



## Industry achievements recognised

By Helen Ketton, AWA Communications Manager

Earlier this month the achievements of individuals and organisations in the NSW water industry were recognised at the AWA's NSW Water Industry Awards.

The annual awards celebrate and promote the outstanding work achieved by the water sector in NSW and once again, the standard of entries was very high.

### The winners

The Sydney Catchment Authority was awarded the NSW Program Innovation Award for the Tallowa Dam Environmental Flows and Fish Passage Project.

The program was developed by Sydney Catchment Authority to improve the quality of water flowing from the Tallowa Dam and restore the Shoalhaven River ecosystem by facilitating the movement of fish at the Dam.

The winner of the NSW Infrastructure Project Innovation award was SewerFix Wet Weather Alliance.

The Alliance, established by Sydney Water, was recognised for delivering a complex project to separate stormwater and sewerage systems in congested parts of Sydney.

Despite facing a number of challenges the project was successfully delivered under budget and weeks ahead of schedule.

The Cost of Carbon Abatement Tool also triumphed for Sydney Water, winning the NSW Water Research Merit Award.

The Cost of Carbon Abatement Tool identifies and assesses opportunities to reduce carbon emissions as well as cost effective ways to reach reduction targets.

The NSW awards also recognise individuals who have displayed a continued commitment to the water industry or who have the potential to play a large and influential role in the industry in the future.

Mr Owen Karsen, Manager for Asset Planning at Sydney Water, was named NSW Water Professional of the Year.

Owen was recognised for his work on the development of enhanced water quality within the Hawkesbury Nepean as well as for his role as a mentor to many engineers and scientists in his years in the water sector.

The NSW Young Water Professional of the Year was awarded to Kate Miles, Senior Engineer at AECOM.

Kate has over seven years experience in the water, environment and project management industries and has worked in both the public and private sector on a broad range of water, wastewater and reuse projects.

University of New South Wales student, Louise Gates, was awarded the Sydney Water Gold Medal, an award that recognises the most outstanding student in a water-related project or subject.

The final award receipt of the evening was NSW Branch President Cheryl Marvell.



She was honoured by the Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovellers for outstanding, meritorious service above and beyond the call of duty.

### 2010 Scholarship winner

The winner of the 2010 Peter Cullen Postgraduate Scholarship is James Hitchcock, from the University of Technology Sydney.

The proposed research is entitled 'The role of estuary inflows in structuring the plankton community in the Bega River; importance of environmental flows in supplying dissolved organic carbon and inorganic nutrients'. The research will assist in developing a greater understanding the role of freshwater inputs into estuaries.

More pictures from the Awards are on page 5.

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## Editors Note



Well what an exciting past few months! You can see by this jam-packed issue that there has been a lot happening in the world of water...!

Sydney's Desalination Plant is well up and running. Promotion of the water industry and of sustainable water management is ongoing by volunteers, local community groups and water industry professionals.

There have been a few water events such as OzWater and there are plenty of more water events coming up.

The 2010 Water Industry Awards night was held on 5 May evening at the glamorous venue

Watersedge, Pier One.

Well done to Despina for another well-organised, successful event! Great music, food and drinks and a lively and humorous MC entertained us while we enjoyed a spectacular view of the Harbour Bridge!

We were glad to see many of the leading faces from the industry in particular, the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists, the Minister for Water along with Peter Cullen's family members.

Congratulations to all the winners and finalists of the awards for their hard work and achievements. I am proud to congratulate our very own Cheryl, Marvell NSW Branch President who was presented the Gold Shovel from the Select Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovellers by Chris Davis for "outstanding, meritorious service above and beyond the call of duty".

Cheryl may have been surprised but all that know her know of her hard working nature and that she is well deserving of the award. The Chair of the NSW YWP Committee Kate Miles also won the "NSW Young Water Professional of the Year" award – congratulations Kate!

It is great to see we have so much talent and hard working people in our AWA Committees!

Good luck to the winners in their entry into the equivalent AWA National Award category. Hope to see you on Wednesday 21 July at the free event at Zenith Theatre, Chatswood to hear presentations from some of the award winners.

I encourage everyone to start thinking about nominating projects/outstanding individuals for next year's Water Industry Awards, as it is such a prestigious honour.

Peter Cullin's wife Vicky gave a personal moving and inspirational speech about her world-renowned husband's life work and passion for water resource management.

It was heart warming to see that Vicky has carried on the passion and legacy of her husband and a great contributor to the water industry in her own right.

Vicky along with The Hon Phillip Costa, Minister for Water presented The Peter Cullen Post Graduate Scholarship to James Hitchcock, from the University of Technology Sydney.

Don't forget to submit your or your children's water artwork/photos to Despina or myself on 12 July for a prize for two people to go to the 2010 Heads of Water Dinner (read more about it in this issue!)

Even with our catchments filling up and Sydney's Desalination Plant being up and running (you can read more about it in the next issue of Newsdrop) – please remember that water is a precious and valuable resource!

## President's Bit



Last week was Volunteer Week in Australia and I was reflecting and applauding the job that our AWA State committee's and volunteers perform for the good of the water industry.

Happy Volunteer Week to all.

I can only recommend that if you have never done anything in the volunteering space then give it a go. The rewards can be surprising.

What a wonderful month May has been with our annual awards night. I won't go on too much as there are a number of articles contained

in Newsdrop.

It is my favourite night on the AWA calendar as we get the opportunity to praise our best State projects and people.

Congratulations to all. I must also recognise our sponsors of the evening, as I was remiss on the night – the shock of being given entry

into the Secret Society of Sanitary Sludge Shovellers obviously threw me.

I would like to thank Chris Davis and my fellow SSSS members and let them know that I am quickly being taught the rules of the society from my manager Greg Cawston – an old SSSS from way back and also a past AWA Federal President.

I have a feeling though that I may be one of the few that have actually used a shovel to move the odd stray sludge pile!

To the Reed Group, Bovis Lend Lease, Tyco and Sydney Water thank you for your sponsorship and continued support.

Please accept my apologies for not mentioning that on the night.

The invitations for our Heads of Water Dinner have been sent and I am happy to report that we have sold half the tables in the first few weeks.

If you and your company are intending to come along I can only encourage you to be quick.

With Despina organising the event, the night promises to be one of our best.

Hope to see many of you at our free Award Winners seminar in July.

Please come along and see why these people and projects were recognised.

# Sydney's desalination plant up and running

By Julie Sundqvist, Sydney Water Desalination Project.

On Thursday, 28 January 2010, Premier Kristina Keneally switched on the pumps at Sydney's desalination plant.

This sent around 55 million litres of water through the new 18 kilometre pipeline from Kurnell across Botany Bay and in to the main water supply at Erskineville that day.

Since then, the plant has gradually been increasing its capacity and is now producing almost 250 million litres of water a day.

At full capacity, the plant can supply up to 1.5 million people in greater Sydney as part of all of their water supply.

The power needs of the plant are offset by renewable energy from a wind farm in Queanbeyan.

The plant is now in a two-year proving period, to ensure it performs to Sydney Water's specifications.

This also allows for the plant's performance to be fine-tuned. During this time the plant will generally run at or close to its full capacity.

Customer enquiries after the go-live peaked at about 41 calls but there are very few, if any, calls each week.

Most customers are curious about whether they are receiving water from the plant – some even say they are looking forward to tasting it.

Interestingly, the comments received on a change of taste in the water have so far been mainly from areas that aren't receiving desal water.

On 19 April, The Minister for Water, Phillip Costa, officially opened the plant –unveiling a plaque with Sydney Water's Chairman, Tom Parry and Managing Director, Kerry Schott.

Representatives from Blue Water Joint Venture who build the plant and the Water Delivery Alliance who built the pipeline also attended.



The private sector partners were thanked for their hard work and the community was thanked for their patience.

## Quick project facts

Over 5,000 people worked on the project since the start of construction

Over 75,000 cubic metres of concrete used, including the largest concrete pour in Australia

Over 1,500 tonnes of reinforcing steel used in plant construction

More than 36,000 reverse osmosis membranes

800 metres of pipeline was microtunnelled in Botany Bay to avoid seagrass beds

Only 1.3 km or 7% of the total pipeline route goes through residential areas

# Water Art Competition and Mailbox



## WaterArt Competition

Do you have artistic ability? Then this is the competition for you!

The NSW AWA Branch is running an art competition! Art submissions can be in any art form – photos or a painting/drawing/ graphic design that express the importance and significance of water to you.

The winner will win two tickets to Heads of Water 2010 (worth \$198 per person), which will be held on 6 August 2010!

Entries from all ages from adults and children are welcome. Please send submissions to Sharmila sharmila.lakshmanaa@sydneywater.com.au or Despina dhasapis@awa.asn.au by Monday 12 July.

## Mailbox

If you would like to submit an article, have any suggestions/ comments about Newsdrop or on water issues – please email them to sharmila.lakshmanaa@sydneywater.com.au

# OzWater

By Kate Miles, Senior Engineer – Water, AECOM

This year's OzWater Conference was held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre and ran from March 7-11.

Once again, it was a raging success, attracting over 1200 delegates and 1400 exhibitors.

This cements the event as the biggest and best water industry conference in Australia.

The diversity of papers meant that there was something to cater to every expertise and interest. The topics included climate change, water reform, decentralised systems and process improvement.

Particularly impressive were the keynote speakers, who provided a lot of insight and presented with passion. Between the conference paper presentation sessions, a number of workshops were held throughout the conference.

The first workshop was the Young Water Professionals workshop on 7 March Sunday afternoon, which was the first event of the conference.

YWPs from across the country spent part of their weekend brainstorming strategies for adapting to climate change with respect to carbon emissions and energy efficiency.

The workshop scenarios provided a real world context for the exercise that encouraged brainstorming and group work. It was also a fantastic opportunity for YWPs from across the country to develop their own business connections.

The YWP program continued with a breakfast on Tuesday morning, and was also attended by AWA Board members and senior members from the industry.

The session's topic was Re-Engineering Your Career, particularly relevant



given both the recent financial crisis and the many opportunities that are available to young people in the industry.

The Gala dinner was held on Tuesday night and featured jaw dropping entertainment, as well as the presentation of the National AWA Awards.

The YWP of the Year was won by Alix Campbell, the Undergraduate Water Prize was won by Samuel Cleary and the Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize was won by Stephanie Reed.

It was wonderful to see so much encouragement for YWPs at such a significant water industry event.

The Water Services Association of Australia and the International Water Association (IWA) also led a two day Cities of the Future Workshop during the conference.

The outcomes of the workshop will inform a 'city of the future green paper' to be presented at the IWA Cities of the Future workshop in Montreal later this year. The closing ceremony was Amanda Hazel's first official duty as our new National YWP President.

Amanda's speech provided an overview of the conference's YWP program and discussed some of the challenges and opportunities the industry faces. The OzWater Plate was also passed to the OzWater 2011 Chair, Don Bursill, who invited us all to OzWater in Adelaide next year.

# Cook's River - Seeking a healthy waterway

By Rachel Wisniewski Jakuba, Project Manager  
Cooks River Sustainability Initiative

The Cooks River Catchment has long been an area of residential and industrial activity.

Flowing from southwestern Sydney into Botany Bay, the Cooks River has suffered extreme degradation over the last 200 years as a result of vegetation removal, artificial channel modification and being used as a drain for sewage, industrial and domestic waste, and stormwater.

Community groups have been advocating for improvements to the health of the river since the 1920's.

The Cooks River Valley Association was formed in the 1950's and is a very active community organisation today.

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of May, they held their annual Community Forum at the Canterbury Girls High School. There was an excellent turnout of community members and local politicians.

Around 300 community members visited stalls where organisations had information on projects and programs such as the Mudcrabs, a community group who do bush regeneration and rubbish removal along the river.

There were presentations from the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (SMCMA) and the community coordinator of the Cooks River Streamwatch Monitoring Program.

The SMCMA is managing \$2M worth of federally funded works to improve river health including building or rehabilitating wetlands, installing bioretention systems to filter stormwater run-off, and installing gross pollutant traps.

Cheers erupted when the SMCMA announced that only 10% of the project costs were spent on administration with 90% going directly to works.

Community Streamwatch monitoring has

revealed that, in many locations in the Cooks River, water quality is not considered safe for primary and secondary contact.

A panel of politicians including Anthony Albanese, Carmel Tebbutt, and Robert Furlo, spoke of their vision for the Cooks River and answered questions from community members.

The community was pleased to hear that all the politicians want to see a healthy river but also expressed their desire to see more action towards making improvements.

The Cooks River Valley Association Forum was an excellent example of how a well-organised and passionate community group can have a strong impact on natural resources management. The strong community interest and involvement may be the most important asset for changing the river's reputation from one of the most polluted rivers in Australia to a vibrant urban waterway enjoy by aquatic life and the community.

## NSW Water industry recognised at awards.



## Grab Sample



Sarah Loder

Process Engineer, City Water Technology

Sarah has a Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) from The University of Sydney. She began working with consulting firm City Water Technology four years ago and has been involved in various water quality investigations, system modeling, process design and operation of desalination and water reclamation pilot plants.

Recently, Sarah has been focused on the roll out of operation and maintenance procedures across a range of treatment facilities in various parts of Australia.

### Most vivid childhood memory involving water?

Awe and fear of the power of water when crossing the English Channel in a storm.

### What was your first job and how did you get it?

Legal Clerk – I was at my parents' office one school holidays when the lawyer next door asked if I'd like to help with the filing. I stayed there for 7 years, eventually managing their accounts.

### How did you end up involved in the water industry?

An introduction by the lawyer. City Water Technology took me on for my industrial experience placement when I was in third year Uni. I soon worked out that water treatment was more 'me' than litigation and conveyancing.

### Favourite part of your job?

The satisfaction of being given responsibility, being slightly outside my comfort zone and then becoming comfortable.

### Worst part of your job?

The air conditioning at the office (not Legionnaires disease, it's just way too cold).

### Most bizarre job you've ever had?

I did some catering while I was at Uni. These jobs were often interesting but one in particular – the birthday of a lovely, attractive, professional, divorced lady – involved balancing large platters of food whilst trying not to get in the way of what I can probably best describe as entertainment not suitable for children.

### Pastimes / hobbies?

Food, wine, travel, keeping fit and spending time with friends and family

### What's the riskiest thing you've ever done?

Mountain-biking down "the world's most dangerous road" in Bolivia.

### Your ideal weekend consists of ...?

A morning run along the shores of the beautiful Sydney Harbour, breakfast at produce markets and catching up with friends and family.

### Favourite food?

I love all different types of food but one thing I can't ever turn down is fresh sashimi with wasabi

### Favourite book?

The Cook's Companion by Stephanie Alexander.

### Favourite music?

A bit of a mixture – pop, rock and alternative.

### What's your vision for the water industry in 10 years time?

While not necessarily in my current field of expertise, I would like to see further innovation and development in groundwater management.

### How much value does community participation add to our industry?

Community participation is important because they are the end user and we need to meet their needs. However, there will always be variance of opinion within the community and it is important that final decisions are made for the benefit of the vast majority. Ideally, every individual would have the opportunity to elect where their water came from and how it was treated and distributed but of course this is just not possible.

### What are your views on indirect potable reuse?

Personally, I don't know what all the fuss is about. I grew up on Thames water...

### What are your views on desalination?

I've learnt to deflect this question, particularly when in the vicinity of Sydney's southern beaches! Power usage, brine disposal and tunneling are certainly significant issues but the technology is fantastic and I am sure we will rely on desalination more in the future.

### What's your greatest asset?

My focus on quality.

### What's your greatest liability?

I have trouble switching off sometimes which can mean losing sight of the big picture but I'm working on this.

### Best advice you've ever been given?

Make sure you can laugh at yourself. If you take yourself too seriously you will inevitably end up unhappy.

### Who inspires you and why?

Everyone around me. All people will have some quality or skill that I can learn from and aspire to achieve.

### Name 3 people you'd like to be stranded with on a desert island?

Bear Grylls for his survival skills of course, plus his good looks and accent. Peter Gilmore and/or Tetsuya Wakuda, not so much for their looks but more for their ability to transform Bear's discoveries into something palatable.

If you had a time machine and could choose a date to go back to/forward to, what year would you pick and why?

Back to the Neanderthal era to see how it feels to be tall.

### What is one thing that not many people would know about you?

I actually spent my school years dreaming of a career in automotive design and motorsport rather than water, but this has definitely changed.

Interview compiled by Leonie Huxedurp

## Young Water Professionals Conference Open

Register now for the International Young Water Professionals Conference 2010

You are invited to register for the forthcoming 5th International IWA YWP conference to be held at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, 5-8 July 2010.

The conference comprises a 2-day technical program, Professional Development Day organised by the IWAA-AWA National committee, technical tours and, of course, social events including a Welcome Reception, evening at the harbour organised by the NSW YWPs, and the conference dinner.

The technical program will commence with an Opening address delivered by Ken Matthews, CEO of the National Water Commission, and a Keynote presentation by Kerry Schott, Managing Director of Sydney Water. See [www.iwa-ywpc.org](http://www.iwa-ywpc.org) for further information.

I look forward to meeting you at the conference.

Rita Henderson

Chair of the YWPC 2010 Organising Committee

YWPC 2010 is proudly sponsored by:



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Technical Tour sponsor: Degremont



## AWA NSW Branch Upcoming Events

Fri 6 August	Heads of Water Gala Dinner Dockside Darling Harbour
Wed 25 August	NSW YWP Water Seminar Series – Water Reform Mercure Hotel, Sydney
Mon 13 – Wed 15 September	National Water Operations Conference/Exhibition Sydney Olympic Park
Wed 29 September	NSW YWP Water Seminar Series – Climate Change Adaptation Mercure Hotel, Sydney
Wed 27 October	NSW YWP Water Seminar Series – Water & Society Mercure Hotel, Sydney
Sun 7 – Tue 9 November	NSW Regional & Source Management Conference - Bathurst
Fri 19 November	YWP Site Tour - Woronora Plant
Thur 25 November	Legends of Water Seminar & Christmas Party Bovis Lend Lease, Millers Point

### NSW YWP Mentoring Breakfast Wednesday 16 June, 2010

Bovis Lend Lease Premises 30 Hickson Road, Millers Point

Mentoring is a committed two-way partnership where someone more experienced has the patience to teach, support, assist and guide a lesser experienced individual through new challenges. Mentors can provide insights and perspectives on what a Mentee should do to achieve their goals and maintain work-life balance. At the same time Mentors can learn a lot from the relationship by developing their leadership and management skills.

At this breakfast, you will be paired with a Mentor/Mentee. Nick Freedman, Managing Director of SOUP, will facilitate the event to ensure you leave knowing how to get the most out of your mentoring relationship.

You will also learn as well as some useful skills that will apply to the relationship as well as your day-to-day work.

To register please visit our website [www.awa.asn.au/events](http://www.awa.asn.au/events)

There are limited places available so don't delay. For any queries please contact Despina Hasapis, NSW Branch Manager on 02 9436 0055

### NSW Awards Presentation Evening

Wednesday 21 July, 2010 The Zenith Theatre Chatswood Corner Railway & McIntosh Streets, Chatswood

The NSW Branch committee would like to invite its members to a free event being held to honour our award winners and finalists. Presentations of the award submissions will commence at 5.30pm with light refreshments being offered through the evening.

To register please email Despina Hasapis – [dhasapis@awa.asn.au](mailto:dhasapis@awa.asn.au)

We look forward to seeing you on the evening and hearing from our winners and finalists.



The YWP's recently held a mentoring dinner for mentees and mentors. It was a good social night out at a local Japanese restaurant and we're looking forward to the mentoring breakfast on 16th June - Nicole Thornton, ISF UTS.