

CHRISTMAS EDITION
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A FADING FAWCETT FACES 50

Thus read a headline in The Courier Mail recently. In the text the following appears "(Fawcett's) Naked Art Special" But before you head off to buy old copies of the paper please note that the article refers to Farrah and not **Barrie**.

LAWYERS FIRST COMMANDMENT

"A person is presumed innocent until proven penniless".

The Journal of the Massachusetts Bar Association records some deep and meaningful questioning from court transcripts:

* "How many times have you committed suicide?"

* "Mr Slatery, you went on a rather elaborate honeymoon, didn't you?"

"I went to Europe, Sir."

"And you took your new wife?"

* "So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8?"

"Yes."

"And what were you doing at that time?"

* "She had three children, right?"

"Yes."

"How many were girls?"

"None."

"Were there any girls?"

* "Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he does not know about it until the next morning?"

* "The youngest son, the 21-year-old, how old is he?"

* "Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?"

"All my autopsies are performed on dead people."

* "Were you present when your picture was taken?"

* "Were you alone or by yourself?"

* "Was it you or your younger brother who was killed in the war?"

And from a trial in Alameda, California.

Attorney: Before you signed the death certificate, had you taken a pulse?

Witness: No.

Attorney: Did you listen to the heart?

Witness: No.

Attorney: So, when you signed the death certificate you were sure the man was dead, were you?

Witness: Well let me put it this way. The man's brain was sitting in a jar on my desk. But I guess it's possible he could be out there practising law somewhere.

From The Courier Mail

LAIDLEY CHELSEA FESTIVAL BY STEAM TRAIN

On Saturday, 13th September, a small group of eleven members made a trip back in time when they visited Laidley on the steam hauled heritage train tour to the Laidley Chelsea Festival and Flower Show.

Steam Locomotives Brown Bomber C 17 no.974 and Blue Baby DD 17 no.1051 pulled ten wooden heritage carriages about 80 years old, with opening windows (so that passengers could have full benefit of the lovely views of the Lockyer Valley and the smoke), end platforms with cast lacework railings and varnished timber interiors.

We enjoyed the nostalgia trip, but were again reminded of the noise, movement, smoke and cinders of old steam trains as we rattled past waving children, startled maned ducks and flying sparks. We were followed by a fire engine for the long dry grass grew close to the line on the downs.

After Grandchester the train climbed the steep Little Liverpool Range and passed through the two oldest tunnels in Queensland, one is half a kilometre long. The lights in our carriage were not working and we found that **our leader** used the cover of darkness to return to the behaviour of his youth.

Our arrival at Laidley was announced by the Toowoomba Pipe Band which led us down to the main street where the procession commenced. We all knew that the area was renowned for its onions, potatoes and beetroot, but I can assure you that they are also very skilful at growing orchids and ferns. The Orchid and Foliage Society had an excellent display ranging from large, showy Cattleya to small, delicate native orchids and a wonderful collection of maiden hair ferns.

The Chelsea Flower Show was well presented with lovely fresh flowers, showing great co-operation in the town by the number of well prepared displays.

Our transport moved to Gatton after the parade, where the **Morwoods** joined the locals on the extra steam trip. Maybe they were responsible for the delayed return, but it is as well or our **noisy leader** and friend would have had to catch a bus home. The flower show was not the attraction that delayed them.

To enable passengers to photograph or video the train, a photo stop was planned on both trips. The photographers were dropped off at an appropriate place, the train slowly backed off and then rushed forward in spectacular fashion. It then sedately returned to pick up the waiting photographers. Shame! We had all waved farewell to **Gordon**.

About 300 people made the train trip, but **Judy Morwood** won the raffle which was too cumbersome for her to carry home, so we consumed her box of chocolates and left her the rest of the remarkable treasures. There was no prize for the noisiest person on the train but our **energetic leader** would have won easily.

Sunsteam runs the Heritage Train Tours and their volunteer passenger attendants were cheerful and obliging. Too bad they no longer wave a green flag and blow a whistle. We missed that bit, but otherwise we had a great day. Thanks **Beth Pegg**.

MORETON BAY BOAT TRIP

Nine of our members joined the Australian Water Transport Association on Sunday, 21st September for a delightful cruise of Moreton Bay. We were to be indebted to **Gordon Wilson** for his recollections of the day, but **Barrie Fawcett** stepped into the breach:

The weather was fine and the seas calm when we joined our friends from the Australian Water Transport Association for a very pleasant and informative trip on the 'Cat-o-Nine Tails' among the islands in the southern end of Moreton Bay.

The crew member responsible for providing the commentary on the features we were seeing must have had a really good Saturday night. Not only was he confused between his left and right, let alone port and starboard, but also about the names of the islands as we passed them. At least he confessed that for all he knew we could have been entering Sydney Heads. Fortunately the skipper seemed to know where to point the boat.

The strong rumour that **Barrie Fawcett** drew **Malcolm Pegg's** name out of the hat to win one of the prizes, is completely without foundation. Thanks **Barrie**.

MOUNT COOT-THA BOTANIC GARDENS

On 15th October a group of 12 which included the White's daughter, **Susan**, and granddaughter, **Kiara**, visited the Mount Coot-tha Botanic Gardens.

The visit started with a mini bus tour of the gardens during which we heard an informative audio tape which explained the layout, drew attention to some unusual or outstanding specimens and demonstrated just how suitable Brisbane's climate is for growing plants from all over the world.

Morning tea was followed by a guided walk through the Australian native plant section with the emphasis generally being on the suitability of certain natives for planting in home gardens.

Dorothy Fawcett was our guide and we thank her for an excellent job.

With his customary modesty, **Alan Wickham** left the walking group just before our attention was drawn to the splendour of the orange-red flowers of the *Oreocallis wickhamii* (Tree Waratah), a native of North Queensland.

(These Wickhams seem to sprout up everywhere- streets, swimmers, civil engineers etc.)

BOWLS DAY

A small but dedicated group of 18 aspiring and regular bowlers took to the green at Aspley Memorial Bowls Club on Friday 8th August.

The morning game was a test of consistency and also one of trial and tribulation where the regular bowlers were able to show their class and skill. Needless to say the amateurs were conspicuous by their lack of the same skills but still they had a great time trying to emulate the bowlers. This was a lead up to the afternoon event which was a pairs competition with partners arranged by draw (some have suggested this may have been rigged by the organiser!)

Overall winners were determined by a somewhat unusual process, that being by the pair having the highest winning margin, and was won narrowly by the "**Aspley Hot Shot**" **Doris Robinson** and "**Bracken Ridge Bodgie**" **Norm White** who was very fortunate to have Doris as a partner when she was playing in top form.

All who played had most enjoyable and challenging games.

There was also a number of extra members who came along for lunch and to enjoy the conviviality of the occasion.

Many thanks go to **Joan Ross**, **Shirley Beattie** and **Shirley Buckland** for the excellent luncheon, morning tea and the after bowls presentation, and also for their untiring work which resulted in a memorable day.

As usual **Stan Ross** did a magnificent job in organising and running the day this was very much appreciated by all those who attended.

Thanks to "**Wrong Bias**" **White**.

REST IN PEACE

Eric White died in Maryborough in June. Eric was the father of our late member **Warren** who died in 1995. Eric will also be remembered by some members as a Storeman at Rocklea Depot in the 70's.

Our sympathy is extended to **Eric Davis** and his family on the death of his mother mid-year.

We also express our condolences to **Ninna and Bill Day** and family on the death of Ninna's mother in October.

Marty Ryan passed away on 21st October, aged 84. More details will appear in our next edition.

REMEMBER

After much badgering **Stuie Robinson** produced information for the following:

Stuart was born on 25th February 1918 at Wondai. His parents worked on Jingerie Station where Boondooma Dam is today. His Primary education was at the one-teacher school of Brigooda where his parents were then dairy farming. After his parents moved to Childers Stu went on to Nudgee College as a boarder.

His working life began as a Trainee Teacher in Turbot Street, city at the princely sum of one pound per week paid monthly by cheque. Board consumed 15 shillings of this so Stu was attracted to the Public Service where the pay was two pounds five shillings paid fortnightly in cash.

At the end of 1936 he transferred to the Irrigation, Water Supply and Sewerage Department and began work as a Clerk in the Boring Branch (the name of the Branch wasn't exactly designed to convey visions of excitement and exhilaration). His predecessor was **Eric Robinson** who had moved to Drafting Branch. His Boss was **P.C. Tibbits**, a pipe smoker who invariably set the waste paper basket on fire after disposing of his pipe ashes. A couple of these conflagrations were spectacular until they were promptly extinguished by dousing with water from a jug on the washstand. The resulting mess was horrid to behold.

The Department's District Offices were then at Winton (**George Brown** and **Frank Smith**), Boulia (**Paddy Carr**), St George (**Noel Eden**) and Theodore. These offices were busy with artesian bore remeasurements, licensing etc. and importantly the establishment of stock route watering points to provide supplies to allow livestock to travel to the railheads.

Some time in 1937 it was proposed to open a meatworks at Karumba in the Gulf and Surveyor _____ was employed to locate sites for bores and tanks along the route to Karumba. On the day of his departure on the John Burke ship "Wandana", he appeared in the office decked out in Assam silk suit, white pith helmet (tiger shooter) and white shoes. Stu remembers him as a most remarkable sight. Later it was confirmed that the Surveyor had arrived at Normanton but no reports or messages had been received from him. Weeks later the Police Sergeant confirmed by telegram that **Mr** _____ had indeed arrived but he had not sobered up since hitting town and that he was now destitute having squandered all the money advanced against his travelling expenses.
Exit Surveyor _____.

At this time the Department employed a water diviner (**J.H.Bestman**) at a salary of 200 pounds per annum. One Saturday morning (yes they worked on Saturday mornings) a discussion on divining was in progress and Stu was co-opted by Mr Bestman to assist him prove that even metal could be located by the divining rod. A piece of copper wire was bent at a right angle and placed in Stu's right hand, a piece of galena (silver/lead ore) was placed on his head and another piece put under his foot. Nothing happened whatsoever until Mr Bestman held his left hand whereupon the wire oscillated from side to side. The demonstration was repeated several times with the same results but the argument still raged.

In 1939 Stu successfully applied for a Drafting Cadetship and began work under a new boss, **Bill Kearton**. Other cadets had included **George Pearce, Vince Schmidt, Eric Robinson** and **Harry Wright**.

The Commissioner was **C.E.Parkinson** a man about whom thousands of words could be written. Frequently "Parky" would call (or shout) for "Black Robbie" or "White Robbie". Eric was dark complexioned while Stuart was fair.

In August Stu was called up by the C.M.F. and spent three months in a Signals Unit at Fort Lytton. The camp was so bad that young Robinson applied to join the R.A.A.F. but had to wait 5 months until March 1941 before he was called up. He was discharged five years later in April 1946 and returned to work in June. **Harry Wright** also returned to work in 1946 as one of the most highly decorated airmen of World War II. Never one to boast of his exploits, Harry had been awarded the DFC and Bar and DFM.

After the war more staff was recruited and office space was in very short supply at Head Office in the Executive Building. Engineer **Charlie Ogilvie**, a senior and highly respected officer returned one day from a lengthy field trip to find that he had no office accommodation. Not one to be deterred by obstacles big or small, Charlie set up office on the balcony overlooking George Street. He placed two chairs a small distance apart, scrounged a piece of plywood about 4 feet by 3 feet and placed this on the chairs with judiciously placed rocks as counterbalances. Another spare chair and numerous rocks for paperweights and Charlie was in business with out fuss, bother or angst. This was his work place for several weeks until space became available.

It is difficult to picture some of the prima donnas of recent times tolerating these conditions or applying Charlie's simple self-help solutions.

In the late '40's the Executive Building was revamped to accommodate more staff but finally the Commission moved to the old Courier Mail bulk newsprint store in William Street in December 1950. This was the beginning of a new era for the Commission. A new era was also beginning for the urbane man-about-town who married **Doris McKean** on 17th January 1953.

Stuart retired in 1978 as Supervising Draftsman in Irrigation Branch. At this point his memoirs cease, temporarily I hope.

The reference to the old Boring Branch recalls a poem written by the late Bill Harney when he was ranger (the first) at Uluru (Ayers Rock) and an old percussion rig was drilling the first bore to supply water to tourists:

"The bush is full of clattering noise when the walking-beams resound,
The derrick shakes as the drill-bit quakes to a crazy ragtime jog.
One hundred feet in the earth below the drill and the jars rebound
As the driller feels the slackening rope and gives her an extra cog.

Our bits are sharp and the rock is hard, down in the earth below,
With sink-bar, jars and drilling-bit, lever and walking-beam,
Covered in dust we earn our crust, for this is a job we know;
The work is ours and the water yours as soon as we tap the stream.

The engine roars a steady beat as the belt goes whirring round
The drill comes up and the slush-pump down to give us a clearer hole,
A welcome sight for the sludge runs white where the water streams about-
The stream is here but the bit goes on to reach its final goal.

The dust is over our bodies now, but the water is down below,
We'll wash it off as we test the bore and hope for a mighty stream.
The driller is the first to open the land, for he makes the country glow,
His song of water can ever be heard in the crash of the walking-beam.

The drillers are now on that fringe of land untouched for a million
years, Where blackman's well and rock-hole dry beneath a scorching sun.
Our drill-rig jumps as our bits go down to the chatter of gnashing gears,
And over this land shall windmills stand for us when our race is run".

The reference to **Charlie Ogilvie** should bring forward more stories of this remarkable man. Stories like being caught on a field trip on the western side of Cooper Creek by a large flood in the 1930's. Charlie drove the Department's T model Ford to Adelaide from whence he and car returned to Brisbane by coastal steamer.

MAREEBA NEWS

Sheila Turner made the following contribution soon after arriving back from a most enjoyable eight weeks in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Mareeba Oldies had a lunch in July at the R.S.L. Club at which they welcomed back **Col and Editha Taggart**.

Eric Hobson was at the lunch looking quite perky, so too were **Joyce Warburton** and **Lottie Hannam**. The latter was recovering after a fall. **Marcia Pont** is also getting over an operation to replace a leg joint.

The **Fossetts** celebrated their 46th wedding anniversary in July and the **Barnwells** had their 53rd in October.

Sheila also reported that the Taggarts were hosing down reports that **Editha** "broke the bank" at the Cairns Leagues club. However it does appear that countless coins cascaded from poker machine after one onslaught.

RECOVERIES

Stan James has had surgery and is making a speedy recovery.

At the time of writing **Dan Rowley** was about to undergo surgery at the Holy Spirit Hospital.

Vince Lynch has been indisposed with heart trouble.

Many members will know the likeable **Jack O'Connor** formerly of The Local Government Department. Jack has been undergoing a course of treatment at Wesley Hospital.

"Brownie" and Audrey Brown are recovering from their 25th Wedding Anniversary on 28th September.

So too are **Norm and Lindsay White** who celebrated the marriage of son Ian to Selena Bock on 27th September.

TEAMWORK

"We trained hard, but it seemed every time we were beginning to form teams we would be reorganised. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet every situation by reorganising, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralisation." Emperor Nero apparently had management consultants in his day as the above report from one of his pro-consuls shows.

FAMILY TREES

The Switzelberg family is one of the more socially conspicuous pillars of American society. The poignant reference to Uncle Al in the family history was sanitised.

"Albert Hermann Josef Switzelberg 1899-1937 occupied the chair of applied electronics at a prominent government institution. The ties to his chair were very strong and his death came as a great shock."

(Uncle Al was electrocuted at Sing Sing penitentiary)

And another example of black, if apt, reporting came from Nat Mullick the Indian hangman:

"I plan to teach my son the ropes."

And finally from a mining site in Eastern Tasmania:

"Persons hanging around here at night will be hanging here in the morning."

WHAT'S IN A NAME

The names given to some shops and small businesses are most appropriate (if you don't mind a pun). Here are a few:

Nascissors	Hairdresser
Presents of Mind	Gift Shop
Home and Hosed	Gift Shop
Essentials	Massages?
Floral and Hardy	Florist
Fleurtatious	Florist
Tall Poppies	Florist
Babble On	Coffee shop
The Daily Grind	Coffee Shop
Wok On Inn	Asian Restaurant
The Oven D'or	Cake Shop

WYCHEPROOF TO WAGAMAN - KUNUNURRA TO KAKADU

My brother Geoff and I spent a most enjoyable month driving from his place in north-west Victoria to Port Augusta thence along the Stuart Highway to Darwin with detours to Ayers Rock, the Olgas, Kununurra and Kakadu. We returned across the Barkly Tableland to Mount Isa thence south through Longreach, Charleville, Bourke and Broken Hill.

At the risks of causing an eruption of cataclysmic proportions in **Dave Munro**, and of putting the rest of you to sleep, here are a few simplistic notes on the geology of Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (The Olgas).

Ayers Rock and The Olgas are near the southern edge of the Amadeus Basin. This depression in the earth's crust formed about 900 million years ago and over ages were filled with layers of sediments. These flat sediments were then crumpled and buckled into mountain ranges which eroded easily, forming alluvial fans. About 500 million years ago the region was again covered by a shallow sea and more sands, silts and muds settled on top of the alluvial fans compressing and cementing them. The sandy fans were thus converted into sandstones and the gravel beds were changed into conglomerates. Between 400 and 300 millions years ago the area was again folded and fractured. One of the horizontal sandstones was rotated almost to the vertical and exposed by the erosion of the softer rocks around it.

This is Ayers Rock today. A conglomerate layer was rotated only 15 to 20 degrees and after erosion of the landscape is now known as The Olgas. Ayers Rock and The Olgas are the visible tips of huge slabs of rock which extends far beneath the ground, possibly 5 or 6 kilometres.

The sandstone of Ayers Rock does not have major joints or fractures. On the other hand the conglomerate of the Olgas does have valleys which reflect fractures which have been widened by chemical weathering and rainfall run-off.

Lifted from publications by Sweet and Crick, Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics, Canberra.

TECHNICAL AID TO THE AGED QUEENSLAND INC. (TADQ)**CUSTOM DESIGNED LIVING AIDS FOR FRAIL AGED
AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

For a few years I have been a volunteer worker with TADQ. I thought our members would like to know a bit more about this organisation, so I include the following notes from it.

"TADQ is an incorporated non-profit association of technical volunteers, registered as a charity in Queensland. The organisation derives its income from a Government Grant, subscriptions from members, donations and fundraising.

Each year TADQ volunteers design, construct, adapt, install and maintain technical aids for persons with disabilities where such suitable aids cannot otherwise be obtained. The service is provided free of all labour costs to clients, with only the cost of materials and volunteer out of pocket expenses, such as workshop consumables, phone calls, postage and mileage, being requested where possible.

The organisation helps all people with disabilities without discrimination. It accepts requests from clients themselves or by referral through rehabilitation professionals, such as doctors, occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

Many people with disabilities have to cope with limitations of independence. In some cases, computers can compensate for these disadvantages by providing opportunities for education, work, recreation or communication with others. For this reason we have decided to set up a Computer Loan Scheme and have received seeding funding from the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Scheme to establish this extension to our service. With the support and assistance of the Queensland Apple Macintosh Association and Lions Clubs we have placed our first computer with a little girl on the Sunshine Coast. This is both exciting and rewarding for all those involved and providing TADQ with another means of helping others to independence.

Our aim to promote community awareness of TADQ is twofold:

1. We are constantly aware that the very people we seek to assist, being disabled and sometimes frail aged are often isolated from knowing we are available to them.
2. We are in desperate need of volunteers, however the nature of our work means that they need to come from a technical, engineering or trade background.

TADQ has regional Co-ordinators throughout the outlying metropolitan areas and statewide.

If you are interested in becoming a TADQ volunteer, please contact our office on (07)32161733.

If you feel you need help from TADQ 'phone the same number.

Cheers
Bernie Credlin,
Editor.