Cooma Old Gaol Museum:
A regional tourist attraction

Cooma Correctional Centre's "Old Gaol Museum" project has hit the forefront of public relations in the southern region of the state. Thousands of visitors have passed through the Museum's doors expressing a very positive attitude as they participate in a unique learning experience about the history of Corrections, the current system and the important role of Corrective Services.

Many tour coordinators have included the "Old Gaol Museum" in their Snowy Mountains itinerary. This year the Museum expects over 200 coaches to visit the facility, providing a wonderful opportunity for the Department to present it's very important message to the community.

Overseer Les Strzelecki comments "As a Correctional Officer it is my goal to ensure that inmates leave the system as responsible citizens. The community wants to know how we are achieving this, within Correctional Centres".

The museum is staffed by a hand picked group of minimum security inmates. The public contact has proved valuable in their ultimate integration back into the community. The inmates provide guided tours of the museum during which they share the history of the exhibits and the Correctional Centre, providing an informative and interesting commentary for visitors. This enhances inmate communication skills and general development.

The "Old Gaol Museum" craft outlet retails the unique products produced in the Corcraft business unit. Here, visitors take advantage of the huge range of quality crafted souvenirs and gifts.

This year inmates submitted 18 craft entries in the Cooma Show which won 14 major awards. The entries included leather work, fine arts, ceramics and painting as well as examples of Koori art. Congratulations go to the staff and inmates of this tremendous facility.

Inmate Post-Release Employment Project

By Judy McHutchinson

On behalf of the Research and Statistics Unit of the Department I am currently undertaking a study into the contribution of CSI towards inmate development. Studies similar to this one have been conducted into prison industries in other jurisdictions. These studies have found a great deal of empirical evidence that keeping inmates constructively occupied through work programs makes an important contribution to security within Correctional Centres. The results are more modest with regard to the influence of prison industries on post-release employment, but nevertheless encouraging.

This is the second research study commissioned by CSI in relation to inmate development. The first such study, titled "NSW Corrective Service Industries and Offender Post Release Employment", was completed in 1990. I also carried out the previous study.

In that I found that inmates who worked in CSI for longer than six months were significantly more likely to find work after release than inmates who worked in the Services Industries. The CSI group of inmates also obtained work after release significantly quicker than the comparison group. However, both groups had problems retaining work and there appeared to be no significant difference in recidivism in the short term.

Quote of the Month
"It takes less time to do a thing right than to explain why you did it wrong"
Officer Profile:

Henry Earle, still keeping the young out of trouble

A recent article in the "Western Times" newspaper featured Bathurst Correctional Centre Overseer Henry Earle.

Henry who is well known within the district for his work with the Bathurst Police Citizen’s Youth Club (PCYC), is extremely committed to ensuring that young people who might otherwise get into trouble with the law, are provided with a wide range of activities through the PCYC.

He recently rejoined the Bathurst PCYC committee and he hopes that his involvement in the financial management of the club will lead to an expansion of it’s facilities, including extending the gymnasium.

One of Henry’s other areas of community involvement is as a group captain with the Evans Bush Fire Brigade. He was involved with firefighting effort during January’s bushfires at Mt.Horrible. "I think that week I got about 18 hours sleep" said Henry.

Sixteen inmates from Bathurst Correctional Centre and 10 from Kirkconnell were also involved in January’s firefighting efforts. All the inmates volunteered their services during the outbreak and according to Henry “They worked bloody hard and well."

Since the January fires, Henry has started training a number of inmates in firefighting techniques with the assistance of other staff from Bathurst Correctional Centre.

Strong CSI Sales For May

CSI sales for May 1994 of $1.665 million were the strongest recorded of any month this financial year.

We are now placed $600,000 ahead of budget on current year sales and a remarkable $2.1 million ahead at the same juncture last financial year.

Accompanied by the general improvement in overall economic performance this brings great credit on CSI staff at Correctional Centre, Regional and Corporate level. Congratulations to all.

Post-Release (continued)

Although it appeared that most inmates returned to the relatively unskilled work they had engaged in before incarceration some were able to utilise the skills they had learnt in CSI in their new employment. Some were also found to have put these skills to good use in their leisure time by making or repairing items.

The present study will be following a similar format to the original study. I will be visiting business units and will have discussions with staff and inmates. I will need to gain an understanding of the tasks inmates perform in the production process. I will contact Officers in Charge of the business units included in the study prior to my visit and would appreciate their assistance in arranging an area for me, with some privacy, where I can conduct the inmate interviews.

A sample of parolees will be followed up and the employment experience of those who worked in CSI will be compared to a comparison group. Some of these parolees will be interviewed so more in depth information can be gathered. It is anticipated that the following business units will be included in the study:

- Emu Plains
- Mulawa
- Parklea
- Reception & Industrial
- Training Centre
- Cessnock
- Cooma
- Mannus
- PSBU - Smorgon PET Recycling
- Correctprint
- PSBU Panama Developments P/L
- Corfurn
- PSBU - Hard Rock Bakery
- PSBU - Bilpinau Pty Ltd
- Corfurn
- Cornet
- Cortex
- Agricor

Studies such as these are essential if an objective understanding is to be gained into the influence of CSI on inmate development. For more information please contact Judy McHutchison on (02) 289 1549.
Regional News

Northern Region
CSI Northern Region exhibited a display at the recent Grafton Show with the theme “CSI and the Private Sector”. Great support was given to the display by Private Sector industries from three Correctional Centres including Charlie Henry Timbers, (Glen Innes CC), Peter Keppie Printing, Panama Developments, Australasian Pine, (Grafton CC), Prestige, (John Morony CC). On display were numerous samples of the products these industries produce. Special thanks must go to Regional Business Manager, Rob Steer, Manager of Industries, Andrew Wilson, Senior Overseer David Mullavey and Overseers Geoff Peters and John Tong Kee for their assistance in setting up and manning the display.

South West Region
One of the new breed of steer calves from the Mannus Correctional Centre herd took out third place in the recent Tambarumba Show “Hook and Hoo” competition.

At only 11 months of age and weighing 365 ks on the hoof, the steer’s dressed weight was 58%, 34% ahead of its rivals. The only thing that let the side down was the size of its eye muscle compared to the eventual winner, which was four months older.

CSI Manager of Industries Paul Flemming said that as this was the first competition that Agricor had entered, he was very pleased with the result, especially as there had been 25 entries in the competition. “We will be back next year, bigger and better organised,” he said.

Central Region
In preparation for the installation of a new milk cartoning machine in the Agricor Business Unit at Emu Plains Correctional Centre, Senior Overseer Peter Craft recently attended an operator and maintenance course on the Liquipak 740 equipment in Melbourne. The course consisted of an operator and maintenance component and also included carton care and quality control. At the end of the course Peter was presented with a training course certificate. The benefit to the Agricor business unit of the new machine includes reduced maintenance costs and carton wastage and will assist in a more efficient use of the equipment by the inmates.

Eastern Region
The Corfuin business unit at the Long Bay Training Centre received a “pat on the back” from CSI Manager of Industries Jim Cowan this month. Due to a high number of transient inmates within the centre, the workforce has been up to 50% below strength over recent times. Despite this difficulty, production has been maintained through the dedication of the staff and inmates. “The increased effort put in by the Corfuin team demonstrates the high level of commitment to service and quality within the business unit” said Jim Cowan. “I would like to thank all the staff and inmates personally for their support and teamwork.”

Success for “Locally Made” Expo
At Glen Innes
CSI was well represented at a two day “Locally Made” Expo that was held recently in Glen Innes. On display was a comprehensive range of timber products including; port and wine containers, planter boxes, chopping boards, key rings, craft supplies, picture frames, roof trusses, children’s toys, outdoor furniture, bookbinding samples and wine.

The Commissioner, Major-General Neville Smethurst, Charlie Henry, one of CSI’s top five customers, and staff from Charlie Henry Timbers were on hand to inspect the display. The exhibition which was attended by over 1500 members of the public, during the two days, was a great success in promoting the work of, and the products manufactured by CSI. Education Officer Sue Chapman displayed a collection of photographs, depicting inmate vocational pursuits. Special mention for their hard work and effort in supporting the exhibition must go to Overseers Greg Dean and Col Dawson, Manager of Industries Bob Dwyer and Regional Business Manager Rob Steer.

South Australian Visitors Impressed
By Mannus Agricor Business Unit
Mannus Correctional Centre recently hosted a visit by two officers from South Australia’s Cadell Training Centre.

General Manager of the Training Centre, Ross Copeland and Prison Services Manager Sean Edwards spent two days at Mannus studying the organisational and industrial aspects of the Correctional Centre.

The visit succeeded in establishing a strong relationship between the two Correctional Centres.

Of interest, was the comment by Ross Copeland that one of his lasting impressions of his visit was the strong sense of respect that he found existed between the staff and inmates. He said that he felt this more than anything else, contributed to the success of the Correctional Centre’s agricultural training and work programs.
Employment Development Program

Would you employ an ex-offender?

Ex-offenders who are seeking work are doubly disadvantaged in the employment market. They are unemployed (or have been out of 'societies’ workforce for some time), and they have a criminal record. Often job seekers with valuable skills and experiences are unable to secure work simply due to their record, which may have no bearing on any employment situation.

Aims of the program

✓ Provide employment opportunities for ex-offenders
✓ Increase the job retention rate for ex-offenders
✓ Decrease the likelihood of ex-offenders returning to crime
✓ Reduce the social and financial cost of crime

The Employment Development Program is funded by the Department of Corrective Services. A data base is maintained of both job seekers and employers. Once an employer notifies an employment vacancy the data base is activated to find a job seeker who has the relevant skills and experience for the position.

What can you do?

If you are an employer (or know of an employer) who is interested in securing the best person for the job, and you are community minded and believe in a 'fair go'. Register NOW. All you are saying is that you will accept applications for employment opportunities from ex-offenders. Once the job seeker has lodged the initial application, he/she competes on merit with all other applicants.

Contact

For registration forms and further information

Jan Hall
Level 18
Robson Cutler House
24 Campbell St
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Ph: 1302 269 195 Fax: 1302 268 105

OBITUARY

It is with deep regret that Overseer, Chris Walters of Mannus Correctional Centre was tragically killed in a traffic accident on Saturday, 7th May, 1994.

Manager of Industries, Paul Fleming delivered a moving eulogy at the funeral service:

"I am proud to speak on the life of Chris Walters. The talented young man who raced at life with the wind in his face. The proud man, in every sense a modern Correctional Officer - a leader, a doer, a motivator, an achiever.

He had verve and zeal and a zest for life. He inspired inmates and his workmates loved to be with him. He loved his work. A family man, a colleague, a sportsman and a friend. He had a great sense of fun and adventure. He has left his mark on the forests of Tumbarumba, on many buildings at Mannus and, of course, on his beloved vineyard.

He noticed things, sometimes the subtle, sometimes the sentimental. Last week, when the approval for the vineyard came down the line, he bought a lottery ticket and called it "the fruits of our labour". Today we celebrate and hold more precious than ever before, the fruits of Chris’ labour. We celebrate his energy, his humour, his determination to succeed. Look at this crowd, this respect, this pride. This loss. See how the fruits of his labour live on in his family. Let us celebrate the treasures they must share. The great writer Pierre Teilhard de Chardin wrote these words on the death of a young officer so long ago:

For all emotions rich and strong.  
For life and man’s high sensibilities, 
He lived true, he lived for these. 
And let the lesser things lie long. 
Oh death, thou poor and disappointed thing, 
You’d give your thousand years to sing his song. 
Our friend has lived and you can’t rob him now 
Of any day yet to be. 
His life was full and thus complete; 
His life is endless now and sweet; 
He holds it firm beneath thy blows 
And dying, take it where he goes.

Today, Chris goes to the house of the man who turned the water into wine. With one heart we say to innex and the family ‘be proud, be brave; time and your courage will ease the pain and cement in your hearts memories of the good times.’

And with one heart we say to our friend ‘thank you for the harvest of your life; thank you for the vintage of your youth; thank you for the fruits of your labour’

Our deepest sympathy and support are extended to Mrs. Innez Walters, Tara and Dale.