

# WATERY SAUCES OLDIES AND BOLDIES

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## .....THE PALM BEACH POKEY.....

The recent election epidemic in Queensland recalls the tribulations of US presidential candidates in the Florida primaries. It didn't take the entertainers long to profit from the US shemoozle.

(To the tune of the Hokey Pokey)

You put the Gore votes in,  
You put the Bush votes out,  
You put the Gore votes in,  
And you do another count.

You do the palm beach pokey  
And you turn the count around,  
That's what its all about!

You let your doctors spin,  
You let the pundits spout,  
You let the retirees sue,  
And your people whine and pout.

You do the palm beach pokey  
And you turn the count around,  
That's what its all about.

**And from *The Mercury* of Durban.**

**"Politicians are like babies-they should be changed often and for the same reason."**

.....LAYOUT OF NOVEMBER 2000 NEWSLETTER.....

The first page of the previous edition featured the 1947 Christmas Card of the then Minister of Irrigation, Thomas A. Foley, whose electorate included the Emerald area. Mr Foley was an enthusiastic supporter of irrigation and oversaw the formation of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission in the post-war era. Several of today's Irrigation Areas were investigated during Foley's term of office and the Mareeba-Dimbulah and St George Irrigation Areas received Government approval. It was therefore ironic and more than a little sad, that the November Newsletter covered the whole period of major irrigation development in Queensland beginning with Foley's dream as captured in his card and ending with the obituary on page 6 of State Water Projects.

**Credits go to Max Merrett and Norm White for their treatment of the old Christmas card.**

.....**COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION BY IWSC/WRC STAFF**.....

The Commission's value to the various communities in which it operated is usually measured in terms of dams or channels or bores or advisory services or water assessment. Little recognition is given to the very large contribution made by staff towards making these towns and districts much better places in which to live. Employees put not only their salaries and wages into their communities but also their voluntary services into charitable, cultural, sporting and educational activities. Staff came from around Australia and other parts of the world and have helped introduce different ideas and attitudes to their new surroundings. Many have since stayed after retirement and continue to contribute to "their town". Mareeba is an excellent example of these community contributions. Similar stories can be told for Theodore, Emerald, Longreach, St George etc. etc.

The Commission first came to Mareeba/Dimbulah in the late 1940's and early 1950's with the construction of the weirs on the Walsh River, Tinaroo Creek, Granite Creek etc and then the construction of Tinaroo Dam on the Barron River. Work at Tinaroo Dam began in 1952 and the dam was completed in 1958. The channel infrastructure construction began around the same time and has gone on for a number of years. The ongoing presence of the operations staff will contribute to the town for years to come.

The Mareeba Rodeo is but one example of the involvement of Commission personnel. The first rodeo was held in 1949 and during the 1960's and 70's it was the biggest rodeo in Australia, being only rivalled by the event held in Mt Isa. The Mareeba Rodeo is held each year in July and is a highlight of the social calendar. A street parade of floats and bands on the Friday night starts proceedings and is followed by a beauty pageant for the Rodeo Queen and the four day rodeo and carnival. The girls from the office were encouraged, and sponsored, by the staff to enter the Rodeo Queen pageant.

The Association which runs the rodeo has always had Commission staff involvement with many serving on the Executive. Commission staff such as Jim Wallace, Bill Fossett and Jim Blakeney have served on the Executive for extensive periods in various roles such as President, Secretary and Treasurer. Bill Fossett is the current Patron of the Association. The President is Jim Blakeney and Glen Kelly is Vice President, both of whom currently work for the new SunWater Corporation. Various other staff over the years have been members of the Association which would spend many days and weeks before each Rodeo making preparations to the grounds etc. It has been said, perhaps in jest, that in the weeks leading up to the Rodeo, the Commission workshop was not the best place to get Commission work done as most efforts were concentrated on preparations for the Rodeo.

The Commission nearly always would put in a float for the Friday night's street parade and Mardi Gras. For months before the parade, the theme would be thrashed out at the morning smoko's in the office with the drafting crew doing sketches on ideas thrown up by the office staff. A couple of weeks before the parade the workshop was roped into the involvement and the float would be constructed to a very high standard. There were prizes for different categories in the parade and

the Commission won on many occasions when the prize would be donated back to be given to the runner up in our category.

The Rodeo is a non profit organization run with volunteer labour and assisted by sponsorships and donations from local businesses and people. Grants from the profits are given to local charities including Lions, Rotary and Scouts as well as the Ambulance and some of the profits are used to upgrade the facilities and amenities at the Rodeo grounds.

The Mareeba Rodeo makes a great contribution to the district, not only in the funds provided directly to charities, but in attracting competitors, spectators and tourists to the area and the comradeship and spending money they bring with them. The Rodeo and the people who make it possible, remains a major benefit to this community.

Employee contributions to other local organizations have also been considerable and deserve to be mentioned at a later time. In the meantime names like the recently deceased George Barnwall ( RSL and Swimming pool), Jim Wallace (Retirement village and Shire Council), the late Jim Cannell (Scouting) and Kevin Lea (Rugby League) come to mind.

We earnestly ask members to send us details of the personal contributions made by staff over the years to the towns and districts in which they lived. We have done a lot as a Commission/Department to make the State a better place to live. We are confident that collectively the personal efforts of our people to their areas and organizations would match the official contributions.

.....**REST IN PEACE**.....

**Merv McGeechan** passed away on 21st December 2000 at the age of 73 years. Merv will be remembered as an able assistant to Jim Pashen when Jim was Training Officer. Merv saw service with the Australian Army in Vietnam where he was a member of the Army training team. Merv. was very active in the Queensland Branch of the Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam, and was its President for a time. We extend our sympathy to wife Nola and family.

**Jill Heness** died on 29th November 2000 after a long illness. Jill's family, the Cardnos, were from Boulia and she married Maurie there in 1964. The Henesses worked in many places in Northern and Western Queensland following the water drilling business, before moving to Rockhampton where Maurie is with the Department. Our sympathy is extended to Maurie, their three sons, Tod, Scott and Jim and his family, and Jill's brother and sisters, one of whom is Janet, the wife of Ross Heness.

We are much saddened to advise that **Cathy Hazel** died on 24th February after a long illness at the untimely age of 34 years. Cathy was the only daughter of Colin and Sandra Hazel. A very large congregation overflowed the Iona College Chapel at Wynnum for a thanksgiving Mass on 28th February. A private burial followed. We offer our deepest sympathy to Col, Sandra, brothers Paul, Dan, James and Rob and families.

**Frank Charters** passed away on the 28th December 2000 aged 85 years and was buried on the 30th. Frank was an engineer in Construction Branch for many years and worked mainly in the area of planning and building construction camps and townships. His hobbies included painting in which he excelled, and writing poetry some of which graced the old Commission magazine "Aquarius". Frank's wife Beryl predeceased him. We extend our condolences to Ken, Murray and Marilyn and their families.

**Mrs Angela McDonald**, formerly **Angela Keogh**, passed away on 17th February 2000 after a short illness. Angela will be fondly remembered as the very pleasant "Head Girl" of the Typing Pool. She retired in 1967 to marry **Bernie McDonald** who was the Chief Surveyor at that time. Bernie left

the Commission to join the Lands Department and retired from there in 1981. He lives at Helensvale. We ask Bernie to accept our belated sympathy.

**Gerry Smith** died on 5<sup>th</sup> March in Toowoomba and his funeral service was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> in Toowoomba. Gerry and his brother Daryl were part of a private drilling family before they joined the old Commission. Gerry joined at Longreach in 1962 and subsequently served in Mackay and Toowoomba before retiring in Toowoomba in 1990. Gerry was a very capable Boring Supervisor and made a big contribution to the Commission/Department activities in those areas in which he worked. We pass on our sympathy to Gerry's family.

#### .....RETIREMENTS.....

**Allan Potter** retired after 31½ years at Mundubbera 29th January 2001. Allen commenced his career with the Commission at Biloela in 1969 and was transferred to Cania Dam as Storage Supervisor in 1983. He later moved to Mundubbera and was Customer Service Manager on retirement.

Well over 100 local irrigators, SunWater and DNR staff travelled from afar to give him a wonderful send off at the Mundubbera Golf Course on 16th January.

**Ted Dunlop** retired on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2000 from SunWater after a career spanning some 26 years. He was one of three brothers who worked with the old Commission, John was foreman in the heavy plant workshop at Tinaroo before moving to the private sector and Bob was a most competent geologist in Project Planning Branch.

Over the years, few water resource projects, dams, weirs and pump stations from Boggabilla in the South to Horn Island in the North did not have some association with Ted. Likewise few Technical Officers would not have benefited from Teds assistance and advice. It was not widely known that Ted was an accomplished poet in the true Australian style, hiding his talent behind the nom de plume "The Dunny Poet".

**Peter Thompson.** When Peter retires in July 2001, he will have completed 40 ½ years in the Public Service having joined in 1961 as a Clerk in the State Government Insurance Office before moving to the "Department of Irrigation & Water Supply" as a Cadet (Drafting). He worked in Irrigation, Construction and Designs Branches as a Draftsman and after completing the Diploma in Civil Engineering he progressed through Rivers & Streams, Project Planning, Forward Planning, Groundwater and Surface Water Branches before he was appointed Senior Engineer and later Manager in Water Resources Assessment Division. Peter has remained in this capacity up to his retirement, although the names of the position and Branch have changed a number of times since.

Peter was a particularly competent and hard working officer who was very highly regarded by his colleagues, a very large number of whom, past and present, gathered at the "Roof Top Garden" in George Street to bid him farewell on 18<sup>th</sup> January as he began pre-retirement leave.

**Bill Souter** has retired after 30 years of service. Bill began with the old Commission as an engineer in Townsville on Farm Water Supply designs and the Ross River Dam project. He then spent two years in Rockhampton before moving to Emerald in 1976 where he was responsible for the establishment of the Emerald Irrigation Area (Selma area), design of the Weemah Area and regulation of the Nogoa River.

In 1982, after spending 2 years in Brisbane as Executive Engineer, Operations Branch, Bill was appointed Regional Engineer, Far North, stationed at Mareeba. He was involved with the management of the Mareeba-Dimbulah Irrigation Area and all the other activities associated with the Region

Since 1991 Bill has been in the Bundaberg area with involvement in the design of the Isis Irrigation Area, Walla Weir, Urban Water Source Study, and the Groundwater Rescue Package to address saltwater intrusion problems.

Bill has also worked on 4 overseas projects since 1992 in Asia and the Pacific regions.

Bill and Marg have retired to Mission Beach where the Coral Trout and Mangrove Jack had better be wary. We wish them all the best in their retirement after so many years of dedicated service.

**Joe Cheetham** retired on Friday 12 January 2001 when the local Mareeba contingent of SunWater gave him a small personal send-off befitting this modest man who disliked fuss. This quiet approach will be missed.

Joe has been with SunWater and the previous administrations since 1977 when he commenced with the Water Resources Commission in Ayr as Senior plant Supervisor. Joe became Operations Manager-Mareeba in January 1998.

Coming from a nautical engineering background, with hands on experience in electricity generation and sugar production and loading, his experience in industry led to a holistic approach to asset maintenance with a focus on whole-of-life costs and standardisation where possible. Joe very soon developed a reputation as an effective mechanical and electrical maintenance manager with maintenance records second to none.

**Hugh Byrnes** from Mackay retired earlier this year. Hugh's wife **Dot**, also worked for the Commission and their combined service totals 47 years. Their son John is continuing the tradition. We believe Hugh received a community award on Australia Day. We hope to tell you more about this in the next edition. We also hope to recognize other recent retirees including **Ian Hoskins, Bill Meredith, Brian Doyle** and **Gordon Gracey**

#### .....AUSTRALIA DAY COMMUNITY AWARD.....

**Ernie Melville** was another member to be receive a Sports Medal for his service to Croquet. Ernie has been in the State Team for three years and is a State Development Squad coach.

#### .....ILLNESSES.....

**Heather Clark** faced a tough decision - should she operate there in the pub." Headline in *Readers Digest*. No this is not our Heather, it's Dr. Heather Clark of the Royal London Hospital who was called to save the life of a stabbing victim in "The Swan", a suburban pub.

However our **Heather** has been poorly with 'flu but expects to be well by the Annual General Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> April.

**Peter Spierings** has been quite ill with an embolism but is well on the way back to recovery and the bowling green.

**Roy Mincher** has been suffering with a sore leg. A measure of the severity of his illness is his absence from the golf course. We hope you are back to good health by now Roy.

**Jim Pashen.** I contacted Jim for some information on Merv McGeechan whose death is recorded elsewhere in this Newsletter. Jim tells me that he too has been poorly and now needs some mechanical assistance when walking. Jim lives at Peregian Beach and hopes to keep in touch with the Oldies as a member.

**Alan and Joan Wickham** have both had health problems. Alan has been having more sun spots removed and Joan has been in hospital for attention to a leg.

**Sherry Credlin** has had knee surgery and is progressing well.

And an item about **Judy Morwood** has been censored.

#### .....MEDICAL HOWLERS.....

"*Caesarean Section*" - a plot of land in Rome. **And** "*Sugar Diabetes*" - an Italian boxer.

#### .....BARBECUE BULL.....

Men's love of taking over the cooking at barbecues is all down to a deep seated desire to rekindle boy scout memories and to give in to caveman instincts.

A British poll showed 49 per cent of women believed their partners' love of reducing good steak to carbon was because it provided them with an excuse to play with fire.

One in five men say they would rather cook than talk to guests and the same proportion took charge to ensure that they get the best meat for themselves.

From The Bottom Line *The Courier Mail*.

(On the Aussie scene it provides the cook with an opportunity to sneak in a couple more stubbies even at the expense of a bit more charcoal. Ed.)

A Bishops' conference on "**Starvation in the Third World**" was held in a southern city last year. The Dinner at the conclusion was sumptuous, so much so, that one of the attending clergy was heard to remark that he couldn't wait for the conference on "**Chastity**".

Who was the southside member who purchased the book, "**How to Love**" and found it was Volume 7 of a set of encyclopedia?

We have previously told of the eye specialist who moved to Alaska and became known as the *Optical Aleutian*. We now hear of the Russian version of the American "Stealth" bomber which is almost invisible and is named the *Optical Ilyushin*.

"*The van from Snowy River*" a sign on Cooma removalist's truck.

#### .....McENIERY FAMILY.....

In the March 1993 Edition we reported the sad news that **Mike McEniery** had passed away. It's a wonderful experience to now tell of the successes of the children of **Mike and Roslyn** in the eight years that have followed.

Daughter **Carmel** has just begun a two-year contract in Cambridge doing Post-Doctoral Research in Clinical Pharmacology.

Son **Christopher** works as a cartographer with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

**Adrian** has been freelancing as an Opera and Concert artist for ten years. Some highlights of his career include major roles in two Australian premieres in 1993, becoming a Young Artist with the Victoria State Opera in 1994/95 winning prize money in the Opera Awards of the Australian Singing Competition in 1995 and being awarded a Churchill Fellowship for 1996. He used that money to

travel and study in Europe and the UK in 1996/97. In 1999 he again won Opera Award prizes in the Australian Singing Competition and is planning to travel to Germany for further study and auditions this year.

He has worked regularly with Opera Queensland, Opera Australia, Opera New Zealand, the Victoria State Opera, and West Australian Opera. He has also worked with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Queensland Orchestra and this year will be with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra for the first time. He has also given concerts in London for the CHOGM Arts Festival.

Adrian has been based in Sydney for the past four and a half years with his wife Anne who manages the Opera Australia Orchestra. They happen to share a house with Paul McMahan, nephew of Maureen and Pat McMahan.

It speaks volumes for the love and dedication of Roslyn that she has given their children the opportunity and encouragement to achieve so much. It also says a lot for the character and persistence that Mike passed on to his children.

### .....WICKHAM DAM.....

Did you know that the **Burdekin Dam** could well have been called **Wickham Dam**? Not because of Alan's considerable skills as a designer of dams nor his terms of office with the International and National Commissions on Large Dams nor even as Deputy Commissioner of Water Resources. It stems from the fact that on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1839 Captain Lort Stokes of the "*Beagle*" observed the mouth of a large river flowing into the Coral Sea near Cape Upstart. He named it the **Wickham River** after Captain Wickham who was rowed some 10 miles up the River on the next day. Alas the opportunity for a future Dam named Wickham disappeared on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1845 when some 100 miles further inland, Ludwig Leichhardt reached the junction of the Suttor River with another river which he named the **Burdekin** "in acknowledgment of the liberal assistance which I received from Mrs Burdekin of Sidney". He was apparently unaware that Stokes had already called the river **Wickham** six years before. The **Suttor** incidentally was named after a Mr Suttor who gave Leichhardt four bullocks at the start of the expedition.

### .....AQUARIUS.....

The Staff Magazine "**Aquarius**" was mentioned earlier. It was widely acclaimed as a paragon of propriety, unsullied by crudity or coarse innuendo. It was sad therefore to re-read the following passage from the Jan-Mar '77 edition:- "*I told my wife the other day we were going to see 'Moby Dick' but, she said she didn't like sex films! - I explained it wasn't a sex film, but was about whales - to which she replied Oh good, I like the Welsh!*"

The same edition ran a story about the Rivers and Streams sea-dogs, swallowing salt water, sinking stubbies and steering by the stars. The story referred to Morwood (the poor man's Captain Bligh), Pryor (the Old Man of the Sea), Wilson (the Scourge of Moreton Bay), and Fawcett (whose nom-de-plume has become too barnacle-encrusted to read). Signals from the Bay suggest that little has changed in the last 24 years.

### .....FEBRUARY SOCIAL.....

A pleasing attendance of more than 30 members and friends enjoyed nibbles, drinks and conversation at the Public Service Club on 28<sup>th</sup> February. It was great to see Sheila Turner from Mareeba on her way to a holiday in New Zealand with her daughter, Coreen. It was also good to see new members Cliff McLeod and Voytek Poplawski.

### .....ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.....

The Annual General Meeting will be held on 18<sup>th</sup> April in the First Floor Function Room at the Public Service Club 84 George Street Brisbane at 11 O'clock. Light lunch will follow.

All members are urged to attend and to consider putting themselves forward for election to the Executive. It is important that new ideas and approaches are considered so as to keep the Association relevant to it's members and to the times.

Subjects that might be considered are ways of attracting more retirees to the Association. A suggestion has been made that our name, with its reference to Water Resources, might be seen to discourage retirees whose work experience had little to do with the water industry. While our Constitution does **not** insist that members have worked in a Water related field, a view has been expressed that changing our name might help attract members who otherwise might not join.

If any change is thought to be necessary, amendment to the Constitution will be required and the opportunity should therefore be taken to see if other alterations would be desirable.

Space has been provided on this page for you to use to send in your suggestions.

**Friends of Harry Horne might like to note that he now lives at**

Abbey Gardens,  
69/71 Caboolture River Road,  
MORAYFIELD QLD 4506

PO Box 137,  
MORAYFIELD QLD 4506

Telephone (07) 5432 4928

**.....AFFO'S ANNECDOTE.....**

I remember suggesting to a Senior Officer that a certain worker, who was very good at his job, warranted a promotion. The Senior Officer pointed out that we would then lose a very good worker and that we should make the laziest bloke the boss because he would ensure that everyone else would work hard thus keeping himself in the good job. I've wondered since if this man had any influence in electing politicians.

**.....SOMEONE SAID.....**

Everything looks impossible for people who never try anything. *J.L. Etienne.*

The past is what actually happened but history is only what somebody wrote down.

The attempt to silence a man is the greatest honour you can bestow on him. You recognize his superiority over you.

Silence is golden - when you can't think of a good answer. *Muhmmad Ali.*

Those who have least to say usually take longest to say it.

The trouble with a rat race is that if you win you are still a rat.

**Cheers for now.  
Bernie Credlin.**

Please use this spare paper to write your suggestions for the Association.