

New Zealand Insulators, 2016

January

Full production in the Temuka factory started on the 11th January to help us keep up with the forward demand for NZ and Australian customers. Keeping with tradition the 2016 NZI catalogue was delivered to all our customers. Helping with demand we appointed some new staff to join us in the Temuka factory. Our monthly H&S meetings start with a re-invigorated enthusiasm and we also received a quick visit from our past GM and current Director Greg H.

February

Everyone enjoys our first staff BBQ breakfast update of the year. We appoint a new storeman Raza for the Auckland distribution centre as Rebecca has to leave us due to a serious illness of her young daughter.

Another Quality Audit completed and Telarc confirm our accreditation renewal of AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008. (again we pass with flying colours). The NZI Super15 rugby sweepstake gets underway (note to myself I need to get better with my picks). Our first fire drill of the year sees everyone safely evacuated and recording completed in 4min and 32 seconds.

March

Health & Safety retains a high profile as we get some new committee members joining the team and we get to grips with new H&S legislation. Training is boosted and a new system for managing training records is created. The warm weather necessitates the need for extra water coolers in the factory to keep everyone hydrated, ironically the same week as everyone gets organised for selecting their free issue NZI winter clothing. Easter Bunny makes an appearance in the factory dispensing Hot Cross Buns and Chocolate treats.

April

All staff take part in the NZI Annual Hearing tests and the factory gets systematically checked for hearing risks (a clean bill of health for everyone including the factory) Daylight saving ends and normal factory start time of 6:00am is a challenge while we all adjust our body clocks.

The Quality Assurance meetings continue each month as we continue to improve on our ISO 9000:2015 accreditation. We complete a site Earthquake drill which is completed in record time.

We give the staff café an overdue paint job and makeover. Free company wide influenza injections are offered to help keep us healthy over the coming winter period.

May

Robin B celebrates 50 years working at NZI, a great morning tea with family and friends attending to retrace Robins history within NZI – an amazing effort from Robin, a very special gentleman. Regular on site visits from our EAP services continue, which provides all of NZI staff a support network with free confidential third-party support and counselling service if ever required.

June

We complete our annual porcelain crushing (recycling) programme with a mobile crusher setup onsite in Temuka. This process recycled 600+ tonnes of customer and NZI porcelain, ready for reuse in our manufacturing process. A nice environmental feeling to recycle that amount of porcelain, as opposed to filling landfill.

EEA conference was held in Wellington and once again we had a fantastic exhibit and used this event to release the new Polesaver products to the NZ market.

Our financial year ends with some good highlights these were overviewed at our quarterly staff breakfast BBQ with the normal cuisine flair.

July

We encounter a few mechanical issues with a couple of bits of plant (high pressure slip pumps and filter press), it's times like these that the combined knowledge in our 94-year-old business comes to the forefront and a solution was found without affecting production. We start to get excellent yields and results from our new CNC lathe but as usual no resting on our laurels, so it's still work in progress as we continue to modify to improve the CNC lathes efficiency.

August

We appoint Steve R as Sales Manager, to be based in the South Island to support our sales team. We review and update our emergency contingency plan just in case of a catastrophic event. Our new website www.nzinsulators.co.nz goes live, primarily to improve functionality and upgrade site security. Stocks of the new Polesaver product arrive from the UK and start to flow out the door. Our driers all benefit from the addition of a new humidity drying system which enables us to speed up the drying process and improves the overall product yields.

September

We started the month with a regular fire evacuation drill in Temuka, we even had the fire brigade turn up (although that part was unexpected). The Netzsch extruder gets some refurbishment work done, just in time as the A&G Price extruder suffers some mechanical issues and gets sent to Thames for a rebuild. We start a native flax and grasses planting programme at our Kakahu mine site as we continue our environmentally responsible land ownership and resource management. Robin B decides it's time to retire (or just slow down a bit) after 50 years plus with NZI, what a fantastic effort.

October

We add extra pallet racking to the Kumeu distribution centre to optimise the facility – amazing to see how much stock we can fit in when its well organised. Some hidden chef talents get exposed at another quarterly staff BBQ breakfast/business update. Final approvals are received from the company owners/directors for the purchase of another CNC lathe and an automated pull tester (serious plant items), once commissioned these will improve our efficiency and QA.

We make a special run of limited edition collectable products and donate them to Temuka School's 150th year reunion which was held over Labour weekend in Temuka.

NZI again attended and exhibited at the Connexis Annual Linesman/Cable Jointers Competition which was held in Christchurch, as expected it was another good event. In 2017 the event is scheduled to be heading back to the North Island (Mystery Creek Hamilton).

November

The SF extruder gets readied for a rebuild once the Price Extruder is recommissioned and back onsite in Temuka. Work continues with the humidifier sprayers and control systems across the factory with special attention on the maturing rooms/driers, all in preparation for a long hot & dry South Canterbury summer. The All Blacks finally faulted and broke their winning streak, with the Luck of the Irish ending their 111-year famine.

December

Last minute adjustments to the new 2017 catalogue (these will be out any day soon) so keep an eye out for them. Some finalisation of January 2017 price reviews and planning of the factory start-up all consuming a reasonable amount of time.

But at last there's a little slow down and a chance to look back on the year past and our successes and get ready for our Christmas function, festivity and celebrate another great year in the history of NZI.

Over the year we celebrated these staff milestones, all celebrating their place in the NZI 25 years plus club: Ian C - 25 years, Peter C - 25 years, Gary A – 25 years, Debbie C - 26 years, Heather G - 29 years, Roydon F - 32 years, Craig J – 32 years, Rayleine P - 37 years, Warren C - 36 years, Dave J - 40 years and then Robin B with a staggering 50 years.

I reckon that's a fantastic effort – well done team.

Thank you all for the support during 2016 and we all hope 2017 is another year to remember.

Chris van der Werff
General Manager