

JANUARY

The Temuka factory started full production on 7th January, we had some staff starting a few days prior making sure the factory was prepared for the start-up. Things progressed like clockwork, which was attributed to a good shutdown prior to Christmas and excellent forward planning for the start-up – well done team.

Any down time in production was capitalised on by our maintenance team, completing upgrade work on the scrap blunger and general R&M ready for a busy year ahead. We finalised some R&D work on our CNC lathes to improve optimisation and efficiency. We continue our staff recruitment campaign, increasing staff numbers to keep up with manufacturing demands.

FEBRUARY

Revitalised efforts start on the audits of our SOP's (standard operating procedures) Each of the 700 + SOP's identify how a specific (extra ordinary task) is completed at NZI. SOP's are essential to retain our consistency and high product yields whilst helping create, simplify and monitor an effective system approach to our manufacturing process, keeping NZI aligned with our well deserved ISO9001:2016 accreditation and approvals.

Our owners and Tiri Group Directors schedule a factory visit, meeting management and reviewing our newly completed R&D work, great to have this team on site to see NZI's progress first hand.

We schedule the 1st of our ¼ly staff updates, including the traditional BBQ breakfast and presentation.

MARCH

Contractors complete a makeover of the NZI owned quarry at Kakahu, improving road access and drainage management, we also stockpile raw materials to an area suitable for all year access. We've "won" Kakahu Sand & Clay here since 1903 (check out the updated photos on our website)

The NZI Quality Assurance system receives an external audit, QA is an essential part of business and this commitment was reflected with a successful audit, the external auditor providing positive comments and rating NZI in the top 5% of companies audited – well done team.

Some of our older ball mills struggle to keep up with increased demand due to the design but we continue with our automation plan, updating from mechanical drives to electronic variable speed drive systems, which is fantastic. Our NZI Emergency Contingency plan for the Temuka Factory & HQ, Kumeu warehouse & office gets an update (hopefully it never gets utilised)

APRIL

Daylight saving kicks in and coincides with our annual issue of winter clothing for all staff (hard to beat the Merino/Opossum fur socks) especially on a cold day.

We all enjoy an extra long holiday as Easter & Anzac day coincide and everyone at NZI enjoys a 10 day break.

Our driers start to all receive a bit of extra care and attention as we update controllers and move their optimisation and efficiency up another level.

Debbie S joins the NZI "25 Year Club" as our newest member.

MAY

Our annual Influenza vaccinations and Hearing/Health Checks get underway, protecting us from a few winter ailments and keeping us in good shape.

Our regular WIP and Raw Materials stocktakes keep the production part of the factory focussed on stocks of raw materials, while the stores assembly and dispatch areas focus on the regular full inventory counts.

Our weekly improvement form recipients continue to take a good haul of chocolate home each week as prizes for their great improvement ideas, plus the monthly draw for cash vouchers. Having a good idea has never been so easy!

JUNE

We start thinking on the planning of NZI's 100-year Celebrations, just like a quality insulator this all takes time, NZI was registered as a company in 1924 but we have been making insulators since 1923 and a lot earlier than this, on our existing site.

We appoint a new Operations Director (Bev) to manage/oversee all the Finances, Health & Safety, QA and Administration.

EEA (Electrical Engineers Association) Conference at Sky City Auckland proves to be another successful NZI event, providing an opportunity to catch up with the key players in the industry, our exhibit focussed on the traditional NZI products and also items from Narada (off grid power solutions) and Long & Crawford switchgear maintenance spares and a focus on NGK-S FSD LV switchgear.

As per usual the NZI movie (recently updated) provided a considerable amount of interest providing a great overview of how much skilled work is required to manufacture, test and supply the NZI Temuka manufactured insulators.

JULY

Temuka cops some heavy winter rain, proving a test for our roof and drainage system resulting in a few puddles on the factory floor but we were up for the challenge and business carried on regardless. Our maturing room had a few humidity control issues, creating an in-depth review of the process/procedure and after some simple modifications, we are now getting better results than previously expected, once again it's not about the problem, its how we fix it and what we learn from it, that really counts.

We create and implement our plan to increase and optimise the output of the factory with new technology, process improvement and adding extra work hours. It doesn't take long for us to see a positive increase which aligns with 5-year usage forecasts.

Plans for this years (early) Christmas party get started, seems ages away yet.

AUGUST

At NZI we encourage customers to inspect our factory, everyone is amazed at the effort/skill required to manufacture NZI quality products. Only then, can they understand how & why we put a true 25 year warranty on our NZI product.

We also had a visit from an ex employee, Ron S who completed 25 years service with NZI (1950's /80's) and was originally relocated to NZ from the UK specifically for the role at NZI. Ron was very complimentary on the quality of what we are now making and was very proud of the fact that NZI has grown back and offering a wide product range, whilst competing with imports.

We continue to export (on average) a full shipping container of product every month to Australia and other international destinations (at NZI we prefer to export, opposed to import. That's way better for the NZ economy)

Our Price/SF and Netzsch clay extruder trials continue as we continue to push for better yields and optimisation of our factory.

SEPTEMBER

Tiri Group (NZI's Owners) provide business support to NZI as required. Its fantastic to have the support and knowledge in the wider group of companies to call on "as and when required". Scott E the Tiri Group CFO spent some extra time in Temuka to provide support while key NZI staff were on leave and help with some training.

We change up the traditional staff BBQ breakfast meeting to a Pizza lunch, nothing that 400+ slices of pizza can't fix!

NZI exhibited at the Connexis Linesman Competition in Napier, a great event (even if the weather was a little fickle). It's great to be able to exhibit and support the industry, many existing customers made their way to our site along with many new faces wanting to know more about NZI and of course our NZI story.

As per usual the NZI movie was well received with most people not realising the skill, time and effort which is required to manufacture our porcelain insulators. There were also many school groups who came through and they showed great interest in the industry and of course NZI's 95+ year history and story was of great interest to most of them, in particular recycling of our NZI insulators which is a special point of difference. Caring for the environment and

sustainable manufacturing is something we all need to be focussing on for ourselves and future generations.

OCTOBER

We continue the "upgrade theme" with our Ball Mills and No 3 gets the "full monty" which makes it safer, more efficient and improves reliability to help carry us through many more years of production, by no means a cheap exercise but an essential part of business for NZI.

Our Quality Assurance (QA) system receives the annual review of objectives, making sure that NZI is focussing on things that are important and essential to providing quality products, meeting all appropriate standards with full traceability for our customers.

Daylight saving kicks off (summer must be on the way), we continue our 6.00am start and 2.30/4.30pm finish times.

NOVEMBER

Our Health & Safety policy gets the annual overhaul and update of objectives, these objectives are made up of what's important to us and the health and safety of our team and those who work on our site and use our products, it is real important to get this stuff right.

Time for us to get ready for our Christmas function, which is always a good event to get our country wide staff and partners all in one location to celebrate another fantastic year in the history of NZI.

DECEMBER

As per usual we shuffle a few last minute changes to our revised 2020 NZI product catalogue (these will be out any day soon) so keep an eye out for them. We are also completing some final adjustments to the January 2020 price reviews. We have some staff working through the Christmas period to complete some urgent customer orders and also get on top of some factory/plant maintenance. Our plans are in place for the start-up and locking in our production schedules for Jan/Feb/March/April 2020.

But maybe at last, there's a little slow down and a chance to look back on the year past and our successes

Over the year we celebrated these staff milestones, all celebrating their place in the NZI 25 years plus club: Debbie S – 25 years, Peter Q – 27 years, Ian C – 28 years, Peter C – 28 years, Gary A – 28 years, Debbie C – 29 years, Heather G – 32 years, Warren C – 39 years, Rayleine P – 40 years, Dave J – 43 years

We all believe its been another successful year – well done team.

Thank you all for the continued support during 2019 and we all hope 2020 is another year to remember.

Chris van der Werff | General Manager