sure we have enough raw materials for production. Especially during rain season, managing dam levels at Oonooie takes a lot of attention, and sometimes there's a higher demand for fuel grade or high grade ethanol to respond to at the distillery. I'm also involved in daily management meetings, as well as various other meetings. I also spend time liaising with our AgServices, maintenance and Quality teams.

What do you enjoy most about your job? There is a lot of pressure but there's also not been one boring day since I've been in the role. No day is the same as the other and there is always another challenge. If I could have no major rain event/cyclone for the next 10 years, that would be awesome!

When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up? I grew up in a town called Standerton, east of Johannesberg in South Africa. Straight out of high school, all young men are required to do their national service, which involves two years initial training and deployment, and then another two years must be completed over 12 years. I got called up for service for two months every year for 10 years, while working my civilian job the other 10 months. Growing up I had wanted to become a vet but my parents couldn't afford to send me to university, so having been trained as a radio signaller in the army, I took up a job as a telecom technician initially. I eventually had the opportunity to study electrical engineering as a mature-aged student at the University of Pretoria, where I graduated in 1999. After about five years working as an engineer, I came to Australia (in 2005). I initially worked for an electrical engineering company in Mackay, before joining the Sarina Distillery team in 2010.

Who has influenced your career the most? There's been many people. I had a great supervisor when I worked in power generation in South Africa. This supervisor was great in the way that he challenged people, and he influenced me to take the plunge and go to university to become an electrical engineer.

What do you like to do outside of work? A lot of my time is spent training for running. The next big run I have coming up is the Australian Trail Ultra which is 100km in the Blue Mountains in the first weekend of May.

Centenary celebrations *a community affair*

When Invicta Mill turns 100 in August, all of Giru will be invited to help celebrate the milestone.

Giru and Invicta share a special relationship. The town did not exist prior to the establishment of Invicta and, for many years, nearly everyone who worked at the mill lived in Giru or the surrounding area.

The committee charged with organising this year's Centenary celebrations has plans to involve Giru State School students and other community representatives in official aspects of the festivities.

A full day of events will be held on Friday, 13 August, starting with a barbecue breakfast for employees and finishing with a community night at the Giru Park, featuring food trucks and entertainment.

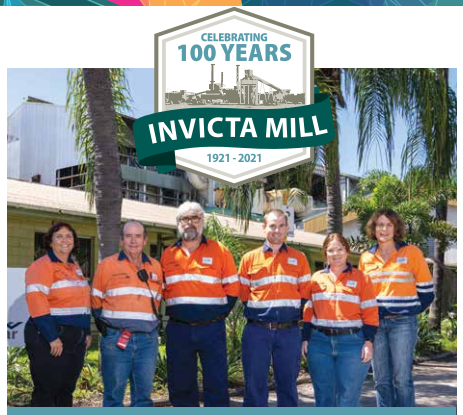
During the day, there will be an official ceremony and morning tea, guided bus tours of the mill, and an historical display at the Giru QCWA Hall.

Wilmar Programs System Specialist Paula Scarabel, who has lived in Giru all her life and worked at Invicta for more than 20 years, has taken on the job of compiling photos and information about the mill.

"We've been able to collect lots of photos and historical records, and even some old video footage," she said.

"Anyone who has photos or other memorabilia that they're willing to share for the historical display can contact me."

To commemorate the Centenary, the retired 12-tonne Invicta locomotive will be dedicated and put on permanent display at the front of the mill.



The Invicta Centenary planning committee Paula Scarabel, Daryl Stockham, Paul Turnbull, James Wallace, Katlyn Radunz and Kylie Newman. Absent: Bradley Garner.

Invicta Work Execution Superintendent Daryl Stockham and Cane Railway Superintendent Bradley Garner with the Invicta locomotive that will be dedicated to commemorate Invicta Mill's Centenary.

Paintings spark childhood memories

Jenny and Andrew Gough with EGM North Queensland John Pratt (centre).

A painting of Victoria Mill's original manager's residence brought back fond childhood memories for Jenny Gough during a recent visit to Wilmar's Townsville office.

Mrs Gough and her family lived at the Victoria Mill Estate while her father, Robert Gordon, worked at the mill as a senior manager.

She recalled being put to work peeling prawns in preparation for large parties that were held at the opulent manager's residence.

"It was a beautiful home. We used to play tennis on the court that was next to the church," Mrs Gough said.

Mr Gordon joined CSR Limited in Sydney in the early 1920s after completing his private school education.

He was sent north, to CSR's Queensland mills, initially working as a chemist.

Mrs Gough said he worked at several mills, including Goondi, during which time she was born.

Sadly, Mr Gordon died in 1954, aged just 51, while employed at Victoria Mill. He is buried in the Victoria Mill Estate cemetery alongside his wife, Dorothy, who died in 1988.

Mrs Gough said CSR paid for the family to be moved back to Sydney and went on to help fund the tertiary educations of her youngest siblings.

"They were always so good to us."

Mrs Gough stayed in Ingham and married cane grower Peter Gough, who later sold the farm and moved to Townsville, where they started their successful family business, Gough Plastics.

Mrs Gough's son, Andrew, had a chance meeting with Wilmar's EGM North Queensland John Pratt at a social gathering earlier this year.

After learning of the family's connection to the region's sugar mills, John invited the Goughs to visit the Townsville office to look at seven Kenneth Jack paintings displayed in the foyer. The paintings depict the original manager's residence at each of the seven Australian sugar mills that CSR owned in 1972.

In the *Mix*

Back from left: Loui Gaggiano, Bonny Smith, Anthony Marmara, Jo-Anne Farrell, Garth Yates, Peter Whelan, Sue Shaul, Wes Davies and (front) Ray Zanetti, Mick Hodgman, Aldert Portwig and Pieter Van Vuren enjoyed the ASMC Safety Conference dinner on Tuesday, 23 March

Sugar Australia and New Zealand Sugar CEO Bernard Duignan (left) congratulates NZ Sugar CFO John Ellis on achieving 40 years of service. A special morning tea was held at Chelsea to celebrate the milestone.

EGM Strategy and Business Development Shayne Rutherford and Marketing General Manager David Burgess hope to still be smiling when they're a couple of days into their 680km ride to raise money for Mater Smiling for Smiddy. See Sweetspot for more info.

Kerrod Bevilacqua, Darren Oar, Deon Darr and Seth Pugh with a section of the new Inkerman bagasse conveyor.

Glebe Island Terminal Planning and Logistics Team Leader Madhu Ramasanjeevaiah on the job.

IT Support Engineer Alex Tennent is helping to prepare the business for its transition from Skype for Business to Microsoft Teams.

Burdekin Grower Marketing Consultant Yolanda Hansen and Cane Supply and Grower Relations General Manager Paul Giordani at the Burdekin Industry Breakfast.

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Story ideas and photographs can be sent to info@au.wilmar-intl.com.

SUGAR Australia

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