

Life Member

Brian SOCKHILL

Brian was born in Bundaberg and boarded at Toowoomba Grammar School for two years before matriculation in 1945. He then moved to Brisbane where he completed a science degree at the University of Queensland in 1950, majoring in chemistry. While studying he worked part-time in the testing laboratory for Shell Oil, who subsequently transferred him to Melbourne.

Brian joined the Sugar Research Institute in Mackay in 1953. His research investigated the scientific fundamentals of the physical and chemical processes involved in the milling of sugar and the improvement of those processes. During his time there he travelled to study the sugar industry in the United States, South Africa, Mauritius, and Reunion Island.

In 1964 Brian moved to Plane Creek Mill in Sarina in the position of sugar chemist, with subsequent promotions to Assistant Manager and Manager. His time at Plane Creek gave him the opportunity to apply his research knowledge in practice and was marked by annual projects to upgrade plant and improve efficiency and increase capacity. During this period he also obtained a degree in economics through part-time study and developed his managerial style.

In 1976 Plane Creek Mill was taken over by Pioneer Ltd, for whom Brian became the Deputy General Manager of the sugar division, which also included three mills in the Burdekin.

Brian retired from Pioneer in 1985 and continued to work as an individual consultant, including commissions for Mackay Sugar, Farleigh Mill, and Ramu Sugar in Papua New Guinea.

Brian's career in the sugar industry encompassed research, milling technology and operations, and senior management. He was president of ASSCT in 1982 and was a long standing Life Member of the ASSCT.

Brian passed away peacefully on the fourth March 2016.