

EASTER EDITION
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THE GOOD SAMARITAN

A Perth gentleman made his first and last visit to Queensland last year. He checked into a south-east Brisbane caravan park. On his way back to his caravan from the ablution block a stone lodged in his thong. He kicked his foot but the stone remained. He then leant for support against an electricity meter box and began to kick much more vigorously. Another guest saw the man in his throes and assumed, from his contact with the meter box, that he was being electrocuted. The samaritan grabbed a piece of timber, a fair insulator, and hit our tourist a sharp blow on the arm to break the assumed electrical connection. Our Perth friend was left with two fractures of the arm and one very strong resolve never to visit us again.

JOCKEYS

Horse

"Jockeys strike. Owners plead with Bill "Skeeter" Sharp to return to the saddle". Thus read a headline in a prominent racing rag on 6th January. The paper also said about another sportsman, "You are never as bad as they say you are and you are never as good as you say you are". (DLM says "I'm not as good as I was once but I'm as good as I ever was once.")

Disc

On a flight from London to Rome I sat beside a very pleasant lad from the south of England. He was making the trip to audition for a position as an English language announcer for Radio Vatican. I asked him if he was confident of securing the job. "Nnnnn-not rrrrr-really, ttttt-to bbbbbb-be ttttt-truthful." he replied. "I'm a ppppp-protestant."

IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR ?

Morris Ochert found that the reference (WS&OB Nov '96) of the Moreton Bay Courier to Sir George Gipps:- "Regretting the decay of his health, we rejoice at his departure." reminded him of a headstone found in Scotland:-

"Sacred to the memory of

Sir,

Laird of these parts,

who was accidentally shot by

his ghillie while hunting.

('Well done, thou good and faithful servant.' Matthew 25;21.)"

Morris also sent two more verses of the "Owl and the Pussy Cat" which have been sent on to young Chris.
Thank you Morris.

Critics of present-day newspapers and journalists would be horrified by our early press barons. Here is an example from a John Norton editorial: "John Hector you are a hidebound humbug and a high-faluting hypocrite....I always did regard you as a press-puffed nincompoop and a parson-boasted humbug....while your past connubial conduct makes you the concupiscent composer of some of these pornographic pulpiteers who have taken you under their pious parsonical protection.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

It is reliably reported that a **regular contributor** to these columns recently broke a toe when he leapt out of bed in the middle of the night in response to a smoke alarm allegedly activated by ants.

REPTILES

Australian herpetologists believed that vipers did not inhabit this continent until in the 1930's, Dr Vincent Crean of the University of Melbourne found such a scaly wriggler in Gippsland. It is known today as the Vince Crean Viper and is usually most active in wet periods.

PERSONAL FILES

How many of us ever bothered to look at our Personal Files when we were working? Here are a few extracts from personal files:-

"His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of curiosity."

"S..... is not really so much of a has-been, but more of a definitely won't-be."

"He carried out each and every one of his duties to his entire satisfaction."

"He would be out of his depth in a car park puddle."

"Technically sound but socially impossible."

"Since my last report he has reached rock bottom, and has started to dig."

"He has the wisdom of youth, and the energy of old age."

"This man is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot."

Do not fear, these files are not from the old Commission, but from the British Military. A few other extracts are:-

"When she opens her mouth, it is only to change whichever foot was previously in there."

"This young lady has delusions of adequacy."

"When he joined my ship, this officer was something of a granny; since then he has aged considerably.

"She sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them."

"This Medical Officer has used my ship to carry his genitals from port to port, and my officers to carry him from bar to bar."

Always forgive your enemies. Nothing annoys them more. (O W) (Oscar Wilde)

If at first you don't succeed, try a little ardour.

Old lawyers never die, they just lose their appeal.

MAIL MOLE

Your Newsletter has a mole in the Bundaberg News-Mail who sent us this item from the unpublished files of the paper. It was apparently intended for publication on 16th July 1982 but never got into print.

"Four hundred dead parrots were found floating with their feet up in the Gin Gin irrigation channel at the weekend. The parrots, all of which had their throats cut, are believed to have been of a rare species known only in the Bundaberg district. According to a spokesman from the Ornithological Protection Association of Queensland, Mr R.H.Eagle, the parrots were, in fact, so rare that they had now become extinct.

The Water Resources District Engineer, said that all bird species were in danger in the area of the irrigation channel since the introduction of piranhas some five weeks ago.

Small boys had been plucked from the banks on three occasions, and two local wildlife enthusiasts had disappeared. The District Engineer said it was a small price to pay to ensure clean water supplies to the district farmers."

(Our thanks go to the nameless and courageous Bundaberg member who sent this document. It smacks of a cover-up and would normally be sent to the CJC or the Press Council but the first body seems to have plenty on its hands and the second is usually sitting on it's. Ed.)

And on the subject of **birds**, people are likely to see lots of **Unleaded Petrels** and **Left Hand Terns** around the roads these days.

MAREEBA NEWS

Sheila Turner has generously continued the good work of Keith and is keeping us informed of Oldies in Mareeba, collecting subscriptions and signing up new members. Thank you Sheila for your efforts and for the Christmas and New Year messages:-

"The group had a great luncheon on 28th November, at the International Club with a roll-up of 33 and quite a few apologies. It was great to meet up with others and have a natter about our families etc. We had a farewell card for all to sign for the Buttenshaws, who are moving to Carlyle Gardens Over 50's Village in Townsville. Both their daughters live in that city so they will be able to see a lot more off them. The Mareeba folks will be sorry to see the Buttenshaws leave.

There was also a "get well" card to be signed for Joyce Warburton who has been very ill. She was looking a lot better and was able to go to the lunch. It was great to be able to catch up with her."

Thanks again Sheila.

FORWARD TO THE PAST

Our first electric telegraph message was sent in 1854 in Victoria on equipment operated by an American, Samuel Walker McGowan. Our messages in 1997 are sent by two other Americans, Frank Blount and Ziggy Switkowski, Chief Executives of Telstra and Optus respectively.

And the concept of Pay TV is certainly not new. In 1923 our first radios were known as "sealed sets" and could only pick up one station to which the listener paid a fee for the right to listen.

I don't recognize you - I've changed a lot. (O W)

I can resist anything except temptation. (O W)

FUNCTIONS

Christmas Luncheon

The end of year function for 1996 was a luncheon held at "Diplomas Restaurant" on Southbank on 6th November. Diplomas is one of several restaurants operated by the College of Tourism and Hospitality to train people for careers in the hospitality industry. Our restaurant was on the fourth floor with magnificent views of Southbank, the River and the City. The food was of a good standard and the trainee staff were helpful and competent.

The attendance totalled 73 and it was particularly pleasing to see quite a few of our country members present- George and Merle Beran (Innes Park) and a friend, Nev Caton (Ayr), John and Patrea O'Shea (Toowoomba) and Eric and Peg Wheeler (Bundaberg). From less distant places were Elaine James (East Ipswich), Vince and Sheila Lynch (Morayfield), Martin Ryan (Bribie Island) and Joyce Rieck (Rosewood).

Peter Bevin, our Patron, was also able to attend and spoke briefly on matters of interest to members. It was also good to see Carol Davison who gave us so much secretarial help over the years, and who is now a member, and Wayne Stewart who is now our administrative contact.

Unfortunately Tom Fenwick had to make a last minute apology.

New Year Function

The first function of the year was held on 22nd January in the second floor function room of the Public Service Club when 33 members and friends enjoyed conversation, savouries and drinks.

Please note the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held at this venue, 16th April.

ENGINEERS EXPLAINED Cont.

Last edition we reproduced comments on Engineers from what was thought to be a disillusioned management (DiM) consultant. We continue his perceptive observations.

"Dating and Social Life

Dating is never easy for engineers. A normal person will employ various indirect and duplicitous methods to create a false impression of attractiveness. Engineers are incapable of placing appearance above function. Fortunately, engineers have an ace in the hole. They are widely recognised as superior marriage material: intelligent, dependable, employed, honest and handy around the house. While it's true that normal people would prefer not to date an engineer, most normal people harbour an intense desire to mate with them, thus producing engineerlike children who will have high-paying jobs early in their lives.

Honesty

Engineers are always honest in matters of technology and human relationships. That's why it's a good idea to keep engineers away from customers, romantic interests, and other people who can't handle the truth. Engineers sometimes bend the truth to avoid work. They say things that sound like lies but technically are not because nobody could be expected to believe them. Some engineer lies are:

'I won't change anything without asking you first.'

'I have to have new equipment to do the job.'

'I'm not jealous of your new computer.'

Powers of Concentration

If there is one trait that best defines an engineer it is the ability to concentrate on one subject to the complete exclusion of everything else in the environment. This sometimes causes engineers to be pronounced dead prematurely. Some funeral homes in high-tech areas have started checking curriculum vitae of the deceased before processing the body. Anyone with a degree in electrical engineering or experience in computer programming is propped up in the lounge for a little while just to see if he or she snaps out of it.

Risk

Engineers hate risk. They try to eliminate it whenever they can. This is understandable, given that when an engineer makes one little mistake, the media will treat it like it's big deal or something. Examples of bad press for engineers:

- * Hindenberg airship
- * Apollo 13
- * Hubble space telescope
- * Titanic

The risk/reward calculation looks something like this:

RISK: Public humiliation and the deaths of thousands.

REWARD: A certificate of appreciation in a handsome plastic frame."

Our thanks to the DiM consultant.

REST IN PEACE

John Dunlop will be well known to many of our members who worked at Tinaroo Falls Dam. He died in late September. John was one of three brothers who were employed by the Commission; Bob, geologist, (deceased) and Ted (still with the Department), were the others. John was a foreman in the heavy plant workshop at Tinaroo and later worked for a mineral sands mining company on Stradbroke Island, for Thiess Brothers at Archerfield and for Plessey. One of his jobs for the last named was looked up to by the people of Brisbane for many years. It was the SGIO clock.

John is survived by wife Lola, daughters Sue and Jenny, two grand-children and Ted.

Leon Gachowicz died on 12th November aged 84 years. Leon worked in the drafting office in the old Project Planning Branch. He had studied engineering before migrating to Australia and after a long wait enough of his training was recognised to allow his appointment as draftsman. Much of his work involved survey computations. Although a very private person, he was a familiar figure bent over a Facit hand operated calculating machine. In fact when he retired at 65 years, he was presented with the machine and the Senior Engineer and auditors were presented with a stock taking problem. Perhaps his time with the Commission is best described by Alan Viser "He was a very gentle man."

Leon is survived by his wife Olga.

Members who worked at St George and Beardmore Dam will be saddened to hear of the death of **Joe Bayliss** on 27th December. Joe, who did a lot work for the Commission, was one of the characters of the bush, a good sportsman, a great personality, and a real tradesman with his earthmoving equipment - for years one of his excavated tanks appeared in a machinery handbook as an example of what could be achieved with tractor and scoop.

BIRTHDAY

There was much merriment at a birthday party in a Northern Brisbane suburb on 12th March, including a raucous rendition by **one of our members**, who wishes to remain **anonymous**, of something that sounded like this:-

"I'm just too long in the tooth,
I've started to deteriorate,
I'm now past my use-by date.
Oh, I'm no spring chicken it's true,
I have to put my teeth in to chew.
My old knees are starting to knock,
I've got too many miles on the clock.
Sure, I'm winking, twinkling and set in my ways
and my body has seen better days.
But give me half a chance and I'll still lift my age."

Aspley Anon who reported the "concert" said that our own **Don** should give up any thought of a stage career and stick to golf, gardening and investing.

Aspley Anon also told me that **Stewie Robinson** has been sampling the service at the Brisbane General Hospital and is now back home demanding, and getting, **VIP** attention. He is well on the way to complete recovery. Other members who have heard the whetting of scalpels are **Pat McMahon, Alec Vitte** and **David Morwood**. **Maureen McMahon** has had eye surgery. They are all now well.

Paddy Walsh is well known to many members, especially those who were at the Burdekin and Mareeba where Pat was a surveyor. In November a Townsville RSL magazine reported his death. Paddy wants it known that the report was **grossly exaggerated** and he is very well. Those of us who read the obituaries before deciding whether or not to rise from bed may have to revise the practice.

POLITICAL FAUX PAS

A former Australian Ambassador to Ireland was invited to a ball, a major event of the social calendar. His hosts wined and dined him with enthusiasm and when the orchestra began to play, he saw, although a little hazily, a dazzling crimson-clad figure on the other side of the ballroom. He made his way, somewhat unsteadily, across the floor and asked the crimson one to dance.

"I have three reasons to refuse your invitation" began the frosty reply. "First you are drunk, second this is the Irish National Anthem and third I am the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin."

AND

A former Australian Prime Minister once took his Cabinet to lunch. The waiter took the PM's order first.

"What will you have Sir?"

"Steak."

"How would you like it Sir?"

"Rare."

"And what about the vegetables Sir?"

"They'll have the same as me?."

Only dull people are brilliant at breakfast.

NATURALLY THE RESOURCES ARE DEPARTMENTALISED

In the immortal words of the inimitable **Meryck Kotek**, "For blardy hell, vot iss goink ON here, Davey".

The Department of Natural Resources continues much as outlined in my article in the WRROA Newsletter of July 1996. If you've lost that, well, "too bad", you didn't really want to know, did you?

What has changed a bit is that the structure and most of the appointments in the regions and districts have been finalised; quite a big achievement for our **Patrons past, present, and probably future**.

These Patrons and the Minister are now located in their new offices on the 13th floor, Mineral House.

REGIONS: There are now five regions (North, South, S-East, West and Central), and the Metropolitan District. These are centred in Cairns, Toowoomba, Nambour, Longreach and Brisbane. (No change from July).

There are Regional Service Directors (Managers in the July 96 note) in charge of all Department functions in each Region. They also communicate directly with the Minister, so they are V.I.Ps indeed. They include **Tim Smith** (South-East), **Frank van Schagen** (South, although Frank has moved to Head Office, and **Greg Claydon** is Acting RSD), **Mike McKenna** (Central), **Graeme Milligan** (West), and **Mal Cremer** (Metropolitan), all previously of Water Resources, although Mal has been with Lands Dept for many years. So we're well represented here. The only other is **Barney Myers**, (North).

There are also Regional Managers for Water Infrastructure across the whole Region, and as you might expect, most of these are ex WR people. North Region is the realm of **Peter Gilbey**, Central has **Ed Donohue**, **Alan Murray** manages S-East, and South has **Ross Krebs**. Anyone who thinks these "young fellers" are too young, is getting old.

There are also Regional Advisers, Business Services, in each Region, to co-ordinate what we used to call Administration. Some of these are: Central, **Kev Archie**; South Region, **Ian Kulpa**;

DISTRICTS: The Districts are more complex, so get a good light, stop trying to do the crossword at the same time, and **CONCENTRATE**.

There are Districts within the Regions which have a District Manager for the whole Department, and there are other smaller offices in centres where less than the full range of activities are represented. These have managers for parts of the Department activities, called Operations Managers.

Full strength Districts, and Managers where I know they are ex-WR are:

NORTH REGION: Far North District (Cairns)
Townsville District

CENTRAL REGION: Emerald District
Rockhampton District
Mackay District

WEST REGION: Cloncurry District
Longreach District

SOUTH REGION: Darling Downs District (**Greg Claydon**)

Border District (Warwick)

Balonne District (Roma)

SOUTH EAST REGION: Moreton District (Ipswich) (**No! Not Trump**)

North Coast District (Nambour)

Burnett District (Bundaberg)

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT:

Sub Districts at Brisbane, Caboolture, Beenleigh and Bundall.

Other (sub) Districts include Innisfail, Ayr, Charters Towers, Ingham, Biloela, Goondiwindi, Dalby, St George, Hughenden, Mt Isa, Blackall, Cunnamulla, and maybe others I've missed.

Some Operations Managers at these Districts are: **Rob Lait**, Innisfail; **Maurie Clewley**, Rockhampton; **Jim Cook**, Emerald. Maybe more have been appointed, this is still on-going.

So the message is you can still find offices and officers in the places they used to be. Just look for the DNR rather than DPI or WRC or IWSC. Many of the offices are actually still in the same places!

From **David Morwood**, with help from **Peter Bevin**.

AND Thanks to White and White for the artwork

What is a cynic? A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. (O W)

We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. (O W)

CHEERS

Bernie Credlin.

PLEASE USE THIS SPACE TO WRITE SOMETHING FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER