

## \$5,000 Donated for New Computers at Skills Centre

Gladstone Schools Engineering Skills Centre (GSESC) students can now enjoy the benefits of new computers purchased with a \$5,000 donation from NRG.

Head of Skills Centre, Greg Wade said it is important for the students to keep pace with changing technology and the new computers and program upgrades would provide the tools for them to do this.

“The ongoing support we receive from NRG and their staff play a major role in the success of our program which over the past six years has delivered work ready future engineering trade apprentices,” Greg said.

“The Skills Centre is proud of the strong links it has with NRG and other industry partners and we greatly value their ongoing support and commitment,” Greg added.

Specialist Training and Development John Marxsen is a regular visitor to the Skills Centre instilling strong industry ethics, mentoring students and presenting regular safety briefings to the students.

John is also a member of the Skills Centre Advisory Committee ensuring that the program continues to meet the needs of industries future work force.



*GSESC students Steven Potts and Joseph Richardson check out the new computers with Toolooa High School Teacher, Peter Hammett and NRG's John Marxsen.*

“Computers are an integral part of the work place and an important element of work readiness training to allow transition from school to work,” John said.



## GILG Website Launched

Most employees may have heard about the Gladstone Industry Leadership Group (GILG) which was established in December last year. Well now you can check it out online!

The group, which consists of some of the region's largest industries including BSL, NRG, QAL, Rio Tinto Alcan Yarwun and Cement Australia, was created to provide a unified industry approach to areas such as environment, sustainable growth and liveability in the Gladstone region.

NRG's General Manager Glenn Schumacher represents NRG on the GILG board and is Chairman of the Board, which provides strategic direction to the organisation.

To raise awareness of GILG a new website has been launched. The website - [www.gilg.com.au](http://www.gilg.com.au) contains a range of information

including industry licences, latest media releases, reports, and educational information.

CEO Kurt Heidecker said the website was a key tool for member industries to increase their transparency.

“There is so much on the site, but the highlights are the Frequently Asked Questions which cover all of our member industries and the interactive forums which are easy to join, enabling the community to have their say on issues of importance,” Kurt said.

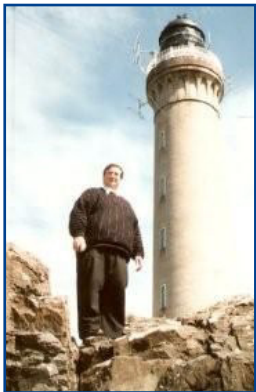
“The website also provides an opportunity for the community to voice concerns and to bring issues onto the industries radar.”



## Shoey's UK Adventures

There are few things more boring than being subjected to somebody else's holiday stories and photos so I think asking me to write a story for the Gladrag was a way of everybody around GPS avoiding being exposed to my stories on a personal basis. So, sorry but here it is! For two weeks at the beginning of June I took some holidays and went to the United Kingdom to do some train trips and fulfil one of my life long ambitions of visiting some of the great places of the Industrial Revolution. It was a great time for me to "recharge the batteries" and to learn a lot. You can read all you like about a place and what happened there but there is something special about actually visiting it.

As some of you know I am a "Train Nut" and just absolutely love trains and railways. (It is the smell of the steam, the oil and burning coal. You can just feel all of that living energy waiting to get out). I did a steam train trip in the Western Highlands of Scotland from Fort William to Mallaig and back. Now, this is an absolutely beautiful part of the world and the site of some great history. Many of you who have



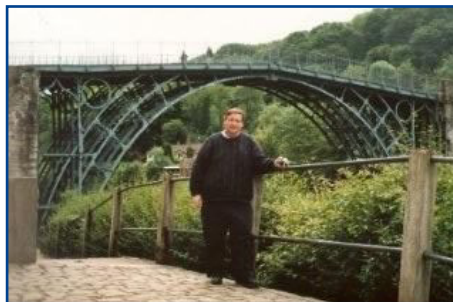
*Ardnamurchan Lighthouse on the West Coast of Scotland*

been exposed to the Harry Potter movies will actually be familiar with some of this rail line as it is the site for the filming of the "Hogwarts Express". The beautiful viaduct that the train goes over is the Glenfinnan Viaduct which is at the head of a beautiful valley that leads down to Loch Shiel. This is

the site of the start of the Scottish Jacobite Rebellion led by Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745.

Mallaig at the other end of the line is the port on the West Coast of Scotland from which the ferries leave for the Isle of Skye and the place made famous by the retreat of Bonnie Prince Charlie after his defeat by the English. I did not make it to Skye; something for next time.

I spent sometime in Glasgow and wandered



*The Famous Ironbridge Bridge*

along the Banks of the Clyde, the birth place of so many great ships of a bygone era. I also learnt that Glasgow was the site of the first Singer sewing machine factory outside the USA. The factory was opened in Glasgow, in 1867. The floor area was nearly one million square feet and seven thousand workers were employed producing on average 13,000 machines a week.

Not only was the Glasgow factory larger than any of Singer's American plants it was the largest sewing machine factory in the world, finally closing in 1980. I did not know that. Sadly all that is left is a railway station called Singer.

In England I made it to Ironbridge and Colebrookdale in the Severn Valley. Ironbridge (the site of a modern power station) is best known for being the first bridge in the world to be built out of iron, hence the name. The bridge, built in 1779 is still standing and is beautiful. It is built

as if made from wood with mortice and dovetail joints. You can walk over this 230 year old bridge. Nearby Colebrookdale is the birthplace of the modern iron and steel industry. It was here that a man named Abraham Darby perfected the secret of smelting iron with coke in 1709.

Also in the Seven Valley, I got to spend a day on the Severn Valley Railway. This is one of the world's greatest preserved railways. There were steam engines in every direction I could look. It was just great (you can see why I am still a bachelor!).

One place I visited that caught me by surprise was the Wedgwood (china) factory and museum. I thought about two hours would pull this up. I mean how many china plates can you look at! Well, I was wrong. I spent the whole day there and still did not have enough time. I would recommend this place.

Well, that is about enough. I did also do a little bit of work whilst I was in England. I



*A Great Western Tank Engine on the Severn Valley Railway*

visited the Lynemouth Power Station for a day to talk about mills, slagging and carbon emissions. I also spent a day at a coal forum at Anglo Coal in London (They are the owners of the Callide Mine from where we get some of our coal). A bit of a "busman's holiday," but great.

SHOEY.

## Visit by Shadow Energy Minister

Last month Gladstone Power Station hosted a brief visit by a Government delegation to discuss the impact of the Emissions Trading Scheme and renewable energy legislation on Gladstone.

The delegation included the Honorable Ian Macfarlane MHR, Shadow Minister for Energy and Resources accompanied by Policy Advisor, Mr. Graham Edney and Rio Tinto Alcan Manager External Affairs, Jim Singer.

During the visit there were discussions on the impact of the carbon legislation on Gladstone Power Station's operation and the possible technology options available to minimize the impact.

General Manager Gladstone Operations, Glenn Schumacher relished the opportunity to discuss the future role of nuclear, coal and the range of renewable technologies.



*General Manager Gladstone Operations, Glenn Schumacher with Federal Shadow Minister for Energy and Resources, Ian Macfarlane, Advisor to Ian Macfarlane, Graham Edney and Rio Tinto Alcan Manager External Affairs, Jim Singer.*

# Roll out of ZIP Program Underway

The roll out of the Zero Incident Process (ZIP) program is currently underway with all employees across site having the opportunity to attend the two day seminars conducted by Sentis.

Sentis are a Brisbane based team of psychologists and safety professionals who specialise in enhancing safety and leadership performance.

ZIP is a cultural change process designed to assist organisations like NRG to reach their goal of a zero injury workplace.

Manager Health, Safety, Environment and Community, George Bennetts said the program was designed to empower people to take control of their personal safety by becoming more effective within the systems they work with.

Specialist Safety Systems, Allison Hutton added that the program was not a flavour-of-the-month program.

“Zip is designed to help people identify their personal reasons to stay safe,” Allison said.

A ZIP Implementation Team comprising a cross section of employees is being put together to ensure the process is embedded across site during the next 18 months.

Sentis facilitators, led by Peter Kennedy are conducting the ZIP training off site until October.

Prior to attending ZIP training, all employees are being given a letter which provides an overview of what ZIP is and what to expect from the training.



*Sentis Facilitator Peter Kennedy has been conducting the ZIP training for GPS employees.*



## Hazard Reduction Projects Continue During Unit 4 Overhaul

During the recent Unit 4 overhaul many modifications to plant were conducted as a part of the hazard reduction program.



*Guy checks out the new hinged rear pass access doors that have reduced manual handling of the doors.*

Superintendent Units Mechanical, Guy Ayscough said hinging the rear pass doors and re-routing the rear pass damper actuator power supply conduit from head height to floor level had been undertaken.

“Each of the four rear pass doors weighs approx 40 kgs each and when we lifted them off by hand we would have to tie each door to the top of the walkway which also restricted access. By hinging the doors we have reduced the potential for injury and provided improved access for the fitters. The hinges we have fitted are a prototype and may require some further development in the future,” Guy said.

Unit 4 Overhaul Co-ordinator - Fuel, Paul Cupitt said that during a recent audit it was found that the pulveriser bearing guards did not meet current standards and so new guards have been installed.

“The previous bearing guards were not easy to remove and there was an area where people could get their hands in. The new bearing guards will improve installation and removal and provide greater protection for employees working on the bearings,” Paul said.

Guards have also been upgraded for the pulveriser hydraulic arm on the rotary controlled valves and in another separate modification to the boilers, new enlarged

access doors have been fitted to the primary air ducts to improve safety.

Specialist Projects Mechanical, Rick Thomason said oil drain and vent valves for the turbine oil system had been relocated due to access problems.

“Previously it was very difficult for the fitters to work on the valves behind the main oil coolers, so we have relocated them by putting in new galvanised piping and new ball valves which will make them easier to operate,” he said.



*Paul inspects the new bearing guards which will provide greater protection for employees.*

## Archie Enjoys Rainforest Experience

Station Electrical Plant Services Employee, Archie Lowe returned from the Atherton Tablelands last month after participating in the Gladstone Power Station Earthwatch Fellowship Program which funds a two week field research project. Archie reflects on some of his experiences of the trip.

I was really looking forward to taking up the two week scholarship on 17 June which was to focus on climate change in the rainforests of the Atherton Tableland.

I've always been interested in the environment and felt the trip would be a great hands-on opportunity to gain experience in the field.

We arrived in Cairns and met up with the other volunteers including three PhD students and another two volunteers like myself. We were all introduced to our team leader Dr Steve Williams, a rainforest ecologist and his research assistant Collin Storie.

We left Cairns via a troop carrier from James Cook University and drove up through the Atherton Tablelands to the South Johnstone Forestry Camp which would be our base for most of the next week.

While I had driven through the tablelands before I had never really appreciated the true beauty of the area. Upon arriving we pitched our tents and were given a brief safety induction along with information on logistics and sampling techniques.

The purpose of our expedition was to gain an insight into the fragile nature of rainforest ecosystems and an appreciation of the threats they face from global climate change.

As a volunteer I was involved in helping to collect data which would be used to build better models to predict the effects of climate change.

Generally we worked in groups of two or three doing bird surveys, leaf litter trap emptying, leaf litter insect sampling, taking environmental measurements and spotlighting for frogs and possums.

Spending so much time in the rainforest you soon got to know some of the hazards in the form of ticks, leeches, stinging trees and wait-a-while palm fronds but this was soon forgotten when I

had the opportunity to see platypus for the first time in a creek just down from our camp.

Typically we would start work at dawn doing the bird surveys, have a second breakfast at 9am and work through until late at night spotlighting for various nocturnal animals. Naturally it was not all work and we did have breaks during the day when we could swim in a rainforest pool or just relax. At various times we were also required to do cooking and cleaning duties.



Archie gets up close and personal with some of the local wildlife.

Towards the end of the first week we had a recreation day in which we had the opportunity to take the scenic train ride from Cairns to Kuranda. While in Kuranda we visited the butterfly farm, tropical bird park and Koala Sanctuary which were all memorable experiences.

Overall I really enjoyed the fellowship program. Working with the research team was a fantastic experience. I not only gained a greater understanding of how fragile our environment is but I really appreciated the dedication of the researchers and their tireless efforts to make a difference and improve our understanding of the environment. They are a credit to their profession. I'm really thankful for the support from NRG and would thoroughly recommend the experience to anyone.

*Each year Earthwatch enables approximately 4000 volunteers to assist in 140 field research projects around the world.*

## New Electro-Chlorination Transformer Installed

The first of two new replacement electro-chlorination transformers was lifted into place on 16 July marking the start of the replacement program.

Superintendent Electrical Projects, Scott Ferrier said the existing oil filled transformers have been in service for over 20 years and maintenance costs have made them uneconomical to use.

"The new transformers were designed and manufactured by a Queensland company. Their design is based on a dry type transformer negating the need for cooling / insulating oil, producing a more environmental and maintenance friendly solution," Scott said.

To overcome the overheating problems in summer the new transformers were designed with a greater maximum capacity and a new roofing structure.

Scott said during factory load tests of 7000 amps, no significant temperature rises were recorded within the cabinets.

"This is a good result given that normal operating load of the chlorination cells are 5000 to 5500 amps," Scott added

Commissioning of the first transformer will occur in August with the second to be installed before summer.

## Virtual Walks a Great Success

Congratulations to all the walking teams, their team captains and the workplace co-ordinators for making the latest virtual walk from Cooktown to Healesville (Victoria) a great success.

Wellness Committee member David Lahey said eleven teams had participated in the 6,400km walk.

"The walk started on 11 May and followed the route of the Australian Bicentennial National Trail which is the longest marked trekking route of its kind in the world. First team over the line this time was "Not Couch Potatoes" followed by "Unhampered Half" who finished three days later," David said.

To date six virtual walks have been conducted at GPS since 2006 with the first being a walk from Gladstone Power Station to Flinders Power Station in South Australia. Earlier this year employees completed a walk from Woomera to Albury.

David said the virtual walks were part of state government's 10,000 Steps Active Workplaces Program designed to promote increased levels of activity.

"It's really about encouraging people to adopt a healthier lifestyle by increasing their physical activity."

"On a personal level I found that monitoring my pedometer before going home motivated me to do additional walking after work. It even motivated me to do extra walking around the district on weekends and through the break between walks," David said.

# Justine's a Girl on the Move

Ultra Systems Technology (UST) engineering consultant Justine Van Der Werf is a young lady on the move.

Born in Germany and hailing from the small country town of Tiaro, near Maryborough Justine readily admits that she surprised a few of her friends and family when she decided to pursue a career in mechanical engineering after leaving school in 2004.

"I was brought up on a cattle farm in a small rural community so the thought of a country girl wanting to take up an engineering career seemed a bit foreign to many of the guys I worked with in the cattle yards," Justine said.

While pursuing a career in a predominantly male industry was never going to be an issue for Justine, the move to Brisbane to study at the University of Queensland was not something she initially looked forward to.

"Brisbane is such a big place and it's difficult to get to know people on a personal level. After my first year of engineering I was keen to use the Christmas break to get back into the country. I applied for a position at the Curragh mine in Blackwater and was thrilled when they accepted me. From then at every opportunity I followed my feet back out into more rural settings working at Stanwell Power Station, ACIRL

and Tarong Power Station in the following years," Justine said.

Now five and a half years into her career Justine has been steadily accumulating a wealth of knowledge in the areas of coal slagging, pulveriser performance and boiler furnaces.

"I initially came here last year to work with Clinton Windsor on the Wandoan coal trials and when Clinton indicated he could use a technical person to help with several asset management projects I jumped at the chance."

Since starting here in March Justine has been working on the implementation of the new PAS asset management system, researching plant performance data, setting up an asset issues register and investigating plant equipment items which are underperforming.

Justine said she was keen to develop her knowledge in the production area and is really appreciating the support she receives during her time on site.

"Everyone has been great to work with. Since it's an older power

*Justine has been working with Clinton Windsor on several asset management projects.*

station the employees really take pride in looking after the plant. There's a lot more ownership and I think that's critical in promoting a good working environment as well as taking better care of the assets," Justine added.

Depending on how the future works out, Justine and her partner are considering a more permanent move to Gladstone.

"There are some really nice areas just outside Gladstone which are fantastic for weekends. I especially love Byfield National Park. The beaches there are great for surfing and the 4WD trek out is icing on the cake. In the meantime I'm very happy to get the opportunity to learn as much as I can while I'm here," Justine said.



## Refurbishment of B Route at Coal Unloading Begins

Following the successful completion of the early portion of the coal unloading upgrade project, work on the refurbishment of B route at the coal unloading facility commenced on Monday 13 July. The successful tenderers for the main portion

of the project were electrical (MIE) and mechanical (Monadolphous).

Fairbairn Engineering Services Project Manager, Gordon Low who is managing the coal unloading upgrade project, said the refurbishment of B route would last for several months with recommissioning of the route expected to begin early October.

"The station will continue to accept trains through the night to allow work to be completed during the day with the exception of two total shutdowns in July and August."

The first shutdown will be in late July to split the existing 415V switchboard physically so that the B route 415v switchboard can be removed while trains are being unloaded via A Route. The second shutdown in mid August will allow for the change over of the distributed control system cabinets to their new location," Gordon said.

The initial mechanical works will involve refurbishment of the magnets and widening of the grizzly bars to reduce coal spillage. This will be followed by the changeover of the gates and vibratory feeders on the bottom of the hoppers.

It is expected the main mechanical works will be completed without a total cessation of coal deliveries.



*A magnet from the coal unloading facility is taken away for refurbishment.*

## Apprentices Complete Probationary Period

NRG's ten first year apprentices were urged to continue their life long learning by General Manager, Glenn "Shoey" Schumacher in a presentation held earlier this month to recognise the successful completion of their first three month probationary period.

In his presentation Shoey congratulated the group on reaching the first milestone in their careers.

"It's not just the skills and knowledge you pick up while working at the station. This is the first step in a journey of life long learning. How you develop as an adult is important to us. We want you to achieve your very best in all your future endeavours," Shoey said.

Specialist Training and Development, John Marxsen encouraged the group to seek assistance from the superintendents and mentors if they had any personal concerns during their apprenticeship.

"Don't be afraid to ask questions. We are there to help you if you need support. What you do now will lay the foundations for the future," John said.

Manager Maintenance Martin Thomas further encouraged the apprentices to celebrate success and also learn from their mistakes and work towards being the best they can.

It's now up to each of you to seize the opportunity to make a very satisfying and rewarding career. We are here to help you grow as people and it's up to you to decide where your apprenticeship will take you," Martin said.

With their basic training complete, the apprentices and trainee will be rotated through the various workgroups every four months.

Each apprentice/trainee is assigned to a superintendent who is there to assist them with any problems that may arise. Mentors in the workgroup also assist by ensuring that competency requirements are met and any work related enquiries are answered.



*Tyler Stross and his dad caught up with Ray Que at the apprentice function.*

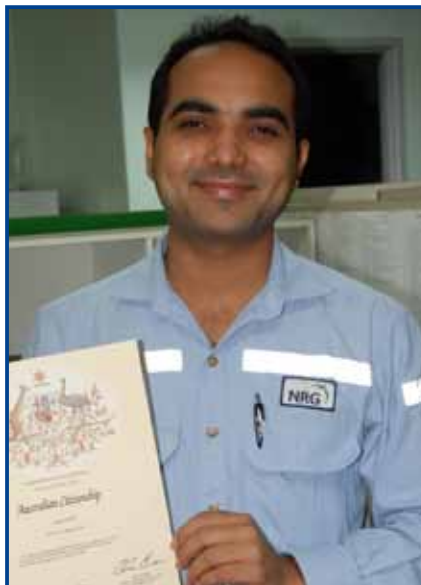
## Gagandeep Gains Aussie Citizenship

Information Services Officer, Gagandeep is now a proud new Aussie after gaining citizenship last month in a formal ceremony at the Gladstone Regional Council Chambers.

Originally from a small town called Ghagga in the Punjab in Northern India, Gagandeep has lived in Australia for four years. He moved to Rockhampton in 2005 where he completed his Masters in Information Systems at the CQ University. Prior to that he worked as a data base designer and programmer in the Department of Information Technology in Punjab.

Gagandeep said he was keen to move to Australia as it was a multicultural country and not overly populated like India.

"Everyone I've met has been very friendly and made me feel very welcome. I'm proud to be an Australian citizen," Gagandeep said.



Since arriving in Australia Gagandeep has been keen to see more of the country and he has enjoyed exploring North Queensland, the Whitsunday's, Sydney and Melbourne.

A lover of fine Indian curries, Gagandeep admits he has also grown fond of the traditional Aussie barbecue of steak and sausages.

Gagandeep is looking forward to his wife, Shampa moving to Australia next month once her visa is approved.

*Gagandeep with his Australian Citizenship Certificate.*



## Success for Karate Kids



The Queensland State Shotokan Karate Titles were held on the 14 June at Biloela PCYC. Gladstone was well represented and fared well in the medal tally. In particular, Danni Thomas (daughter of Martin), in only her second year since taking up Karate, took home three medals.

Danni took out first place in the Senior Women's Team Kata, second place in the individual 12 to 15 years free fighting and third place in the 12 to 15 years girls team Kata.

*Danni Thomas proudly displays her medals won at the recent State Shotokan Karate Titles.*

Gladstone Power Station was also well represented by second year electrical apprentice, Jon Redshaw who put in a sterling performance to bring home a second place in the Open Mens Free Fighting, second place in the Open Mens Kata, third place in the Open Male Team Kata and second place in the Team Kumite (team fighting). For his all round efforts Jon was also presented with the Senior Spirit Award Trophy.

Given their recent good form, Jon and Danni are looking forward to competing in the National Shotokan Titles to be held in Gladstone in September. Jon has been competing in the sport for 11 years and holds a Second Level Black Belt (Nidan).



## Getting Personal with Specialist Analyst Support Andrew Cronin

### ***In the short time you have worked at the station what's been your impression of the plant and people so far?***

The most impacting thing I noticed was the strong feeling of "ownership" by the community for the plant and its operations. The employees at NRG take a real pride in the performance of the station and its contribution to the community. People here are very approachable and willing to provide help and time for someone new like myself.

### ***What have you enjoyed about your new role?***

I've always enjoyed number crunching and turning that analysis into useful decision support information. The Specialist Analyst Support position has definitely got that in spades. The role monitors, analyses and reports on key process and commercial parameters and provides the breadth to ask the questions "Why is it that way and how do I contribute to making it better?" This monitoring and analysis of key plant and commercial processes and their alignment with the framework of existing commercial agreements such as the IPPA makes for very interesting work.

### ***Tell us about your previous roles and experience.***

I've spent quite a few years in the Electricity Industry, predominantly in commercial, market and finance roles. Prior to NRG, I worked for Tarong Energy Corporation in their Finance and Commercial, and Marketing and Trading Departments. The majority of my experience has been in market facing risk in the National Electricity Market and its evaluation and management. My roles have included Market Analyst, Senior Energy Risk Analyst and Energy Risk Manager.

### ***What things attracted you to NRG and Gladstone Power Station?***

Although I had worked in the industry for some time, most of my exposure was through the National Electricity Market and how an energy company positions itself within that market. This provided some exposure to the operations of a



Andrew Cronin

power station, but at a fairly high level. NRG provides me with the opportunity to understand power station operations at a much closer level, whilst giving me scope to employ the financial and commercial skills developed in previous roles.

### ***Tell us about some of your interests and hobbies.***

My number one hobby is fishing. Upon arriving I bought myself a new boat and have been out and around the local area as much as I can. Perhaps more than I should

if you ask my wife. I also enjoy travelling and have spent time working and living overseas. Good wine, great food and good company is always a bonus too.

### ***What do you like about living in Gladstone?***

I like the strong feeling of community and the balance of work life and play.

### ***Where were you born and where did you do your early education?***

I was born in Bundaberg and attended Bundaberg State High School. I then went onto the University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba and graduated in 1996 with Honours.

### ***Tell us a little bit about your family.***

I'm married to a lovely lady, Andrea. No kids yet but we're working on it. I have three brothers and one sister.

### ***What is your favourite childhood memory?***

Going on fishing trips with the old man.

### ***At home I like to cook....***

Generally Asian cuisine - anything from Japanese to Indian. I have recently taken a real liking to fish curries, but am yet to master cooking them.

### ***Someone who makes me laugh is.....***

Carl Barron, Ross Noble, Dave Hughes and Jimeoin. For authors I enjoy Ben Elton and Douglas Adams.

### ***What music do you enjoy listening to?***

The classic Brit sound is right up my alley - Oasis, Arctic Monkeys, The Beatles, The Cure, The Seahorses, The Stone Roses and The Manic Street Preachers. For something a little more relaxing, then a bit of modern jazz a la St Germaine is good.

## New Operators on Board

New operators, Tony Tankard, Steve Lund and Allan DeAraugo are looking forward to developing a long career in the operations section at NRG following the completion of their Certificate IV in ESI Generation Operations.

During the 18 month course, each of the trainees spent twelve months learning the theoretical skills in the training centre with the remaining six months spent working on shift with the production crew as their mentors.

As a former GPS apprentice Tony described the course as a steep learning curve but one which was very satisfying.

"The first twelve months was full on with a lot of theory. Being a former tradesman I thought I had a fair bit of knowledge about the plant but there is always a lot more to learn," Tony said.

After more than 19 years on site in the mechanical area Steve Lund was

appreciative of the support from the other trainees.

"I thought we complemented each other really well and it was great to be able to draw on other people's experience," Steve said.

With no prior knowledge of the power station before starting his traineeship Allan DeAraugo said the training provided exceeded his expectations.

"This type of training is unique in industry and we would never have been able to do it without the support of our training officers Alan O'Rourke, Darryl Kropp and Ian Talty. Steve and Tony with their plant knowledge also provided great support. While doing on the job training I also received valuable guidance and support from experienced operators who freely helped me along. The instruction provided was excellent and the simulator, along with the valuable training aids, really helped us get through the course," Allan said.

Training and Development Officer, Alan O'Rourke said completing the course was a major milestone and he thanked each of the trainees for their determination and persistence.

"Training these blokes was a pleasure and they certainly made my job very easy," he said.



New operators Tony Tankard, Allan DeAraugo and Steve Lund demonstrate their new skills under the watchful eye of Training Officer Alan O'Rourke.

## Where are they now? – Dan Whitmore

### **What period did you work at the station?**

I started as a mechanical apprentice in January 1993 and left the station in February 1997. I was employed by Transfield on construction at the QCL expansion straight after my apprenticeship then returned to the station from January 1998 to December 1998 to do a shutdown and the fire system upgrade project for Rick Thomason.

### **Tell us about your time working as an apprentice and some of the other people you enjoyed working with at the time.**

From memory there were five electrical and five mechanical apprentices in our year.

The five electrical were Bruce Wright, Daniel Miller, Justin Barnicoat, Greg Coleborn and Gav Maitland while the other four mechanical were Laurie Cosgrove, Andrew Sibley (who still works there), Steve King and Mark Gill. They were a great bunch of guys but unfortunately I don't get to see them too often anymore. Some of the tradesmen that I enjoyed working with were Glen Kiernan, Troy Smith, Brad Maitland, Gerry Costello, Robert Sweeney, Neil Smith, Steve Lund and Dave Hoffman.

### **NRG apprenticeships are highly regarded in the local community. How would you describe the training you received during your time at the station?**

The facilities and quality of the trainers who looked after us during our apprenticeship were excellent. Our apprentice trainers were John Marxsen, Jeff Hunt and Neil Grother. They were really good guys and were passionate about leading us in the right direction. I ended up playing cricket against John while doing my apprenticeship. I could bowl "bouncers" at him and get away with it on Saturday's. Problem was I had to face up to him at work on Monday.

I worked at QAL and BSL at various stages after leaving NRG and after seeing the facilities they offer their apprentices, NRG's facilities were certainly the envy of others.

### **What are your fondest memories of working at the station?**

Nine day fortnights were always good when you're a teenager and obviously getting the chance to see what happens in the "real world" after high school was good experience. Having a trade background has

certainly opened plenty of doors for work opportunities since the completion of my apprenticeship.

### **What do you miss about living in Gladstone?**

I spent just over 30 years in Gladstone so obviously I miss the friends and family side of things. I certainly miss the fishing, crabbing and spending the day out on the water in the boat.

The five minute trips to work are a thing of the past. You can normally get the sports section of the Courier Mail read while waiting in traffic on the way to work down here.

### **Your dad Bill still works at the station in the stores. Do you get the chance to catch up with him much?**

I talk to the old man almost every week. I don't get home too often but he's been down a few times with mum to visit but I think it's the grandkids that are the main attraction. We've been to a few games of footy, soccer and cricket which I think he enjoys.

### **What have you done since leaving Gladstone?**

I left Gladstone in 2007 to take up an internal promotion with Golding Contractors as the Business Development Manager for South East Queensland. My responsibilities include maintaining relationships with Golding's current client-base, building new client relationships, and creating new business opportunities to assist in the achievement of the company's business plan and target turnover.

### **What do you enjoy about living in Brisbane?**

We have the opportunity to go to plenty of things that would normally be too far away to access on a regular basis. The soccer and footy at Suncorp Stadium and the cricket at the Gabba are a good way to spend a day out. Our camper also gets a fair work out in surrounding areas such as Bribie Island, Brunswick Heads, Ballina, Byron Bay, Kingscliff and Fingal Head.

The kids have plenty more opportunities in Brisbane which is also good for their progress.

### **Tell us a little bit about your family**

My wife Kylee is a dental nurse and she works a five day fortnight at Brookfield Dental. The remainder of her time is spent organising the kids and running them around. We have two children Geordie (9 yrs) and Anna (7 yrs). Geordie is at Nudgee Junior College and Anna is at Kenmore South State School.

My father, Bill, as most of you would know, still works in the main warehouse at NRG and cycles to work everyday on his motorised bike. Mum has retired a while ago now, although with seven grand kids she is busier now than she ever was. My two older brothers are married and still live in Gladstone.

### **Do you still keep up with any GPS employees?**

Besides my father the only other person I talk to occasionally is Glen Kiernan. I think it was his advice on females when I was younger that has convinced me to stay in touch with him. He's a real clean cut bloke. Even after a day's work at the station he still comes out looking really clean.

Before I left Gladstone I used to regularly run into John Mann and Nev Beckman at touch footy, both of whom are still capable of showing the young blokes a clean pair of heels on the touch field.

*If you know of a former employee who may be interested in participating please forward their contact details to Gary Macnamara ext 504.*



*Dan and his family have happily settled into the Brisbane lifestyle*

## Service Register – July 2009

The NRG Service Register recognises employees who have completed 10 years service or more in the Queensland electricity industry and who have been employed at GPS since the Sale of the Station (31/3/94). This register is for employees whose anniversary falls during the month of July.

41 years	Bob Shields	28 years	Peter Christopoulous,	26 years	Howard Thomson
32 years	John Norris		Paul Vanderlist, John McGhie,	22 years	Eric Surmon, Brad Maitland
30 years	Maurice Neill	27 years	Jim Hackett	20 years	Les Smith
29 years	David Kent		Bob Watts, Allan Thomas,	18 years	Peter Ambrose
			Doug Thomas, Kris Petersen,	16 years	Des Hall
			Graham Elliott		