

BLACKOUT EDITION

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COMING EVENTS

Excursion to Nambour and the Sunshine Coast

Please remember this train/coach excursion on Sunday 5th April. The cost is \$18 per head which includes coach travel and morning tea and lunch.

Train travel is NOT included. Reservations with payment should be made to Barrie Fawcett by 23rd March. Please see the circular sent out on 6th March.

Annual General Meeting

A venue and date for the Annual General Meeting are yet to be finalised, due to the unavailability of the State Service Club. Notice of the Meeting will be issued when possible.

KEEPING FIT

The power blackouts gave some the opportunity to climb stairs and to get out of air conditioned rooms. However not all of us are health fanatics.

Peter O'Toole spoke for many of us when he said: "I never exercised except to walk behind the caskets of friends who did."

Other casualties of the power cuts were those who depend on the computer to make themselves literate and the take-away food proprietors.

Beneficiaries include the physical health of those who patronise the take-away shops and the financial well-being of plumbers who were called out to "fix" off-peak hot water systems which had been turned off by remote control before the rationing officially began.

And talking about the effects of power cuts on computers and their owners:

PROBLEM SOLVING

The following is from a computer customer assistance office:-

Assistant: "Computer assistance; may I help you?"

Customer: "Yes, I'm having trouble with my word processor package."

A: "What sort of trouble?"

C: "Well I was typing along when all of a sudden the words went away."

A: "Went away?"

C: "They disappeared?"

A: "Hmm. So what does your screen look like now?"

C: "Nothing. It's blank; it won't accept anything when I type."

A: "Are you still in word processing mode?"

C: "How do I tell?"

A: "Never mind, can you move the cursor around the screen?"

C: "There isn't any cursor: I told you, it won't accept anything I type.?"

A: "Does your monitor have a power indicator?"

C: "What's a monitor?"

A: "It's like a TV. Does it have a little light to tell you the power is on?"

C: "I don't know."

A: "Look at the back of the monitor and find where the power cord goes in. Can you see that?"

C: "...Er. Yes, I think so."

A: "Can you see if it is securely plugged in?"

C: "No. I can't see it properly, it's too dark."

A: "Too dark? Well turn the office light on."

C: "I can't. There is a power cut."

A: "A power.. a power cut? Ah! Okay, we've got it licked now. Do you still have the boxes and manuals and packing your computer came in?"

C: Yes, I Keep them in the cupboard."

A: "Good! Get them, unplug the system and pack it up just like it was when you got it. Then take it back to the store where you bought it.

C: "Really? Is it that bad? What do I tell them?"

A: "Tell them you are too stupid to own a computer."

And while still on computers:

News Report July 24th 1996 Zaire.

CABINDA, ZAIRE- In a move IBM offices are hailing as a major step in the company's ongoing worldwide telecommunications revolution, M'wana Ndeti, a member of Zaire's Bantu tribe, used an IBM global uplink network modem yesterday to crush a nut.

Ndeti, who spent 20 minutes trying to open the nut by hand, easily cracked it open by smashing it repeatedly with the powerful modem.

"I could not crush the nut by myself," said the 47 year-old Ndeti, who added the savoury nut to a thick, peanut-based soup minutes later. With IBM's help, I was able to break it. " Ndeti discovered

the nut-breaking, 28.8 V.34 modem yesterday, when IBM was shooting a commercial in his southwestern Zaire village. During a break in shooting, which shows African villagers eagerly teleconferencing via computer with Japanese schoolchildren, Ndeti snuck onto the set and took the modem, which he believed would serve well as a "smashing" utensil.

IBM officials were not surprised the longtime computer giant was able to provide Ndeti with practical solutions to his everyday problems. Our tele-communications systems offer people all over the world global networking solutions that fit their specific needs," said Herbert Ross, IBM's director of marketing. "Whether you're a nun cloistered in an Italian abbey or an Aboriginal in Australia's Great Sandy Desert. IBM has the ideas to get you where you want to go today."

According to Ndeti, of the modem's many powerful features, most impressive was its hard plastic casing, which easily sustained several minutes of vigorous pounding against a large stone. "I put the nut on a rock, and I hit it with the modem," Ndeti said. "The modem did not break. It is a good modem."

Ndeti was so impressed with the modem that he purchased a new, state-of-the-art IBM workstation, complete with a PowerPC 601 microprocessor, a quad-speed internal CD-ROM drive and three 16-bit ether-net networking connectors. The tribesman has already made good use of the computer system, fashioning a gazelle trap out of its wires, a boat anchor out of the monitor and a crude but effective weapon from its mouse.

"This is a good computer," said Ndeti, carving up a just-captured gazelle with the computer's flat, sharp internal processing device. "I am using every part of it. I will cook this gazelle on the keyboard. " Hours later, Ndeti capped off his delicious gazelle dinner by smoking the computer's 200 page owner's manual.

IBM spokespeople praised Ndeti's choice of computers. "We are pleased that the Bantu people are turning to IBM for their business needs," said company CEO William Allaire. "From Kansas City to Kinshasa, IBM is bringing the world closer together. Our cutting-edge technology is truly creating a global village."

MAREEBA NEWS

The Mareeba Oldies had a very nice Christmas luncheon and get-together at the Bowling Club on 4th December. The roll-up of 39 was very good and included **Lottie Hannam** who caught a bus up from Cairns. (**Sheila Turner** drove her home afterwards.) Lottie is still in fine fettle and doesn't seem to have changed much over the years. All present signed a Golden Wedding Anniversary card for **Mick and Dawn Henderson**. Dawn had a recent hip replacement, but is whizzing around with the help of a wheeled walker.

Marcia Pont is using a walking stick after her knee replacement but is turning in slower race times than Dawn. **Maud Willis** won the lucky door prize.

Members used the occasion to give their 1998 subscriptions to Sheila who has passed them on to Treasurer Jim Walls.

Pat Fossett is in Calvary Hospital, Cairns after surgery. Some old residents have showed interest in joining the Oldies including **Lil Collins (formerly Mrs Sting Daley) and Howard Bloomfield**.

Thanks Sheila.

Sheila has suggested that many members, particularly those from the country, have wonderful

memories of the old days, including some very funny ones, and would be happy tell us about them. Sheila has kicked off with an anecdote about her early days in the bush which is in this issue. Many others have good stories to tell, so how about it, don't be shy and don't worry about your writing. **After years of deciphering Don Beattie's notes, we will interpret yours.**

Of course I'm the boss son, your mother might make all the decisions, but I've got the TV remote control.

BERTRAMS' GRAND TOUR

In the November 1996 Newsletter we included a few paragraphs of the Bertram odyssey in which the party sat in their car in the Vienna airport plucking up enough courage to venture into the traffic. Read on for an account of the rest of their travels:

"ADVENTURES IN EUROPE (4TH SEPT TO 13TH OCT 1996)

As reported by our esteemed Editor in a previous newsletter, Joyce and I, together with our two travelling companions, did in fact depart from Munich Airport in our hire car-on the third attempt and after paying a parking fee for our prolonged Airport stay. Heading south, our first stop was Mittenwald (a small family hotel) in Southern Germany. Sightseeing at Oberammergau (where the Passion Play is presented) Neuschwanstein Castle then off to Lauterbrunnen (Switzerland)- this was a re-visit as we were fortunate enough to be here in 1993. A visit to Jungfrauoch (just below the Jungfrau 4158 m -Europe's highest peak) was a must- not possible in 1993 due to winter conditions-but made it on the day we left for Vienna - rack railway- Ice Museum with spectacular ice carvings- hanging glaciers- and breathtaking views. Our onward tour took us to Innsbruck via Zurich and Vitnau, and then to Vienna via Salzburg and St. Gilgen, where we enjoyed a two day farm stay- the owners could not speak English, thus making an interesting language experience). Our car hire terminated at this stage- I am sure the local motorists were very glad to be rid of we tourists. (The Bertrams insist they voluntarily surrendered the vehicle to the hire car people. Ed.)

"Vienna was the starting point of our Insight-Highlights of Eastern Europe Tour.

Day 1- Vienna at leisure- the old section of the city were entralling- cobbled streets and pokey shops. **Day 2** by coach to **Budapest** (Hungary) on the Danube River.

Day 3 Budapest sightseeing- **Buda** on the west bank to see St Matthias Church and Fisherman's Bastion on Citadel Hill- **Pest** on the east bank viewing the beautiful bridges and the ornate Parliament building.

Day 4- to **Krakow** (Poland) via Tatra Mountains (**Slovakia**)- Border crossings were an interesting experience to say the least- 57 on the coach consisting of a Hungarian guide, German driver, 31 Americans, 4 Canadians, 8 Australians, 4 English and 2 each from New Zealand, South Africa, Indonesia and Singapore. The Singaporeans, Indonesians and Australians caused the most interest and delay for the Border Police- up to 2 1/2 hours at one gate. At this gate, some 1200-1500 heavy transports were waiting and it could be 2 days before these vehicles were processed and allowed to pass through.

Day 5- Krakow- sightseeing and shopping (hand carved chess sets were purchased for our grand-children at very reasonable prices). Amber in all shapes and forms was at very competitive prices, although this fortunately did not interest our ladies. Also we had the option to visit Auschwitz Concentration Camp- but after having visited Mauthausen Camp after leaving Salzburg, one such facility was more than enough!!!

Day 6- on the road again to **Warsaw** with a brief stop-over to view the Black Madonna, said to be painted by St Luke.

Day 7- Warsaw- viewing the reconstruction of the city which was almost totally destroyed during World War 2, the Ghetto Heroes Monument, The palace of Culture and the Neo-classical Lazienki Palace.

Day 8- to **Berlin** via **Posnan** (historic river port).

Day 9- Berlin- a must to see remaining sections of the Iron Curtain, Brandenburg Gate and the Reichstag- burnt by the Nazis and now to become Germany's Parliament- some 50+ cranes are in use for this project's construction.

Day 10 To **Dresden** (its opulent Opera House and its ancient Saxon Wall made of Meissen tiles) and on to **Prague**.

Day 11- Prague with its new air of freedom since the "Velvet Revolution", its unique character remains unchanged. We visited the 1000 year old Hradcany Castle and within its walls, St Vitus' Cathedral with its gilded chapel studded with semi-precious stones. Also the spectacular Old Town Square with its Astronomical Clock.

Day 12- Today we travelled through rich farm lands with a stop at **Trebon** among the Bavarian Lakes. Then on to **Vienna** with a night tour of Prater Park and a ride on "The Third Man's Giant Ferris Wheel"

After this sojourn through Eastern Europe- which was not only spectacular from a scenery point of view but also depressing from the very poor economy of some of the previously controlled Soviet countries.

This completes Section 2 of our journey.

With thanks to all those who helped to make this tour possible. **Grahame Bertram**.
(and thanks to you Grahame for providing these notes.)

REST IN PEACE

John Noble who died in November, spent much of his time with the Department (Commission) in Bundaberg where he was based when he joined I&WSC in November 1977. Born in Scotland, John worked in India, Burma and Fiji before coming to Australia. After some time with John Thompson Pty Ltd. and the Liddell Power Station in NSW, he was appointed Senior Plant Superintendent with responsibility for mechanical and electrical matters in the Burnett Region. He moved to Head Office in 1996.

He had great integrity, was always willing to have a go and inspired trust and loyalty in his fellow workers. He loved his family, music, rugby, his church and worked hard to help the less fortunate. Sympathy is extended to his wife Maureen and their sons.

This contribution is based on an article in the December 1997 edition of "Scheme News", a staff newsletter on State Water Projects in the Department of Natural Resources.

Mrs Ivy Walker, mother of Joyce Bertram, died on 7th January at the age of 98 years. In addition to Joyce she leaves two sons, 10 grand-children and 14 great grand-children. We offer our condolences to Joyce and extended family.

Ed Penny died suddenly at Kingston in Tasmania in mid-1997. Ed was a very competent engineer in our Construction Branch in the 1950's. He moved to Tasmania where he worked with the Hydro-Electricity Commission in senior positions on several very large dams including the Gordon Dam.

Ed had a very sharp wit as demonstrated by a Christmas card we received from him in the pre-decimal currency period. The Pennys had been childless for several years and the card simply

extended seasonal greetings from "tuppence halfpenny". Which was correctly interpreted to mean two Pennys- Ed and Merle- and another Penny on the way.

Thomas (Tommy) Thomas died on 27th December 1997 aged 88 years. Tommy was a highly respected gentleman who served the old Commission with distinction from January 1939 until his retirement in 1975. Tommy began work in Welsh coal mines aged 13 years and attended night school which led him to Scholarships to the Mining and Engineering School at Swansea University. Within sight of his degree, his family moved to Selene near Monto in 1928. They hand cleared virgin bush and attempted to farm the land.

The family returned to Wales but Tommy stayed, married, and got jobs surveying in North Queensland and then with a drafting firm compiling plans for the sewerage of Bundaberg. Tommy's service with the Irrigation Department followed an interview with C.E.Parkinson, during which the discussion was mostly about rugby. "Parky" had played against the Welsh near Tommy's home town and his questions were about local players all of whom were known to Tommy. He started with the Department at the beginning of 1939.

After the start of the Second world War, Tommy tried twice to enlist in the AIF and finally joined the RAAF and spent time in New Guinea investigating the causes of aircraft crashes. He was also engaged in the design of a floating concrete dock.

After the War, Tommy resumed his drafting duties and was involved with the plotting of surveys and levels for 21 dams, 62 weirs and 7 irrigation projects. He also made an equally important contribution to the training of the young, not only as draftsmen, but as good people. Long before his retirement Tommy had reached the top of his profession.

Tommy was a deeply religious man and much involved in his church, drawing plans and supervising the building of a manse and church hall. In the case of the latter, Tommy argued over many hours with council engineers until the use of concrete cavity bricks were approved for external walls, the first time the Brisbane City Council gave such approval.

Mrs Thomas died suddenly 27 years ago. Tommy is survived by four sons, a daughter and their families.

This is a much condensed account of Tommy's life. The papers from which it was taken were prepared by his son, Alwyn. **The Editor would be happy to make copies available upon request.**

Jack O'Connor. Many members knew, respected and liked Jack who died after a short illness on 8th February at the age of 71. Jack was a Principal Engineer with the Department of Local Government and for a time was with Water Resources when a part of DLG was with Water Resources. Jack made a significant contribution to the sound planning and design of sewerage across Queensland and to the training of sewage treatment operators. He retired in August 1986.

A large attendance at Jack's Requiem Mass on 11th February was testimony to the high regard in which he was held. Our sympathy is extended to wife Margaret, daughter Mary-Anne and son Michael.

Why is it that when we search for something we always find it in the last place we look?

EARLY AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES

There is a popular belief that **QANTAS** provided our first regular airmail service in November 1922 with its 950 km route in northwestern Queensland.

Actually the first contract was awarded to **W.A. Airways Ltd** which began flying the Geraldton to Derby route in December 1921, a distance of 1950 km.

The first airmail carried in Australia was by a Frenchman, Maurice Guilleaux, in July 1914 from

Melbourne to Sydney. He took three days for the trip, having to land several times because of bad weather. Happy customers paid 10 cents each to send a card to Sydney. Guilleaux returned to France and was killed in World War 1.

The foregoing information was extracted from "Australian Aviator" a book by Sir Norman Brearley the founder of W.A. Airlines. The book is an interesting account of early flying in the first War and in Western Australia and New Guinea.

One brief reference is to a spare pilot who looked as if he couldn't return to his home at Port Headland because all the seats on the plane had been sold. He solved his problem by sitting on the lower wing of the biplane close to the fuselage holding onto a bracing wire for the 500 km trip from Broome to Port Headland. The biplane was flown by Charles Kingsford-Smith.

And moving from books about West Australian skies to those of a more "earthy" kind, be on the alert for Colleen McCulloch's next novel. The well-known authoress lives on Norfolk Island and not only did **our esteemed President** holiday with friends on that island paradise but so too did **Gordon Wilson** albeit at a different time. No doubt, Colleen has collected more than enough information on our two members for another best seller or two.

Christmas is just like any day at the office. You do all the work and the fat guy with the suit gets all the credit.

RECOVERIES

Len and Cec Redmond have returned from their visit to the land of the llamas and llionas. We look forward to a few notes from them in the near future.

Len has now had surgery to both eyes and his vision is now so good that **he can see both sides of an argument.**

Ian Pryor has had surgery to one eye only (successfully), and he can't.

Noel Ullman says he is almost as good as he was before his stroke (Newsletter July 1997). He drives his "ride-on mower" but not his motor car, for which other road users are truly thankful. Keep it up Noel and we hope to see Rhonda and yourself at a function soon.

Vince Lynch suffered another set-back with a stroke in January. He is recovering and has regained some of the affected facilities. Sheila and Vince are considering a move to a complex with some nursing facilities.

Dan Rowley had successful heart surgery late last year and has made good progress since. At 82 Dan still drives his car and cares for himself.

Shirley Beattie is recovering well after a brief time in hospital.

WHAT DO SURVEYORS ACTUALLY DO ?

The Institution of Surveyors, Australia., refutes the claim that '**Theodolite**' was "the god of peering at things far away". Instead it is supposed to be the god of "Getting It Right." Architects, engineers and builders regularly pray to Theodolite but only surveyors can answer their prayers.

My own studies disclose that Theodolite is in fact a Greek word although not a Greek god. In ancient times a Greek youth named Theo obtained a job with a surveyor. This surveyor was blessed with a fine daughter who formed a liaison with the lad. And it came to be said of her: "she was only the surveyor's daughter, but she gave the young Theo delight". (Pinched in part from The Australian Magazine, 1-2 Nov. 1997 and please, no jokes about contours.)

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Courier Mail 6th Nov 1997.

"(Police) spokesman _____ said it was fairly certain the five escapees had splintered into at least two groups."

and again:

The Brisbane region..... is reaching dynamic proportions of traffic congestion."

Sunday Mail 4th Jan 1998

"My wife hits harder than him." Wigan footballer Terry O'Connor describing Gordon Tallis' punching power.

and while we are on football, albeit of a different code, **Gwen Vizer's** big smile has got bigger with nephew David Wilson's appointment as Captain of the Queensland Reds. **Alan V.** is rubbing his hands and offering to teach the finer points of rugby, either code, conventional or touch, to teams, both male and female.

Parking Sign in Daly Waters: "ANGLE PARKING"
(ANY ANGLE)

BUSH CAMP - WALKAMIN - 1954

When we arrived from UK in 1953, we were expecting to live in two tents, so when we found we had a forty-eight foot prefab, we were duly impressed.

Things were very new and strange at the start, no water laid on or electricity, these luxuries came the following year. We were able to treat ourselves to our very first car, a 1948 Hillman Minx. It was Keith's pride and joy, and he erected a tarp at the end of the prefab, as a garage.

During the wet season, he would check it each time he came home, as the water would settle on top and the tarp would have a deep depression. A broom was kept handy to push up and throw the water off. One day he returned to find the depression there. He found this puzzling, as he didn't remember any rain that day. Seizing the broom, he gave a mighty heave. There was an almighty yell from the roof of the garage and our cat took off, airborne. Fortunately it wasn't hurt, but that moggy thought twice about resting up there again!

Thanks Sheila Turner.

(We hope others will share some of their experiences of the early days with us.)

Cheers

Bernie Credlin

Editor