



WATERY SAUCES OLDIES & BIDDIES

(officially known as Water Resources Retired Officers Association Inc.)

Newsletter No. 5

December 1991

The final Association function for 1991, the lunch at Petrie Mansions on the 21st November, was once again well supported with forty-eight sparkling troops seeming to enjoy the conviviality and the repast.

Our Secretary (and chief organiser of all things for a few years now) Noel and wife Rhonda have finally made the complete move to their new home at Helensvale. Noel has also made it known he'd like someone to move into the Secretary job. Thanks very much for the past good work Noel.

RETIREMENTS (including Voluntary Early Retirements) since May

C.N. Cooney	05.07.91	V.L. Findley	20.09.91	P.D. Andrews	11.10.91
J. Hunter	05.07.91	R.J. Gaeta	20.09.91	G. Goodchild	11.10.91
P.H. Mannion	05.07.91	A. Genito	20.09.91	O. O'Reilly	18.10.91
G.E. Spencer	05.07.91	B. Glazebrook	20.09.91	D.A. Gaskell	25.10.91
C.R. Tietzel	05.07.91	N.S. Hopkins	20.09.91	V. Musso	25.10.91
G.F. Wilson	05.07.91	D.J. Hunter	20.09.91	J. Uhlmann	25.10.91
B.G. Fawcett	12.07.91	P.A. Katsadoros	20.09.91	I.G. Campbell	01.11.91
D.J. Butel	26.07.91	J.W. Kennedy	20.09.91	I. Waldron	01.11.91
I.T. Cameron	26.07.91	J.D. King	20.09.91	J.D. Svensson	01.11.91
B.A.J. Lobston	26.07.91	N.J. King	20.09.91	P. Maher	15.11.91
S.G.W. Morey	26.07.91	A.M. Martin	20.09.91	G. Gillies	15.11.91
J.M. Ross	26.07.91	R.H. Maxted	20.09.91	D.A. Nevin	15.11.91
J.B. Safonoff	26.07.91	M.B. McEniery	20.09.91	J.K. Richarson	15.11.91
N.J. White	26.07.91	A. Navarajah	20.09.91	B.J. O'Callaghan	29.11.91
R.A. Kay	31.07.91	T.J. O'Shea	20.09.91	A.J. Clarey	29.11.91
T. Manson	16.08.91	D.I. Pirsic	20.09.91	E.T. Davis	29.11.91
R.L. Connor	20.09.91	K.A. Reason	20.09.91	M. Larson	29.11.91
D.B. Amos	20.09.91	C.J. Redgen	20.09.91	C.E. Burfein	29.11.91
R.A. Barff	20.09.91	J. Russell	20.09.91	R.J. Miller	29.11.91
W.M. Barry	20.09.91	B. Sbeghen	20.09.91	G.R. Munck	29.11.91
O.F. Borg	20.09.91	C.M. Schlawe	20.09.91	J.W. Scorse	29.11.91
J.N. Brewin	20.09.91	D.J. Smith	20.09.91	A. Shafran	29.11.91
J.J. Buchanan	20.09.91	P.E. Thompson	20.09.91	S. Gerhardt	29.11.91
A.W. Bucknell	20.09.91	C.M. Toohey	20.09.91	D.G. Burton	29.11.91
C.J. Burstall	20.09.91	M.J. Ware	20.09.91	B.E. Milne	29.11.91
C. Chomyn	20.09.91	R.W. Weeks	20.09.91	P.A. Galligan	29.11.91
P.W. Clark	20.09.91	K.C. Wimhurst	20.09.91	G.A. Rosser	13.12.91
P.J. Coe	20.09.91	P.J. Zinn	20.09.91	R.D. Kingston	13.12.91
N.S. Efsthadiadis	20.09.91	D.A. Rennie	20.09.91	K.D. Murray	13.12.91
P.E. Evans	20.09.91	R.E. Walker	27.09.91	R.W. Beausang	13.12.91
R.C. Farrell	20.09.91	D.J. White	27.09.91	W G Perkes	13.12.91

VALE

We regret to note the passing of Association members Sam McCall (July) and Garney Johnson (November). also Alec Vitte's wife Pat died in a tragic car accident on 1st July.

Our sincere sympathies are extended to their families.

Sam McCall

Samuel Woods McCall was born in Llonnegal, Ireland on 21.1.1915, and grew up on the family farm. He was educated at Cork and Dublin, matriculated with honours and graduated in Arts and Engineering. He represented the University in boxing, athletics, diving, cricket and rugby, and played the latter at county and international level. With the onset of World War II he joined the British Army in Artillery, saw service as an A-A gunner in the Battle of Britain and later in Persia. He completed officer training and served in Special Force Units in North Africa, Crete, Sicily, Italy and finally as a Captain in the Occupation Forces in Germany.

He completed his university training after the army service in 1948, then worked as a mining engineer in open-cut coal in South Wales. He emigrated to Australia in 1951, again as a mining engineer around Lithgow, then moved to the I & W.S.C. in Queensland. While working at Goondiwindi he met Lex. In 1953 he moved to Malaysia as a mining engineer in open-cut coal mines North of Kuala Lumpur. His then fiancée Lex joined him and they were married. He returned to the I & W.S.C. in 1956 and remained there till retirement in 1979, serving as District Engineer or Regional Engineer at Longreach, St. George, Rockhampton and finally as Senior Engineer in Brisbane. Sam died on the 7.7.91 and is survived by his wife Lex, daughter Judy, son Sam and four grandchildren.

(This summary was taken from the notes for the Thanksgiving Service for the Life of Sam - Ed.)

Garney Johnson

Garney was born in Brisbane on the 16/5/19 and grew up around the Coorparoo area. After leaving school with a Junior Certificate he worked briefly as a clerk in a business, then became a clerk with the Main Roads Department. One of his early postings was to Thornton in the Lockyer Valley, where he met young Bertha Bussian, the daughter of farmers near his M.R.D. camp. They married in 1940.

Garney joined the army (the 2/10 Aust. Field Regiment) and in February 1941 left for Sydney where he joined the "Queen Mary" for Malaya and Singapore. In February 1942 Garney was taken prisoner by the Japanese, taken from Singapore to work on the infamous Burma Railway, then back to Singapore, and then to Japan where he worked in Coal Mines and in shipyards at Nagasaki. Garney talked very little of his time in captivity, but for those who knew him, nothing need be said to understand the strength and courage he exhibited in surviving this difficult time of his life. After the Japanese surrender Garney was picked up by U.S. Troops, flown to Okinawa, thence taken by the British carrier "Formidable" to Sydney.

Back in Australia Garney was reunited with Bertha and went back to work with the M.R.D. Garney and Bertha had two children, Richard born in 1946, and Glenys in 1948. In 1949 Garney joined the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission as a works clerk and in 1950 he was posted to Clare. This time spent in Clare was to him, personally, a particularly memorable and rewarding time of his life. He returned to Brisbane in 1954 as Investigation Officer and later as Stores Supervisor and Supply Officer. He worked with the I.W.S. until his retirement in May, 1979. He was then able to devote himself to his consuming passion, golf. He was a member of the Pacific Golf Club for more than 30 years.

In December 1990, Garney was diagnosed as having a malignant brain tumour. Following an operation he had some months of quality life, but his fight with the disease ended on 27/11/91.

Garney displayed great courage and strength of character. he had strong courage in his own convictions. For him, essentially, there was only black and white, no grey. He gave a whole-hearted effort to his life; one standard only was good enough for Garney and that was "excellent". He also expected a good effort from others and didn't have much time for people who were happy with a 'botched' job.

Garney was a formidable opponent in debate or argument, and a tenacious defender of a friend or a valued principle.

(These notes are mainly based on Terry Giffin's (son-in-law) Eulogy at Garney's Memorial Service - Ed.)

A TRIBUTE - to the late Prof. Kevin Stark (1933 - 1989)

On the 18th September 1991, the Kevin Stark Research Building at James Cook University was officially opened by Senator the Honourable John Button, named as a tribute to Kev's contributions to the University and community.

The units housed within the building include the Tropical Resource Centre which serves as a focal point for industry to have ready access to advice, and to a range of research equipment and consultancy services. This includes a Remote Sensing Unit and the JCU Instrumentation Centre. Other units are the Research and Development Institute, the Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research, the Coalseam Gas Research Institute, the Key Centre in Economic Geology, and the Research Administration Unit.

Kev obtained his Engineering Degree in 1956, a Bachelor of Economics Degree in 1960, and Doctor of Philosophy in 1968.

He left the Commission from Mareeba to become a lecturer in Engineering at Townsville University in January 1961, became Senior Lecturer in 1962, Associate Professor in 1970, Professor of Systems Engineering in 1972 and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Science and Engineering in 1988.

He served on the University Council from 1974 to 1989 and on various committees which steered the development of the JCU.

At the time of his death he was a member of the Australian Research Council and Chairman of its Engineering, Earth and Applied Sciences Committee. Kev was a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Australia, and on its National Committee on Environmental Engineering. He was Chairman of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Consultative Committee, Deputy-Chairman of the Australian Ocean Drilling Council, and a member of the Crown of Thorns Starfish Advisory Review Committee. He was also a member of the Burdekin Irrigation Project Technical Advisory Committee.

And yet, (in Baden Best's words) Kev Stark was an unpretentious person - even humble. He was not over-awed in the company of top executives and he was comfortable at the grass roots level, and he was a loyal, supportive and approachable friend.

(Thanks to Jack Pont for making available the material from which these notes were taken. - Ed.)

VISIT TO THE NORTH

While in the north in June I asked Jack if he'd provide some local items for our Newsletter as it has the largest concentration of ex-I.W.S. people outside Brisbane. He says he doesn't have anything else at present - too busy at the beach up Daintree way, (my heart bleeds), except he was at Paddy Walsh's 70th birthday party in Townsville at 25th September. A great night he reckons.

On the subject of the north, we spent a week or so round Mareeba - Tinaroo etc. and it was great to be able to meet up with and chat to over half the northern members and spouses, mostly at a lunch at the RSL, organised by Keith Turner. Thanks one and all, and we hope to have more items from your area in future newsletters.

Bernie and Sherry Credlin also spent some time in the area about August, enjoying the delights of Tinaroo.

Happy birthday and many happy returns to Henry Hannam in Cairns who'll be celebrating his 80th birthday on the 22nd December.

THE COMMISSION

I understand this newsletter will be going out with or just before an "Aqueduct" which saves some space here. We're getting lost with the changes to the old firm.

This might be a good spot to introduce an item from David Wilmot which he has labelled -

"NOSTALGIA"

Browsing through reports of development in Queensland in the 1880's - and particularly that of water supply development - one is brought face to face with the substantial reality of the comment that 'life was not meant to be easy'.

This was confirmed in an extract from the Report of the then Hyd. Eng. J.B. Henderson, in 1886 - viz:- "A very large part of my time has been spent exploring country and directing surveys; advising local bodies; computing, sketching, and designing large waterworks; working out detail for contract drawings; preparing specifications and contracts/estimates; inspecting works; reporting on business commitments, my own and other departments; on return picking up details of business done in my absence; dealing with arrears of work that has accumulated, and keeping current work well up ... Reporting on applications for patents submitted; business distinct from that belonging to my own department."

Addendum to the report indicates that work for design, direction, and supervision included water supplies from wells, bores, dams, or streams for towns as divergent as Beenleigh and Cooktown; Sandgate and Roma, as wells, bores, and tanks for works as widely separated as St. Helena (Island Penal Settlement) and Hughenden.

There were significant works being undertaken in that year in every part of the State. Getting to them had to be quite an undertaking!

Consider - the first petrol driven cars appeared on Australian roads, just before 1900, and were not taken seriously for some time. Railways were under construction; the first piece of line, a 21 1/2 mile track from Ipswich to Grandchester being completed in 1865. Toowoomba was reached in 1867, and Millhill, near Warwick in 1871. It reached out to Charleville by 1888 - 17 years later.

The line from Rockhampton to Longreach was completed by 1892; Winton was linked with Townsville by 1899 - but the Brisbane - Rockhampton connection was not made until 1897, while Brisbane and Townsville were not linked until 1923.

Eng. Henderson would, in 1886, have been making his inspections by horse drawn vehicles, or on horseback! All work was done by teams of horses - steam engines were not introduced until many years later.

That poor man would have been as busy as the proverbial 'one-armed woodchopper', and his 'comment', in the concluding paragraph of the Report that:- "I feel reluctant to perform some duties, being not possessed of latest information on subjects I am asked to report upon - having no leisure time to keep myself informed thereon!", was, I think you will agree, amply justified.

Thanks David.

And another bit of nostalgia from Morris S. Ochert follows. (Apologies Morrie but I have shortened it just a little).

"..... LIKE A BONDI TRAM"

"What are thongs?"

"Thongs are wot the Theekers thing!"

One of their more popular thongs was about a steam train - "Rockin', Rollin', Ridin', all around the bay, all bound for Morningtown, many miles away." And some of this chat is about a nostalgic steam train trip.

One of the pleasant features of growing old gracefully is that one may reflect upon the many subtle changes which occur in one's own lifespan. Take transport, for instance. In the early nineteen twenties, we were all marched out of the North Bondi Public (i.e. State) Primary School one day to see a little, spluttering bi-plane, which was slowly wobbling north - overhead of course - along the beaches. The Headmaster at Coogee Beach had rung our Head, and by the time it was over Bondi, we were all drawn up in serried ranks on the playground. Three cheers and a wave later, and back we were marched to the tune of "Colonel Bogey", scratchily amplified from a cranked-up gramophone.

Only a few families had a car and rare indeed was a two-car family. If you wanted to get somewhere, you hopped onto a public convenience, paid your penny and could ride from Bondi Beach to Circular Quay. Those trams were huge, fourteen tonners and two were coupled together. The conductor hung on the outside on a narrow running-board, collected fares, ejecting drunks and ringing the bell. On a rainy, cold and windy winter's night, he just got wet. Sometimes, when the tram took a sharp curve at speed, he was almost thrown off into the path of the traffic. That's loyalty!

Do you know where we get the expression "he shot thru' like a bondi tram"? Just before the line reached the beach, it went into a deep cutting in sandstone, about 1/4 mile long with a considerable down-hill gradient. Before entering it, the driver would accelerate and then "let it have its head". The huge tram would hurtle downhill, swaying and roaring and rocking, at an alarmingly increasing speed. Under Bondi Road it went and we could feel the vibration in our nearby house. Once through, he'd apply his chain-brake and lean back hard, hauling on its long bronze handle. For extra purchase he'd push with both feet on the dashboard in front. Just as the monster emerged from the cutting, he'd daintily apply a bit of retard on the air-brake and bring it all to a neat halt at the first beach-side stop. Except once, when the chain-brake snapped!

I recall some tram-related deaths in that cutting. Two kids who were sky-larking; two apparent suicides; one definite murder and one chap who, inexplicably, fell out of a tram.

In the suburbs, all deliveries were made on horse-drawn wagons or buggies. A milk cart was a tank on two wheels, highly decorated, with a tap for dispensing the watered-down milk. Bread, fruit, fish, ice (no refrigerators), clothes props (no tumble driers or clothes hoists) were all brought by horse and cart. The bottle-buyer would slowly cruise around, melodiously shouting "bottle oh". For a half-dozen empty beer bottles he paid "tuppence ha'penny" - good for as many boiled lollies as any kid could safely ingest. To maintain the dignity of his aristocratic avocation, he wore a bowler hat, a grubby green cravat and a vest coat.

A funeral was a magnificent affair, with a high, glass-sided hearse drawn by four black-draped, dark horses. A procession of horse-drawn hansom cabs followed, for the mourners. The drivers all wore high top hats with broad black bands round them. What a send-off! I'm sure even the chief participant was impressed.

Garbage and "sanitary" cans were collected by operators on horse-drawn carts. If a Sanitary Officer arrived and found the wee house was occupied, he'd light his pipe and courteously await the convenience of the chairperson within. Leisurely times, they were.

My Dad used to go to Melbourne and Brisbane on business, mostly on the steam train but occasionally on vessels of the Newcastle and Hunter River Steam Navigation Co. They were the SS "Hunter", "Gwydir", "Naomi", "Hastings", etc. When he first tried the new airline, he came back looking green!

Well, all this is leading up to our nostalgia trip. We recently accompanied the Railway Historical Society on a steam-trip to Nambour. I confess I'm a "steam buff". During the War, I obtained a Chief Engineer's Steam Ticket of the British Board of Trade and served on steam-powered ships for the duration. It gets into your blood. I recall an ancient Chief looking up at his huge triple-expansion giant, pounding out the revs with real purpose, and, like a devotee at prayer he muttered "'arken to the beat of 'er mighty 'eart!" The Train Engineman on our trip said to me "we talk to one-another -- she breathes - we need each other - we make our demands on each other and we respond. She has heart, lungs, brain and sinews. I drive electric and diesel-electric engines all day, but only a steam engine can give and accept love."

Every loco has its personality, its sound, its smell, its idiosyncrasies - and its beauty. And when they roar down a grade, the noise, the swaying, the "rockin', rollin' and ridin'" are some of life's thrills. Like a Bondi tram!

I wrote before and I do so again - you don't have to travel far afield or overseas to enjoy your retirement. Locally, there are fascinating rainforest walks - we love them, and barbeques with mates and Fourex, and train trips and Carnivals of Flowers and water slides and the world's best beaches and weather, and water skiing, and Binna Burra and O'Reilly's and the Planetarium, and koala sanctuaries, and peace, and people you know and like. Enjoy them all - you won't come by here a second time!

FOR SALE

Pauline Wright has available for sale copies of Harry's book "Pathfinder Squadron". This is the same text as the earlier publication "Pathfinders Light the Way", but is an improved presentation including photo of Harry, etc. These copies were ordered from an English publisher not long before Harry died early this year. Pauline is selling them at a bargain price of \$12 each.

So if you haven't got your copy yet, or are looking for that late Christmas present, you can contact Pauline on 3971723, or at 102 Peach Street, Greenslopes, Q 4120.

SOME RECENT AILMENTS

Bill Day has had a recent six weeks' course of Radiotherapy, Bill says as a precautionary measure following his op. earlier in the year.

In September, I had a right kidney removed resulting in a week in hospital and a month or so of not much activity, but everything's great again now.

THE CONSTITUTION

As part of the requirements of having the Association incorporated the original constitution has been revised to comply with Justice Department standards. Anyone wanting a copy should contact our Secretary, N. Ullman, 32 Derwent Avenue, Helensvale, Qld, 4210, or on Phone 075-735143.

THE END

Don't forget the Smoko at Mineral House on 6th February and the AGM on 16th April - all Executive positions will be up for grabs so please think about it.

The present Executive (Don, Bernie, Noel, Graham, Bill, Col and Stan) would like to take this opportunity to extend to all members their very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a happy and fantastically prosperous and healthy New Year.

S. Ross - Ed.