



WASM Graduates' Association

Annual General Meeting

Friday 4th May 2010

Presidents Report for 2009/2010

Tony James

2009 was a very productive year for the WASM Graduates' Association (WASMGA) and 2010 is heading in the same direction.

I would first like to thank the current Council members who met on a regular basis during the past 18 months and continued to gather momentum in the tireless quest of supporting WASM and the WASM qualifications.

Bill Beament – Vice President
Mike Lovitt – Past President
Clive Annear – Representative for Graduates' Pre 1970
Graham Crew – Kalgoorlie Representative
Sabina Shugg – Committee Member
George Smith – Committee Member
Peter George – Committee Member
Lloyd McAuley – Committee Member
Andrew Grove – Committee Member

Thanks must also go to Karyn Lovatsis for her drive and assistance, Llesa Hawke for her ongoing work as Treasurer and finally to the WASM staff for their continued support of the WASMGA. Without these people, the WASMGA would not be able to achieve the administrative and marketing requirements that are necessary to run the association successfully.

A special note of thanks is required for Natalie Nichols (Avoca) who has worked behind the scenes on WASMGA activities outside the scope of her day to day work. She has done a great job in the implementation of the new WASMGA web site and organisation for today's AGM.

Today we need to remember and pay tribute to former WASM director Paul Dunn, who sadly lost his battle with cancer earlier this year on Easter Saturday. Paul took up his position with WASM a little over two and a half years ago and had a tremendous passion for his work. He played a prominent role in appointing new staff with strong research background to further enhance the research base of the School and made significant contributions to the Faculty planning. He was in the process of developing a long overdue far sighted strategic plan for WASM and was working on this even when his health had noticeably deteriorated. We are very grateful and respectful of the contributions Paul made to the Western Australian School of Mines.

In 2008 a strong media focus was placed on the survival of WASM courses in Kalgoorlie, when Curtin indicated that the economic viability of 1st and 2nd years in Kalgoorlie was questionable. Curtin indicated that unless at least 30 1st years enrolled in Kalgoorlie, Curtin would be forced to close the Kalgoorlie option of 1st and 2nd year. The 3rd and 4th year component was stated to be not at risk.

Towards the end of 2008 and in the beginning of 2009, the WASMGA were being asked by many stakeholders to provide a view on the intended course changes for WASM proposed by Curtin.

As a direct result of this, the WASMGA held and participated in a workshop at the Celtic Club in West Perth to gather information for the compilation of a WASM Position Statement. A special note of thanks goes to Momentum Partners and specifically Carl Adams and Sabina Shugg for facilitating the workshop.

The aim of the workshop was to collect a consolidated view from the graduates, so adequate responses could be made to the various stakeholders. The workshop identified that the key components of the Kalgoorlie based education were fundamental to the quality and type qualification that WASM traditionally achieved. It was made clear that the Kalgoorlie influence was an essential element to the success of WASM and its respective qualifications.

The workshop showed that WASM graduates understood that a clear strategy and action plan was required to preserve the school model and prevent the terminal deterioration of this world famous institution and associated courses. The graduates were clearly concerned about the ongoing dilution of their qualifications.

The graduates recognised that adequate time was required for a plan to be constructed as the many parts required detailed research and business planning. As a result the WASMGA council proposed to execute this plan in three stages,

Short term – If the requirement was to get 30 1st year students to Kalgoorlie in 2010, then a significant marketing campaign was required and cadetships would be facilitated by the graduates to encourage as many first year students as possible. At that stage the WASMGA targeted 30 x \$10k cadetships.

(Note - 16 cadetships were given out in 2010 and the target of 30 students was not achieved)

Medium term – A revised operating model was required for WASM by the end of 2009. The WASMGA were to contribute to the process of determining what the revised model would like and those sentiments passed onto Curtin University.

(Note – The WASM Advisory Board, of which the WASMGA President is a member, has been in consultation with Curtin in regards to formulating a plan. To my knowledge this work has not been done to date)

Long term – With the development of a clear plan and strategy, WASMGA are to give a clear commitment to the work required to achieve the successful implementation of the plan.

In relation to the funding of the cadetships for the 2010 year the WASMGA established a combined funding format which comprised of \$7,000 from an industry sponsor, \$1,500 from the Graduates Association and \$1,000 from the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. The funding from the city of Kalgoorlie-Boulder was originally a separate accommodation scholarship package. After discussions with the WASMGA, it was agreed to have this included in the overall cadetship package.

The WASMGA launched the cadetship campaign at Diggers and Dealers in Kalgoorlie in August 2009. A special mention is required here for the tireless work of Bill Beament who personally influenced a significant portion of the fund raising for the cadetships.

In November 2009, the WASMGA held a Scholarship Ball at the Sheraton Hotel to raise funds for the cadetships. The ball was a tremendous success raising around \$45,000 and it was decided by the committee to host another ball in 2010. Thanks to Karyn Lovatsis for her great work with the balls.

Another recruitment initiative that was held in 2009 was the “Focus on Mining” trip, held in July. The council was involved with establishing appropriate industry contacts and mine tours so that the students would get a real exposure to the industry. Council member Clive Annear together with Karyn Lovatsis lead the tour, which saw a 70% conversion rate into students attending WASM in 2010. This tour saw 20 students travel by coach for 5 days to Forrestania (Western Areas), Higginsville (Avoca), Widgiemooltha (Mincor) and Kalgoorlie-Boulder (KCGM), visiting 3 mine sites and 2 mine camps as well as the Kalgoorlie WASM campus. On their return journey, the students visited the Rio Tinto control centre in St Georges Terrace.

This year we are currently in the process of planning the trip again and have over 50 students who have applied to attend the tour. This year’s tour will begin at the Edna May Operation (Catalpa – Westonia) prior to visiting Frogs Leg (La Mancha), Raliegth (Barrick) and Leonors Operations (St Barbara).

A second shorter trip is being considered to facilitate as many students as possible this year. If you are interested in nominating your mine site to be one of the mines visited in 2010 or 2011, please speak to Karyn Lovatsis (K.Lovatsis@curtin.edu.au), who is coordinating these events. We are aiming to take the student to different mine sites every year so as to share the load among the industry.

In February 2010, I spoke on behalf of the WASMGA alongside Mr David Flanagan at the WA Mining Club Lunch. Together we expressed our passion for the School and the school’s plight to a very impressive audience of politicians, stakeholders and mining industry heavyweights. A very special thanks goes to Clive Annear who spent countless hours rounding up the guests for this occasion which was very worthwhile. It was fantastic seeing so many graduates in attendance along with past WASM Director Dr Odwyn Jones. A copy of the presentation I gave is available on the WASMGA website.

We plan to continue to show support and leadership towards the importance of WASM and what it brings to the Western Australian Resources Industry.

As well as these major events, we have managed to hold regular Sundowner events at the Celtic Club in West Perth. These Sundowners are very social and are a great way to catch up and network with fellow WASM graduates. We are managing to get between 30 and 50 graduates attending and would love to see this trend continue. These events are advertised on the website’s Calendar of Events and notifications sent out to financial members via the database. If you are aware of these events, please spread the word and get more people from your year (and others) attending.

2009 saw the launch of our own website, www.wasmgraduatesassociation.com. On this site, we advertise upcoming events within the industry and encourage members to keep their details up to date. I encourage all WASM graduates to get on there and pay their fees to get your name included on the database. The web site is available to members for use within reason. If you have an event that needs to be advertised, send your request through to WASAdmin@curtin.edu.au. We do make every attempt to honour Graduates’ confidentiality and we will limit the web site to legitimate use.

As President of the WASMGA, I have continued my involvement on the WASM Advisory Board during 2009 and 2010. There has and will be continual interaction with the university and we support the building of a sensible strategic vision for WASM. This work has been delayed due to the passing of Paul Dunn but is expected to continue with the appointment of a new Director. It’s important that this work is completed at the level required from a strong independent facilitation.

The WASMGA hosted the 2009 and 2010 Graduation Dinners. Thanks to the guest speakers at those dinners in Ray Hardy (2009) and James Croeser (2010). Both were exceptional speakers and I thank them for their contribution. I would like to see more 50 year graduates attending in 2011 and hope we can perhaps introduce 25 year graduates in the near future. Having these people attend the ceremonies is not just a celebration of the career that we have been able to enjoy thanks to WASM, but also an opportunity to mentor the industry’s newest members and welcome them to a life full of opportunity.

2010 has commenced as another year fighting for the sustainability of WASM in Kalgoorlie, but we are also driving to increase membership of the Graduates’ Association. The stronger the Association, the stronger our stance in the industry. I urge all of you to not only join up today, but to encourage your fellow graduates to get on the database also.

I have represented the WASMGA as the President since 2002 (8 years) and although I am happy to continue, I am also aware that fresh leadership may also be what the Association needs. So at the members’ discretion I will act accordingly.

On a last note, I would like to make mention of this year’s Gala Ball being held on 11th September at the Sheraton Hotel. We are hoping to get at least 300 people attending. Going by the success of last year’s event, this “Arabian Night” promises to be another unforgettable evening and one that will be enjoyed by all who attend. Westrac have once again signed up to be our Diamond sponsor for the night and we have Barmingo and Curtin signed up as Gold sponsors. If you would like to sponsor the event, please grab a Sponsorship package from the back of the room or speak to Karyn Lovatsis or Bill Beament.

I would like to thank you all for your continued support and welcome you to join us for a few drinks in the bar downstairs at the conclusion of the meeting. Golder Associates have very kindly sponsored the event, so be sure to say hello to one of their representatives.

TONY JAMES
WASMGA President,
4th June, 2010