

POTTED BIOGRAPHIES



John Beguin

John Beguin was born in Belgium on 12 November 1951 and was educated there at Grâce Primary School and the High School at Montegnée where he attained the equivalent to the Higher School Certificate. In 1969 his parents decided to move from near the city of Liege to Australia and John with a brother and sister came with them. Two brothers are still living in Belgium.

Speaking of his visit there in 1984, John said, 'It was great to see them again and we talked for hours and remembered our early years together. One thing I really enjoyed was being called "Uncle John" by my brothers' children'.

When a teenager, John travelled extensively, accompanying his grandfather who had been posted throughout Western Europe as a POW farm worker. 'He was the best tourist guide anyone could have', John said.

John's father Armand worked here as a bricklayer in the period 1970-1975. He is now retired and living at Toronto.

Although presently employed as a driver of the Engineers' truck, John started work here in 1970 as a Trades Assistant and spent some time as a Shift Greaser (now an extinct race) and a Brush Hand. Of all the jobs John has had he enjoys truck driving the most and many of his customers in the Engineering Department have commented on the good service he provides.

'One thing I regret', John said, 'is that I could not continue my ambition to be a language teacher. The opportunities since moving to Australia have not been there'.

The main project on John's program for this year is the completion of a home at Blackalls Park. John and Debra hope to see it finished shortly.

The fervour of the Belgians for a good game of soccer has been inherited by John and he plays for the Cardiff South Fourth Division team. He also enjoys a round of golf and usually plays at Toronto.

Janelle Herd was born in Newcastle on 27 September 1961 and was educated at Wallsend Primary and Wallsend High Schools, where she attained the Higher School Certificate.

On completion of her schooling, and continuing her interest in science, Janelle attended Newcastle Technical College where she completed the certificate course in Chemistry in 1982. During this time she was employed as a Trainee Chemist in the Works Laboratory. This involved the analysis of samples from the various plants at Sulphide.

With the increase in the importance of the role of the computer at Sulphide, Janelle was selected to train as a Computer Programmer; the position she now occupies. Perhaps this answers the question that many of our shift workers would be asking — 'Who's the girl on afternoon shift'? Janelle has been involved in implementing the computer systems for our production plants and at times this meant working on a roster system with the other programmers. With the knowledge and experience gained in this field Janelle is looking forward to a career as a Systems Analyst.

In November this year Janelle plans to marry Richard Endacott who is an Anaesthetist's assistant in the operating theatre at Wallsend Hospital. Richard is known to our Purchasing people as having once been employed by Pipeline Supplies of Australia and being involved in the supply of pipe and fittings to Sulphide.



Janelle Herd

In the realm of sport Janelle and Richard have an interesting record. Janelle said, 'I play hockey for the University A3 team, which has never won a game, and Richard owns and races trotters, which have never won a race'.

Janelle and Richard will be living in a home at Marylands and are at present busy furnishing and decorating. We extend to you best wishes for this happy event, and trust that your marriage will change this losing streak.

Erich Woischwill, Senior Research Operator with CRA Research was born on 20 May 1928. His birthplace was the town of Ross in Memeland which was in East Prussia, annexed to Germany in 1939, and now forms part of the USSR.



Erich Woischwill

He left school at the age of fourteen, and three days later joined the Merchant Navy where he saw ten years service. This of course involved the period of World War II and many are the interesting stories Erich can tell about his experiences. Some of them involved working on ships on the Atlantic supply route and several times the ships were sunk and Erich had to be rescued from the water.

One interesting comment Erich made was, 'It's possible that Fred Salter (see story page six) and I were in the same area at the same time serving under different flags. We were both in Merchant Navy ships calling at ports in Norway and the Mediterranean'. During this period Erich attained the position of Bosun.

After the war Erich began a search for his parents and found they were in East Germany. This meant crossing the border and while waiting for a train he was arrested by the Russian Military Police.

'I thought I had it all worked out', Erich said. 'The only reason they picked me out and arrested me was because I had long hair. All other young men had their hair shorn by the Russian authorities'.

He later made contact with his parents and in fact took his father's position on a work party while his father was sick. This again brought Erich to the attention of the authorities and he heard that the Commandant wanted to interrogate him. This was the time Erich decided to leave, and leaving everything behind he made it back to West Germany.

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