



# Melting Moments

**Casting Industry** – the career choice for makers, creators and innovators.

## June 2019 Edition

Welcome to the inaugural AFI (Vic) newsletter!! The aim of this publication will be to inform our readers, promote AFI activities, and celebrate achievements within our industry.

This quarterly publication will have regular columns from our President, AFI National updates, information about upcoming events and much more.

We will need your feedback and input. We want your stories about the people in the industry, the technical challenges you've overcome to produce a great casting, maybe even some of those "Oh, no !!" moments.

### Presidents Report

What an exciting time for AFI Victoria, our very first Newsletter. It's hard to believe we are already nearly half way through the year, and what a year it has been. We kicked it off with the official launch of our Foundry Apprenticeship Training Program with our training partner GoTafe.

This was such an exciting time for the industry in Victoria as we have been without an official local Apprenticeship Training Organisation for many years. I am pleased to report that many of the companies who committed to employing and training new apprentices have now signed up and we have 8 out of the minimum 15 apprentices already well underway training in their first 3 units.

In March, we held our first of several planned combined meetings with ADCA, a presentation by Matt Ferns from Sun Metals. This Qld based Zn refinery have addressed the issue of extraordinarily high and continually increasing power costs by building a 125MW solar farm to lower costs. The ground-breaking project marked the first large-scale solar farm built directly by a major energy user in Australia and signalled the start of the shift of Australian heavy industry away from "baseload" coal power and to renewable energy.

Our most recent meeting was a plant visit to Albins Performance Transmissions at their new premises. Albins specialise in the design and manufacture of drivetrain components for high performance applications. They are a full-service supplier and pride themselves on the partnerships they create with their customers and suppliers alike. A 30-year history of supply to global markets of extreme duty driveline applications, Albins is the largest high-performance

transmission manufacturer in the Southern hemisphere. Not even the wet and frosty Ballarat winter kept our enthusiastic members from this highly informative tour.

DON'T FORGET - if you haven't already booked your tickets and accommodation for Christmas in July, then go to <https://www.trybooking.com/490649> and secure your place. It is going to be another fantastic AFI Vic family friendly social event not to be missed.

Don't forget to register for the AFI National Conference in October hosted by AFI NSW. See the flyer later in this edition for all the details and information you will need.

I hope you enjoy this inaugural edition of Melting Moments!!

### AFI National

The AFI has branches in Qld, NSW, WA, SA and Victoria. Each of these branches operates autonomously. The AFI National Executive consists of a Secretary / Treasurer (Joe Vecchio) and President (Alan Cooke). We have 2 face to face meetings with State representatives each year – March in Adelaide, and October wherever the National Conference is being held.

There are 3 major issues that are common across our industry – access to skilled personnel, training of apprentices and technicians, and soaring electricity costs.

A major activity in recent months has been the collation and distribution of the Industry Report. This report gives an overview of the casting industry in Australia. Basic data reported includes tonnage of metal cast, number of employee's and dollar value of castings sold.

Another major and ongoing activity this year has been to engage with politicians and advocacy groups in the search for relief from the soaring electricity costs. In recent weeks we have been successful in engaging Tennant Reed (Principal National Advisor – Public Policy, AI Group) to advise and advocate on our behalf. His activity is opening doors and data from the Industry Report is beginning to find the political decision makers. Stay tuned.

## Dennis Keenan—AFI (Vic) Historian



Educated at Brunswick Tech, Dennis started his Pattern making apprenticeship at Coburg's Woodstock Products - a Patternmaking and Non-Ferrous foundry who manufactured tooling and produced moulds and cores for shell moulds.

His official trade training occurred at what we knew and

loved for many years as RMIT. His passionate, dedicated and enthusiastic instructors encouraged our Dennis to attend evening lectures and work visits organised by the Victorian Foundry Industry leaders. Dennis pursued advanced foundry studies by correspondence from the city and guilds of London Institute in Patternmaking and Foundry work.

Dennis began his trade career with T Mains in 1960. 1962 saw the successful application of a Victorian Overseas Foundation Scholarship providing Foundry Industry working / study courses in the UK during 1965 – 1966.

Upon his return Dennis worked at John Valves – Ballarat until 1980. His career progressed from Methoding to Assistant Foundry Manager and Technical Manager. Dennis decided to return to patternmaking later in his career when he started a small Non-Ferrous Foundry - one of the products being the Patternmakers pronged letters and numbers.

In 1989 Dennis began training students at RMIT however after a short period due to dwindling student numbers the foundry school was closed. For 9 years after this until retirement approx. 4 years ago Dennis worked with A.W Bell - Dandenong - in their investment casting facility.

Dennis has always enjoyed visiting foundry's around Australia and overseas. His thirst for knowledge and vast years of experience makes him the perfect choice as the very first AFI Vic Historian. Dennis is looking forward to recording our Industry's history and is looking for input from our many members.

## GOTafe Apprentice Training

GOTAFE is always looking for new ways that we can meet the needs of industry with training options that are relevant, flexible and deliver tangible results for both the student and relevant industry. Following on from meetings held in 2018 with GOTAFE, AFI Victoria, the Victorian Skills commissioner and several industry members it was decided that GOTAFE would apply for State Government Funding to assist in the setup of a new training program.

The funding application was successful and GOTAFE have been able to offer places for up to 15 apprentices this year. New training

resources are being developed and relevant equipment is being sourced to assist students with developing their skills including Virtual Reality training.

GOTAFE has now commenced training seven apprentices across three regional businesses, this has been a great start to the year with eight places remaining for students. If you are interested in putting on an apprentice, up to 50% off the normal fees applied for their training contact period for the eight training positions available if enrolled in 2019.

GOTAFE can assist your business with on the job training programs for all or part of the training contact. A customised Training Plan to suit your business needs will be developed before training commences. For more information about Foundry training please contact GOTAFE Commercial Manager, Brett Ambrosio on 0458 398 143 or 1300 GOTAFE or email bambrosio@gotafe.vic.edu.au

Below are four of the five Apprentices currently in training at Keech Australia.



Bryce Martin  
Moulding



Lyell Draper  
Moulding



Matthew Aherne  
Moulding



Simon Cole  
Patternmaking

\*\*\* Missing Moulding Apprentice John Neville

## In Brief

Congratulations to Geoff Bell on his recent addition to the Honour Roll for Services to Industry at the 2019 Victorian Manufacturing Hall of Fame Awards. Geoff joins Doug Maxwell who was honoured in a similar way 10 years ago.

Through the mineAlloy update we hear that Deakin University researchers visited Keech Castings to discuss an industrial trial, and that the UQ mineAlloy team visited Backwell IXL to agree on best casting practices for a project. Good to know that the links between Manufacturing and University Research are strong and active.



### 30<sup>TH</sup> May - Update on this year's National AFI Conference

Arrangements for the 54th Australian Foundry Institute (AFI) National Conference to be held in Sydney from **17th to 19th October, 2019** are well underway.

As you know, this year's Annual Conference is being held in the historic City of Parramatta. Our President's Reception is being held in World Heritage Listed, Old Government House. Our Conference Dinner will be held aboard a Captain Cook Cruise Boat on Sydney Harbour departing from and returning to the Parramatta River.

We are still putting together our speaker program which includes industry specific topics including:-

- **AFI INDUSTRY REVIEW:** Snapshot of current state of our industry.
- **CASTING:** Developments in Resins; Coatings; Feeder Systems & Computer Modelling.
- **ENERGY:** What relief is in sight for power costs; Solar Options; Gov't subsidies?
- **GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:** Entrepreneurs Program; R&D Grants; EMDG's.
- **SAFETY:** Furnace Monitoring; Improved Protective Clothing & PPE Gear.
- **TRAINING:** New TAFE Training & On-Line Courses.
- **WORLD:** Update on overseas foundry trends; Industry 4.0; & Robotics.

#### CALL FOR SPEAKERS:

We have scope to include more speakers so please encourage any industry specific presenters to come forward. Particulars on how to apply are on our Website:-

<https://expertevents.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/afi-2019-nsw/website>

#### SPONSORSHIPS:

Early take up of Sponsorship Options have been very slow so we ask you to consider how you might be able to support our Conference. Sponsorship is an opportunity to demonstrate support for the event, to increase your customer contact and awareness and pursue business opportunities across the industry. Without Sponsors, it is difficult to maintain a National Conference and so we ask that you all approach Suppliers and Foundries that you feel could help make our Conference a great success. Again refer to our Website:-

#### PARTICIPATION:

Registrations are slow so please help us by not waiting until the "Early Bird" discount expires in September, knowing our attendance numbers early helps us greatly. We really want to have a high percentage roll-up so please register as soon as you can, encourage your key workers and managers to attend.

Hoping to see you in Parramatta.

Yours Sincerely,

Keiran Slattery  
**AFI NSW President**  
Ph: 0414 363 695

