

Nov/Dec 2010

Official Newsletter - Women in the Mining South Africa

Volume 1, Issue 2

Special points of interest:

- Pregnancy in the Workplace
- Events calendar 2011
- Talk by Prof Ncube-Hein

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Dear Women in Mining

It's hard to believe that we are in the last quarter of 2010. The launch of WiMSA back in February seems like a distant memory.

Lots of exciting events have taken place and a number of new initiatives are being planned.

In this edition of the WiMSA Newsletter we will be looking at issues concerning Pregnancy in the Workplace, what your rights are and how we can make it less onerous for employers.

We have also included a talk given by Professor Ncube-Hein at the Minister's Ingxoxo held at the Sandton Convention Centre on the development of women in mining.

A new feature of the Newsletter is to look at top achievers in the industry and profile them and look at how they got to where they are today. Our first profile which will be in the next newsletter is of Dr Susan Webb the newly elected 2nd Vice President of SEG. If you would like us to profile you or if you know of someone that we should be profiling please let us know. (jenny.johnson@centralrandgold.com)

We will also be looking at the Mentorship programme that WiMSA is planning. We have asked our members to reserve 1 March 2011 for the launch of this initiative.

Goodbye:

We say goodbye to Beth Taylor who has sadly tendered her resignation from the committee due to other commitments, as well as to Jilleen Brokensha who while no longer sitting on the committee due to personal commitments, but will still be a member of WiMSA.

Hello:

We welcome Nolene Pauls (Mineral Corporation) to the committee and look forward to working with her.

WiMSA is always looking for people to join the committee so if you are interested please contact us. (Mpai@venmyn.com)

Events Calendar for 2010

2 February 2011

Cocktail Party and Snowden Photo Exhibition - "Celebrating the Mining Industry" at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange
Details to follow closer to the time

1 March 2011

Launch of the WiMSA Mentorship programme.
Details to be provided closer to the time.

WiMSA Year-end Function

What a fantastic end to a great year for WiMSA. Good food, fine wine, clothes, jewelry, and pamper products, what more could the ladies ask for!!

The function was glamorous, and despite the wet weather we had a great turn out. We were treated to a style workshop which was well appreciated by the ladies and I think it gave all participants a lot of food for thought. The wine tasting was great as we had a chance to sample some lovely wines. The clothing and jewelry exhibitions were spectacular and it was really good to see the Mintek projects and to be exposed to some of the fantastic designs. We also had some great prizes to give away at the raffle which was very exciting. I know that Robyn Henderson from Snowden is thrilled with her MSA Mug.

A big thanks once again to all of our very kind sponsors and exhibitors for making this great function possible and a wonderful way to round off a very busy and rewarding year for WiMSA.

The event was made possible by the very kind and much appreciated sponsorship of:



the **MINERAL CORPORATION**
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Wine tasting by Dorian Hulse



WiMSA Committee Members:
(Left) Pamela Naidoo, Claire McMaster, Jenny Johnson, Robyn Henderson, Mpai Motloung, Kate Lindsell-Stewart and Noleen Pauls



Avril Chambers exhibiting Chilli rags range

Triba and Camelot Spa at Triba

Jamie and Debbie from Love Food

Dorian Hulse—Wine tasting

Tracy Gold – Style Workshop

Bianca Volans – Just-B Yoga

Avril Chambers- Chili rags range

MINTEK Jewelry School (Tubatse & Bophadiphadi Jewelry Projects)

Flowers by Oh Flowers in Honeydew

Cheese sponsored by Clover

A Note from the Chairperson

Dear WiMSA Members

Over a remarkably short period of time, WiMSA was launched and has grown into a large organisation, attracting the attention of many companies and associations within the mining industry in SA.

Timelines and what we have done:

14 August 2010:

presentation at Wits Engineering Faculty

27 August 2010:

Breakfast Panel Discussion, sponsored by Turbine Hall and Northam Platinum

15 October 2010:

AMMSA presentation and commitment to affiliation status

Early November 2010:

Interview with SABC- radio, to air over the next few weeks

18 November 2010:

Year end event-celebrating achievements and success.

Achievements to celebrate

- Within 8 months we have 400 member database and growing.
- A poll has indicated majority interested in receiving and providing mentorship.
- Draft Constitution and Mission Statement.
- Hosted Quarterly WiMSA events with 60+ attendees.
- Quarterly newsletter since Q3.
- Logo creation.
- Registered website domain.
- GSSA emailing agreement.
- Article in Mining weekly.
- WiMSA in Linked-In and Facebook.

The organising committee appeal for sponsors and speakers so that we may do additional events and work to achieving our objectives. Please let us

know if there is a specific theme you are interested in for events.

Please also contact us if you have contributions to make in the newsletter and any other suggestions. I would also like to appeal to members of the audience who feel excited about what we do and would like to play a part, to volunteer as committee members

Professor Kim Ncube-Hein is no stranger to many of us and we have been privileged to hear her talk about her experiences in the mining industry at the De Beers breakfast at the beginning of the year. Kim has very kindly agreed to share her talk that she gave at the Ingxoxo at the invitation of the Minister of Mineral Resources. Pamela and I were both fortunate to be able to listen to Kim deliver this talk to a packed audience of over 200 women and were greatly inspired as we hope you will be too.

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We walk on rose petals: celebrating the courage of women who go into the mines

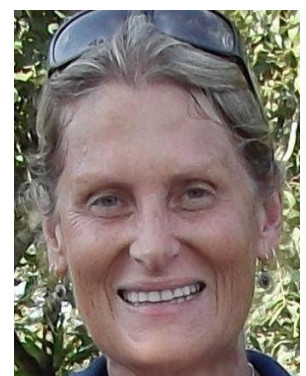
I am pleased to be here today to share some of my thoughts about a development agenda for women for the mines, and I thank the Minister and her staff for this invitation to speak.

Sanbonani!

We walk on rose petals! It is an expression given to me by my first mentor in the industry, Dr Maud McBair, who with these words reminded me that I would not be the first nor last woman

to enter the mining sector. There were in fact some women who were and are still deserving of our acknowledgement and praise for being the first to break new ground or, for taking serious risks that made a positive difference for change. These women, such as those who illegally worked in the coal mines in Britain in 1854, and in spite of the Mines Act of 1842 that banned women from the mines, created livelihoods and argued for change in an

industry that tried to exclude them. To those women we should add the names of many African women who worked coal, gold and diamonds in South Africa in the period before and during apartheid. Regardless of their legality or illegality, they are the women who preceded us and I celebrate their courage and determination. I particularly want to mention one woman who should be on the South Africa list but remains unknown, i.e., the



Prof Kim A.A Ncube-Hein
Chair and Professor of Mining Geology; School of Geosciences; University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg

We walk on rose petals: celebrating the courage of women who go into the mines (cont)

first black woman to work the large scale mines on the Rand. I remember you today for your courage.

I must be honest and say that it gives me great delight to see so many women in the mines these days, and it tells me that something about the way we are moving forward is going right. Two weeks ago and for only the second time on my life, I found myself thinking differently about how things had changed. The women's change room at the mine I recently visited (Cooke Shaft 3) was full of chatter about 'this one' and 'that one', the kids, life at home and of course, the men or boyfriends. The women in the cage that descended to take us into mine were busy with chatter about the umlungu mama who was going underground with them. They had never seen an older white woman going underground (they nervously said in Zulu), but I've been in the industry for a seriously long time now so they shouldn't have been surprised. The speed of descent and the yoyo bounce of the cage as we reach the 128 level gave a joyous giggly whoa, as though the descent was a fun ride. The women were happy and having fun. We rose from the 128 Level to the 118 Level in the cage and got out - a hurried mass of men and women all raced to the giraffe (the train) that took us to our respective work places in the mine. My student (a woman) and I joined the race. The female train conductor signaled the train forward. Thirty minutes later we exited at our station point. And so began our shift that day.

I don't remember it being like this when I entered the mines the first time. It is indeed, becoming a gentler happier environment. I am beginning to feel space to breathe, a balanced workspace where I can be myself and enjoy my job. Certainly, I remember the old days of no change rooms for women, of pornographic photographs on the walls of the surveyor's office, of rudeness and aggression, of being touched up in the cage (my breast fondled as we descended), and yes, even more unpleasant things. It was very hard if you where a mum, and worse if not. You were either too good looking or too ugly, menstrual or menopausal, always of suspect sexual orientation, of being immoral or too moral and prudish. Mostly I remember being lonely and often the only woman. Regardless, I had a wise mentor who encouraged me focus on the geology and I suspect that's why I'm a Professor today. I do like my geology as many will tell you.

And nowadays there are a good number of women in my geosciences and engineering classes, which is certainly more than I remember from my university days. I see more women at the senior level as well, even at academic institutions. Yes, even me, the first female Professor of Mining Geology in the history of the University of the Witwatersrand and the School of Geosciences.

So I do have something to celebrate and that some things are going right?

Without doubt a significant change has been forged by establishing a preliminary 10% equity target and enforcing that target at all levels within the mining sector. Yes we have a way to go to achieve even 10% but the process of transformation has begun and I applaud those who maintain the pressure to achieve this goal. In this regard, I would like to encourage the ministry to continue with its policies, but to move transformation a little faster forward (please). We don't want to get tired of waiting to get to where we should be. My experience is that increased participation by women in the workplace has been a positive experience and will continue to

gender equity is translating into career decisions that take them out of any environment where they perceive professional and personal danger

We walk on rose petals: celebrating the courage of women who go into the mines (cont)

create a gentler work environment for all. Added to this, the salaries earned by women in the sector tend to filter to child education, family health care and nutrition in a more direct way and this is desirable.

Significant change has also come about through increased access to higher degrees and post-secondary school skills training agendas. Again we have a long way to go in this regard but there is momentum. I would ask the Minister of Education to seriously address the gap that exists between secondary school and university, and return Tecknikon training to the education landscape of South Africa as an option for those women who do not wish to go to university, but would still like specialist skills training and accreditation at the diploma or certificate level.

Significant ground has also been made through workable agreements between all stakeholders in the industry. I applaud those companies in the mining sector who have courageously advanced equity agendas, and who see women and their style of working as an asset that adds value. I commend you but ask you to speed the process of transformation forward. It is a matter of urgency.

All in all I have a sense we are moving the right direction with skills development for women in the sector. I acknowledge there is a way to go, but we are on the way. Importantly we must continue to find peaceful solutions to issues of inequity because we know that an adversarial approach is counterproductive to reform. We need good skills in negotiating and we need to learn to use our power wisely.

This then brings me to the skills agenda for women in mines and three skills I believe are crucial for further transformation in the industry at this stage of the game, i.e., **(1) build confidence, (2) encourage true self-esteem and (3) teach self-respect**. We need to address the issues that cause poor confidence, low self-esteem and poor self-respect, and which limit women in career selection and advancement in the industry, in achieving higher degrees, or achieving sustainability of their livelihoods.

I am going to suggest to this gathering that we will fail to advance the role of women in the mining industry (or in any industry in South Africa) in the near future if we fail to address the broader societal problem that devalues the role and contribution that women can, and do make, to our society. It is the problem that now consumes 20% of my teaching time and 50% of my mentoring time; i.e., violence toward women and girls at home. You may protest at what this subject has to do with this Ingxoxo, but it has everything to do with charging forward to a brighter future.

Of my current student group, a worrying number of young women have suffered physical violence at the hands of their fathers or another male figure in the family. A good number, if not most have witnessed their fathers being physically or psychologically violent towards their mothers. Most have problems with confidence and self-esteem and directly link that to home experiences. Further proportions have family members who consistently disempower or, who are psychologically abusive. Many of my female students tell me they were simply ignored for most of their youth by their fathers (and sometimes mothers) thus creating abandonment syndrome in some, even though they lived with family members. Worse, many of my female students tell me they are not valued for their intellectual contribution but for their future money-making capacity; they suffer as a consequence (most of the boys as well). Most of those young women are also discouraged from MSc or PhD education in mining geosciences by their families because their value is perceived to be in what they can earn and not what they can be. Several of my students routinely seek help from psychologists and recount very unpleasant stories of childhood beatings and physical violence.

South Africa, this is not the way to grow a healthy empowered society.

I put it to you that this is not unique to my office. Young women who make it to university but who come from difficult homes, generally struggle with confidence, self-esteem and self-respect and thereby often suffer in an industry that for today, remains male-dominated. For these women, their potential is shrouded in hidden doubts about self-worth and value. They often lack the courage needed to enter an industry which they perceive as psychologically and physically difficult, and often unpleasant. In fact, for these young women, gender equity is

We walk on rose petals: celebrating the courage of women who go into the mines (cont)

translating into career decisions that take them out of any environment where they perceive professional and personal danger. The truth is that many of our young women chose to use their skills elsewhere and often that is outside the mining sector.

Lets us therefore rethink the strategy we are using to grow young women into the industry by acknowledging there is a need for psychology skills training today for women, particularly in the areas of confidence building, encouraging true self-esteem and the development of self-respect. This must be coupled with equal training for men that violence is not the way forward.

For me the matter has become urgent. It should be a matter of urgency for all.

Thank you

Pregnancy in the Mining Environment

Always a touchy subject, pregnancy in a mining environment has certain connotations which are not necessarily prevalent in other industries.

What do I mean by this?

Well, a few months ago I was invited to give a presentation at a conference on the following topic:

Is legislation regarding pregnancy in the Mining Industry creating a barrier to achieving the 10% quota of Women in Mining.

This topic really made me think about how we are almost starting out on the back foot in the mining industry by the simple fact that we are women and that our bodies are capable of carrying babies.

Why should this be the case? Well there is a notion among some of our male counterparts that pregnancy will severely hamper production and

that women really have no place on a mine and that they should stick to softer jobs, admin, secretarial, environmental etc. Below please find some actual statements from men in the mining industry pertaining to women falling pregnant.

"As soon as we get her trained up then she will just go and get herself pregnant!"

"Surely we can't pay her the same salary if she's pregnant"

"Four months paid maternity leave – what about production?"

Let's have a look at this affliction called pregnancy to see what all the fuss is about.

It lasts approximately 9 months, and can cause the following symptoms:

- Swelling of the stomach, ankles, legs, hands, fingers, toes and every other conceivable body part.
- Back pain, pelvic pain, chest pain, leg pain, head pain and pain in areas of your body that you never knew existed.
- Irritability which is caused mainly from all the pain, swelling and remarks from co-workers, complete strangers and your significant other that you seem a little tired and irritable lately!
- Stretch marks covering 100% of your body which will never fade followed by an excess weight gain which will take years to shift (without plastic surgery).

Some thoughts from a working mom who has survived this affliction, twice!

By:

Jenny Johnson

Every woman has a right to bear children

Pregnancy in the Mining Environment (cont)

- At around 9 months the disease culminates in the need for hospitalization to rid the patient of the cause of much of the symptoms but then it mutates into the more extreme form of the disease which lasts for decades, is hugely expensive, extremely tiring but yet the most rewarding experience any mother and father can have. Parenting.

Quite extreme, no wonder she can't do any work and is totally unproductive with all that going on.

What does the law say?

Every woman has the right to bear children.

The Constitution covers this by protecting the right to bodily and psychological integrity, which includes the right to make decisions including reproduction (section 12 (2)) and give every person the right to health services, including reproductive health care (section 27 (1) (a)).

The Constitution, the Labour Relations Act and the Employment Equity Act all provide that "No person may be discriminated against or dismissed on account of pregnancy".

Employers must provide and maintain a work environment that protects the health and safety of all employees, this includes risks to the reproductive health of employees. (OHSA) 85 of 1993 and (MHSA) 27 of 1996 covers these aspects in detail.

The Code of Good Practice on the Protection of Employees during pregnancy and after the birth of a child in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act gives very clear and concise guidelines on what a pregnant and breast-feeding women should and should not be exposed to.

Provides a schedule of the physical risks associated with pregnancy in a hazardous environment.

It makes recommendations towards alternative working environments during the course of pregnancy and post pregnancy.

Here is the challenge!

- If a woman is employed for a specific reason then surely being removed from that particular job will cause a shortage of labour and will affect production?
- Financially this scenario may cause an employer to carefully consider employing a woman!
- How then do you marry the 10% quota with the fact that financially it seems to be detrimental to employ women (who could potentially fall pregnant) in these hazardous environments!



How can you turn a perceived negative into a positive?

1. Appreciate the value a woman can add to your organisation.
2. Mentorship
3. Training
4. Bigger picture – increase in resource base! When considering the potential to increase the resource base it almost makes the time taken for pregnancy and for maternity insignificant.

Makes you think doesn't it!.



WIMSA would welcome any contributions, suggestions or comments. Please contact Jenny Johnson on 079 504 0633 or jenny.johnson@centralrandgold.com if you would like to contribute to the newsletter.

Or follow us on our Facebook page and LinkedIn.com

www.wimsa.org.za

Have a wonderful Festive Season and we look forward to seeing you all next year.

