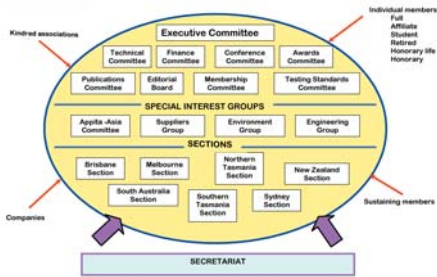


Letter from the Secretariat

Special Interest Groups – a vital part of Appita

Most members have a good idea of what Appita does, but do they know the interrelationships between the various groups that result in our activities? Many of you have attended a Conference, short course or local section meeting, but a group of committees carry out a vital role that may not always be obvious to the majority of members. These are our Special Interest Groups.



As the name implies, these Groups comprise members with a common interest in a particular area of activity for our industry. It is worthwhile describing what these groups do, and this may stimulate your interest in one or two. Contacts for all these groups are given on the Appita Information page on page 79 of this issue.

Appita Asia

The Appita Asia Special Interest Group was formerly the Appita Sponsorship Committee, which sponsored attendance by industry people

from Asia to the Annual Conference. This was at a time when the Asian industry was still developing. In 1993 the name was changed to reflect changed activities. The Appita Asia Committee arranges major Symposia on trade and other industry relationships between Australasia and Asia; it co-sponsors the Melbourne Section Young Speakers Contest final, allowing the winner to use increased prizemoney to further develop their career by travel to Asia; it provides a regular column in Appita Journal (see page 8 of this issue) and has arranged and helped conduct short courses in Asia. Their current activities are the Symposium 'Adding Value to the Pulp and Paper Industry', to be held at the 58th Annual Conference in Canberra in April 2004, and examining the possibility of running a course 'Principles of Pulping and Papermaking' in China. The current Chairman is Ron Bain.

Asset Management

A new Group, still being developed and led by Geoff Covey, the Asset Management Group will focus on the assets that make up our industry, whether they be capital equipment, people or intellectual property. Plans are for seminars at the Conference, and other activities relevant to those interested.

Engineering

Once very active, this Group has waned in recent years but steps are being taken to revive it. The major activity is a workshop/round table at the Annual Conference, and there are plans to set up an email network of interested people. The topics of interest to this Group are project management, planning, maintenance, condition monitoring and reducing downtime. Roberto Miotti chairs this Group.

Environmental

The Environmental Group has been very active over many years, and under the current chairmanship of Peter Sligh will conduct two

Seminars in 2004, in Melbourne (19 – 20 February) and Rotorua (11 – 12 March). The Group currently has about 30 members.

Industrial IT

Following the visit of Appita Visiting Speaker Ole Fadum in 2002, there was sufficient interest to set up a new Information Technology Special Interest Group. This is still being established, under the guidance of Bob Johnston and David Peano, and hopes to be able to facilitate networking amongst members with similar interests, and arrange seminars. Their interest focus on applications of IT to the paper industry, from process control to business management systems.

Suppliers Committee

The Suppliers Committee is the most structured of all the Special Interest Groups, with a Committee elected by Appita's Sustaining Members, and a secretary. The current Chairman is Ken Price and elections are held at the Annual Conference. The Suppliers Committee is responsible for arranging the Operations Forums at the Annual Conference, and has a major input into the format and conduct of the Exhibition.

If you are interested in the activities of any of these Groups, and want to participate, contact the people listed on the Appita Information page, or the Appita secretariat. You can also get information about them from our web site.



Ralph Coghill
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Appital Letter

A Proud Heritage

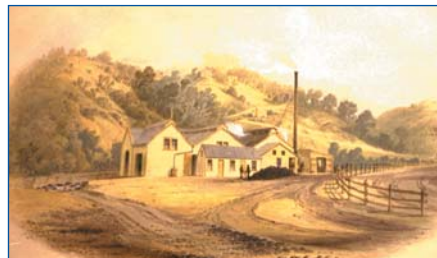
Appita as an organisation does a good job of recognising people that have contributed to the industry and to Appita itself. The awards depend on you, our members, nominating someone. Some of our awards and statistics are worth noting:

- LR Benjamin Medal for outstanding contribution to the industry 28 people
- Honorary Life Membership for outstanding service to Appita 15 people
- Oertel Nadebaum Award for distinguished service to Appita 18 people
- Certificates recognising milestones in length of membership, eg: 34 fifty year members

We hold the recipients of these awards in high esteem – they have advanced our industry and/or contributed to our organisation. We have, in my opinion, done a good job of recognising them.

But, a big BUT, we have not done a very good job recognising our heritage. I think we can do better in this area. Our cover this month shows a collage of scenes depicting the 'then and now' of NZ's industry. My interest in this was sparked on a recent holiday in my hometown, Dunedin in the South Island when I learnt more about NZ's first papermill. Woodhaugh is a flat area in the beautiful, wooded Leith Valley. Leith Stream flows down the steep sided valley and in the 1870's Edward McGlashan chose this site for his papermill. The Central Government and the Otago Provincial Government wanted to promote industrial development and so provided incentives of

£1500 each for the first to produce and sell 50 tons of paper. Two men took up the challenge – James Bain in Southland, who set up the Mataura Falls Paper Mill Company, and Edward McGlashan. The story is a fascinating account of competition, perseverance and struggle. The Otago Paper Mills Company at Woodhaugh started up on 1 May 1876 making coarse brown wrapping paper. The Mataura mill followed at the end of June that year. Production increased at both mills, which amalgamated in 1905 and a greater range of products was manufactured. However, high production costs and severe import competition caused the Board of Directors to close the Woodhaugh mill in 1936 and concentrate all production at Mataura.



Otago Paper Mills, Woodhaugh, Dunedin, 1880 (painting in Otago Early Settlers Museum)

The sad thing to me is that there is nothing tangible to recognise this pioneering effort by McGlashan and to recognise the beginnings of the NZ industry.

What about Australia? Well Kiwi readers, I have to tell you that the Australians beat us. Papermaking started in Australia in 1818 with hand made paper being produced up until the 1860's. The first commercial machine paper

was made in 1868 at Ramsden's mill in Melbourne and at the Australian Paper Company mill in Liverpool, NSW. Ramsden's Mill was opposite Flinders Street Station, where Southgate now is. It later became the APM Melbourne Mill and the first head office for APM. Ian Dench tells me if you sit in Walters Wine Bar you are close to where the headbox of No.2 Machine stood. The *Evening Star* was printed on the first hundred sheets of paper from the mill on 4 May 1868. The main product was wrapping paper but newsprint, fine writings and coloured papers were made using old rags, sacks and recycled paper. The mill ceased production in 1968 after a century of papermaking on the site. There is nothing along the Yarra site today to show where Samuel Ramsden began papermaking in Australia back in 1868.

What is there today to recognise the birthplace of our industry? The sad fact is - very little. I would like to have some form of recognition for our heritage in Australia and New Zealand. Our industry is a major player in the economy of both countries and it seems appropriate that Appita initiates some recognition of our beginnings. Perhaps this could best be done in tandem with local councils and heritage organisations. Let me know what you think about this? And how you feel we can best recognise our Proud Papermaking Heritage.



Tony Johnson
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