

WATERY SAUCES Oldies and Boldies

Newsletter No 45

October/November 2004

NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

A HAPPY FESTIVE SEASON TO ALL!

You are invited to kick off the festive season with the Association's luncheon at COTAH. Last year we had an excellent attendance and we hope to do as well again this year. Numbers were down for the mid-year lunch but the 35 attendees had the usual enjoyable outing with good food and good company.

It is very pleasing to note that membership of the Association has been swelled by the addition of John Hillier, Trevor Sleep, Ian Fairweather, Peter Wheeler, Geoff Eades and Dudley McIntosh. Other recent retirees have threatened to join and we look forward to their company – and of any others you might encourage to join. You don't even have to be retired to become a member!

Recent Retirements

Smiles have been reported on the faces of several officers as they attended their well-deserved farewell functions and walked out for the last time. The happy retirees include Peter Wheeler (SunWater, Ayr), Geoff Eades (SunWater, Brisbane), Kevin Baxter (NRM, Brisbane), Ross Stewart (SunWater, Brisbane) and Don Alexander (NRM, Brisbane). That's an awful lot of experience walking out the door. Thanks to all for their efforts.

But perhaps it's not the last time. SunWater has had so much work on lately that a number of 'old boys' have been recruited to help out.

Many a good yarn was told at the farewells; none better than that of Kev Baxter whose work lunches (prepared by devoted wife Bev) were legendary. On one occasion he took his large tupperware container from the fridge and was gastronomically indulging himself in the lunchroom when a stranger appeared and asked, "Good lunch?"

"Yes," replied Kev, savouring another bite.

"So it should be. It's mine." But before Kev could recover from his embarrassment, the stranger added, "but this one's better!"

From the Editor's Chair

We were recently having a 'lost weekend' – as retirees are entitled to – when Helen picked up a copy of Australian Country Style March 1998. There was an article in it by Tim Flannery which included the following:

Some years ago I brought a very old New Guinea man to Sydney. In his whole life he'd left his own village only once to visit Wewak. The following year I was back in his village where the epic story of his journey was told again and again to a rapt audience. I listened to him spinning it out. The journey through the sky didn't get a mention, nor the underground railway, nor the sky-scrapers, nor the zoo. His story never left the scene of our home and it moved inexorably to its climax. The shining things that turned. You stretched out your hand. Thus and thus. And out of the wall came water.

And I thought, "Isn't it great to be taken for granted like the best referees? We Water Resources officers must have done our job very well".

Until next time, au reservoir.

Ian Pullar Editor

The Past Revisited

I ran into Brian Venz recently. Following our chat, he reported that he had visited Jack Hegarty (former DG of DPI and earlier in Land Resources working with us WRC planners) at his present abode at Hilltop Gardens, Normandy, with a copy of the Bernie Credlin edition of the newsletter. No one there knew any Jack Hegarty, but they certainly knew Austin Hegarty.

'Jack' keeps himself quite active and across what is going on in the world by reading papers and watching news on TV etc. Brian went on, 'Jack was pleased to learn you were interested in his well-being and was sort of miffed that you might think he does not remember you – he would like me to emphasise "nothing could be further from the truth". I can report that he sends his regards to you and other members of your team.

'As you would remember of Jack – he was always most strong on the 'people dimension rather than the task dimension' and so is always keen to learn of people and what they are doing now – and the not so pleasing things like the passing of our mutual colleagues such as Bernie.

In our conversation, he said it is now fifteen years since he retired (1989) from public service.'

Thanks, Brian and best wishes to 'Jack'.

Sport

Bowling 'em over

The annual Bowls Day was held at Aspley Bowls Club on 6 August. Numbers were down a little this year with 26 attending - of whom 16 took part in the wearing of the green while the other 10 partook themselves only of the camaraderie. But, as they say in the classics, 'a good time was had by all.'

Thanks to Norm and Lindsay White for their organisation of the event once again.

As this is an annual event, members are advised to keep that period of the year free next year – don't plan overseas trips or unexpected illnesses.

Bowled over by history

Researcher Michael Green has spent many years tracking down previously unpublished letters relating to famous people. The following is self-explanatory.

PLYMOUTH BOWLS CLUB

*Plymouth Hoe, DEVON
June 5, 1589*

*Dear Sir Francis Drake,
The Committee have asked me to inform you that your membership is to be terminated forthwith for misconduct. It is one of the strictest rules of the club that members must not occupy the green after their allotted period has expired. As you know, playing space is too small for our large membership. Yesterday, when it was pointed out that you were already a quarter of an hour over your finishing time and another group were waiting to play, you replied, "We have still time to finish our game of bowls," and insisted upon doing so, taking another half an hour.
Your explanation afterwards that you thought someone said, "The Armada is coming," and you wished to set an example of calmness is deemed unsatisfactory. In fact, when you had won your game you immediately ran down to the harbour shouting, "Where the hell are those Spaniards?"
Please note that you also owe a year's subscription. And kindly do not pay it in Spanish doubloons this time. We can't get them changed anywhere.
I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,*

*R. Trelawney
(General Secretary)*

Knowing the Score

What are the origins of the peculiar method of scoring in tennis? Apparently Royal Tennis was first played indoors in France and the score is derived from the clockface with quarter hours – fifteen, thirty and forty (five) being the intervals to a complete round.

'Love' comes from the French *l'ouef*, the egg, the duck's variety of which is responsible for the 'no score' term in cricket.

Whatever happened to the IWSC Tennis Group?

Well, the remarkable thing is that the group, albeit with major changes to its membership over a period of 40 years, continues to this day.

Records have been lost and memories faded but it is believed that the group started in 1964 with a solid group of then young tennis enthusiasts playing weekly under lights at the now defunct Milton Tennis Centre. Members of the original group included Eric Davis, now the Association's Vice President, Nev Caton, country member living in Ayr, Harry Stark, sadly no longer with us, Bill Morris who ran the snack bar in William Street at the time, Roy MacArthur, now living on the Gold Coast, Col Cooney, Bevan Faulkner, who worked for a long time supporting the QLTA, Dave Dewar, country member living in Bundaberg, Col Davie and Bill Burnham.

In these days, the Commission's social club was very active and some of the tennis group also regularly played in the Commission's warehouse cricket team but largely avoided the rugby league team. Maybe the tennis players thought league was just too rough.

Over the many years the group has continued, it is thought that there have been dozens of members, Commission staff and friends of staff. Bill Morris introduced many members over the years affectionately referred to as the Greeks.

Enthusiastic staff members at various times included – with apologies to those not mentioned – Mike Wilke, John Hastie, Albert Navruk, Noel Dowling, Terry Daly and Ernie Melville (now better known for his croquet skills).

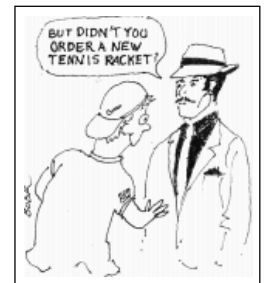
The group today includes two of the originals, Bill Morris who apart from the odd injury has played continuously and Eric Davis who had a break while working in Ayr.

Other current members are Chris Geoga, brother-in-law of the Department's Margaret Geoga, Michael Morris, Bill's son who, given his age advantage, runs faster and further than the others, Terry Schmeide, brother of the Department's Dave Schmeide, Lee Rogers, the Department's Graham Young who was recruited from the NSW Water Commission, Terry Loos, originally from the Local Government Department but now with the Environmental Protection Agency, Peter Allen who looks after dam safety for the Department, SunWater's surveyor Doug Houston and Doug's mate Chris Courtney, an IT contractor for the Department.

Despite an average age approaching 60, the group, perhaps falsely, believes it is playing very good tennis – always doubles because no one has to run too far. Not surprisingly, there have in recent years been a number of injuries, backs, knees, hamstrings, shoulders, calf muscles etc, sometimes requiring long layoffs. But all have come back better than ever.

The group, currently playing on Court 12 at the University of Queensland Tennis Centre, St Lucia, Thursday nights commencing at 7 pm, would be delighted to see any past members at the court for a chat – and for the tennis.

Lee Rogers



Out and About

John and Laurel Connolly have recently returned from a trip to Western Australia which they thoroughly enjoyed. John is now available to give useful advice to members on a travel consultancy basis.

Lee and Denise Rogers have returned from another trip to Europe, no doubt with many stories to tell.

Grahame and Joyce Bertram have decided that as *empty nesters*, the arduous tasks associated with maintaining a large 5-bedroom house is no longer for them, so they have sold up at Moorooka and have bought a smaller house in an over 55's village at Cleveland. They are busily engaged in planning for the move which will happen in late October. Having spent almost all of their lives living in the Moorooka area, Grahame and Joyce have tinges of regret but look forward to enjoying the new surroundings, invigorated by the sea breezes and reduced burden of domestic chores.

Noel and Rhondda Ullman have made an interim move from Helensvale to Forest Lake and are about to take on the challenging task of building a new house on land that they have purchased closer to family and medical facilities. They hope to make the move into the new house in the next six months or so.

Eileen Rossi had a fall a month or so ago and sustained a couple of fractures that still have her confined to a wheelchair.

John and Peggy Potts have sold the family home at St Lucia and are living in Darwin while John is on assignment.

In retirement, Bill Souter has, among other things, been to Stockholm to excavate his son's basement, worked with Digger Flanders in Long Xuyen in Vietnam, missed jobs in Central Vietnam and Bangladesh, declined a 7 year job in south Vietnam, worked for Kev Devlin at Emerald and has "fought the jungle at Mission Beach and the chooks that live therein".

All at Sea

The ideal conditions for taking a cruise on Pumicestone Passage are a fine day and, preferably, a low tide.

Monday 18 October dawned to most unusual climatic conditions – rain. The forecast was for clearing showers, which was encouraging, and all 26 members of the Watery Sources party set off for beautiful Bribie Island where we embarked upon *The Bribie Island Ferryman* skippered by Trevor Johnson of TV fame.

Our tour was timed, purely by chance, to straddle high tide. Although the rain eased off – at times – it never entirely disappeared and we had to take Trevor's word for it that those were the Glasshouse Mountains over there on the port side. Trevor cooked the lunchtime sausages on the foredeck with the barbecue sheltered under a beach umbrella. But they were cooked to perfection and, complemented by salad and tropical fruits, gave us gastronomic satisfaction.

While the conditions were not ideal – and Trevor was ever so slightly apologetic for his inability to control Mother Nature – it was a very pleasant and informative trip with bids, turtles and dolphins (but no dugongs) to be seen. And no one was complaining about the rain so desperately needed.

Matthew Flinders named Pumicestone River in 1799 (at the ripe old age of 25), but as Tour Geologist John Hillier pointed out, "There is no pumicestone in Pumicestone Passage." The black rock Flinders saw is indurated sandstone!

Christmas is the time of year when both trees
and husbands are trimmed and lit up!

Bob McDonald Had a ...

Following a number of years travelling around Aust in the big Nissan and Phoenix caravan, we are now establishing a peaceful existence on 5 ha at Tyalgum (pronounced Tal-gum) Creek in the western part of the Mt Warning eroded caldera, or Tweed River valley in NSW. They say there is a lot of culture in this part of the Tweed. Others say you have to have two heads to live in Tyalgum (that's Tal-gum, got it), although I haven't noticed that any one here is any different to me!!

Our block is west of Murwillumbah (Mur-bah), but we can also drive from Nerang up the Numinbah Valley, past Natural Bridge and through the border gates. Here on the rim of the caldera, which is about 40 km in diameter, you can view layers of the geology in the vertical cliffs.

From our block, we can see Mt Warning in the centre of the caldera, about 12 km to the east. The Tweed and McPherson Ranges, reaching 1000 m in elevation, form the western part of the rim and are about 8 km to our west. One km further west over the ridge is the wreck of the Stinson from 1937. We have exceptional views across old dairy country, particularly to the south, where The Pinnacle on the Tweed Range is a feature. TV reception is from Mt Nardi (north of Lismore) on the southern part of the rim. From our deck we can see the towers some 22 km away to the SE. Reception is perfect and our antenna is hung under the house. Do I need to draw a plan to put that all that in perspective?

The environmental happenings here are amazing. Beautiful winter days, fog and some frosts, big thunder storms with electric pointy things and noise rattling around the mountains, moonlight as well as black as all hell nights with wall to wall stars. Eagles and parrots are in the sky and frogs and ducks are down at the dam. It is dry at the moment, after a few moderate frosts and no rain, so there is little grass to mow. In summer it seemingly grows to head height as soon as you mow it. Very little man-made noise occurs here but the cattle can bellow something awful. The neighbours are few but friendly and we have had many friends visit us.

Mostly we shop in South Tweed which is forty minutes away. The Engel fridge in the back of the Nissan is essential to bring the meat and other cold stuff home. After shopping, it doubles as a portable bar fridge, not forgetting the fridge in the van which acts as a valuable back up. Hence one does not fear being banished to the shed, as no sane wife would want to inflict such heaven on her nearest and dearest.

Basically, we are building a rural residential establishment from scratch, including the house, shed, electricity, water, septic, road, etc. We hope all the effort will be rewarded when we become too old to maintain it and have to sell up – hopefully, in the far distant future. The van lives in the shed and has been extracted on a number of occasions for short trips. Next year in winter (no grass mowing) we might head off for a longer trip somewhere.

Bob McDonald

Anagrams

Cryptic crossword addicts in particular may appreciate this little contribution.

Someone out there either has too much spare time or is deadly at Scrabble.

DORMITORY:

When you rearrange the letters: DIRTY ROOM

PRESBYTERIAN:

When you rearrange the letters: BEST IN PRAYER

DESPERATION:

When you rearrange the letters: A ROPE ENDS IT

GEORGE BUSH:

When you rearrange the letters: HE BUGS GORE

THE MORSE CODE:

When you rearrange the letters: HERE COME DOTS

SLOT MACHINES:

When you rearrange the letters: CASH LOST IN ME

ANIMOSITY:

When you rearrange the letters: IS NO AMITY

MOTHER-IN-LAW:

When you rearrange the letters: WOMAN HITLER

SNOOZE ALARMS:

When you rearrange the letters: ALAS! NO MORE Z'S

A DECIMAL POINT:

When you rearrange the letters: IM A DOT IN PLACE

THE EARTHQUAKES:

When you rearrange the letters: THAT QUEER SHAKE

ELEVEN PLUS TWO:

When you rearrange the letters: TWELVE PLUS ONE

AND FOR THE GRAND FINALE –:

PRESIDENT CLINTON OF THE USA: When you rearrange the letters:

TO COPULATE HE FINDS INTERNS

Mind Your Language

Zoght yo al mizt enjoy ziz vun.

It looks like we really vil be speaking German after all

Subject: EuroEnglish - Proposals for Simpler Spelling

Trouble with your spelling in English?

Anyone ready to learn another language?

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European nation rather than German which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, HerMajesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that would become known as "Euro-English".

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of the "k". This should klear up konfusion, andkeyboards can have one less letter. There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with the "f". This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling can be ekspeted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent "e" in the languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th yer peopl wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v".

During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and after ziz fifz yer, ve vil hav a reil sensibl riten styl. Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru.

If zis mad yu smil, pleas pas it on to oza pepl.

The X-Files

One day I received an envelope containing a number of clippings from northern newspapers from I know not whom. Here are a couple for your amusement.

-Ed.

A small boy called out to a farmer, "What's that in your truck?"

"Fertiliser," he replied.

"What do you do with fertiliser?"

"Put it on my strawberries."

"You ought to live here. We put cream on our strawberries."

* * *

In autumn, the Indians on the remote reservation asked their new Chief if the winter would be cold or mild. As a modern Chief, he had never been taught the old secrets so, to be on the safe side, he told them it would be cold and they should collect firewood. After a few days, he had an idea and rang the National Weather Service. "It looks like winter will be quite cold indeed," the meteorologist informed him.

So the Chief told his people to collect even more wood. Another week went by and he rang the weather service again. "Yes, it's going to be a very cold winter." So the Chief told his people to collect every scrap of wood they could find.

Two weeks later, the Chief rang the weather service yet again. "Are you certain the weather is going to be very cold?"

"It looks like being one of the coldest winters on record."

"How can you be so sure?" the Chief asked.

"The Indians are collecting wood like crazy!"

The Fairweather Files

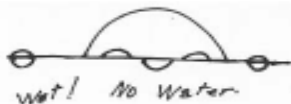
Ian Fairweather joined IWS as an engineer in 1949 and left 8 years later. He retired some years ago from the Brisbane City Council but is particularly known for his work with IEA. Ian, who has recently become a member of the Association, sent me a batch of wonderful stories about his time with us, some of which follow. Look forward to further instalments in future editions. - Ed.

I joined the IWS in 1949 being gazetted on 12th February of that year along with 14 others. With so many engineers being appointed at the one time, there were not enough tables and chairs in Head Office, some were sent to the bush, but I was given the privilege of sharing a table with Fred Haigh, who at that time was senior irrigation engineer, acting senior design engineer, and for a period at the same time, acting senior construction engineer. I think Fred got sick of my face across the table, so Laurie Hayman and I were sent out to Emerald, to work on the survey of the ponded area of what is now Fairbairn Dam. This allowed surveyor Rick Hass to go on leave, but I was never sure if someone was trying to tell us that one surveyor was as good as two young engineers. Because Laurie stayed after I returned to Brisbane, I think someone wanted the survey accelerated.

It was a wonderful era to be working as a young engineer and we got lots of experience. In November 1951, less than three years after I had joined IWS, I was appointed an Engineer Div II, and was recalled from Mareeba to relieve the Senior Engineer while he went on leave. It happened that I was then the most senior engineer available in the Branch. I don't recall being paid for the extra duties. While in the acting position the following event occurred.

Wot! No Water

That summer must have been very dry, because there were lots of people coming into Head Office for advice. While I was acting for the Senior Engineer, I used his office, which was small, being furnished with the standard furniture, including a set of pigeonholes across the front of the desk. These made it difficult to interview people as they had to look over the pigeonholes. It was not too bad if the person was tall but it was a different story for short people. I wonder if anyone remembers Mr Chad, I think that was what he was called. For those who don't, he was a cartoon character developed during the war as a comment on shortages. He was a bit of harmless graffiti that appeared in many places. I'm not sure of his origins. He looked something like this:



The caption varied according to the shortage frustrating the would-be artist.

One day a little bald headed man came in to see me. He apparently had some problem with a shortage of water and I wasn't sure how I was going to be able to help him. I sat him down behind the pigeonholes and there, before my eyes, materialised a real life Mr Chad. As he told his story, getting more and more downcast, I am sorry to say my amusement got higher and higher. It was all I could do to keep from laughing and I kept saying to myself, "Wot! no water." I cannot recall what kind of help, if any, I was to him.

What's in a Name?

The Works Supervisor for all the construction works on the South Walsh area in the early 1950s was Sam Tait, a competent supervisor who called a spade a spade. As the channel works progressed it became necessary to establish a new camp and close Collins Weir and Nullinga camps. The Mareeba Office recommended Mutchilba as the site for the camp and the recommendation was accepted. Mutchilba was designed to be a small village, a school already existed, there was to be a store, office and a few other buildings of a permanent nature as well as the temporary camp. The township still exists and in fact some Commission officers own houses in the township. The foreman on the camp construction was named Dave. The leading hand carpenter, a recent arrival in the country, had the name Albert, we called him Berto. He wore a cloth hat. It was his habit, when excited, to take the hat off and screw it up.

The usual practice was for Sam and Dave to have a conference in the office each morning to fine-tune the day's activities. Berto was working on the ablution block and it was obvious that he would be finished that task in a couple of hours, so would need advice as what to do next, the latrines were the next priority. As Sam passed Berto leaving the office on his way to the channel works, he mentioned casually what his next job was to be, leaving it to Dave to attend to the details. In the fullness of time Berto was instructed by Dave to go on with the latrines. I might mention that these were not elaborate structures, being timber framed, clad with galvanised iron and housing thunder boxes. When Sam arrived back at the office about midday, the office staff told him he had better talk to Berto, otherwise he would have no hat. Sam found Berto outside the office screwing up his hat, the conversation went something like this.

"What is your problem, Berto?" asked Sam

"Mr Sam, who is the boss around here, you or Dave?"

"Why do you ask, Berto?"

"I don't know what to do first, you tell me one thing and Dave, he tells me another."

"What did Dave tell you to do?"

"He told me to build the latrines."

"That is what I told you, so what is the problem?"

"No you did not, you told me to build the 'shit houses'. I want to know which I do first."

Berto was put on the right track. Berto kept his hat and we got our latrines.

To be continued.



A Sigh

My spouse will heave a tortured sigh. It's a chilling sound – one that manages to convey scorn, rage, despair, frustration and the terrible threat of unspecified but lingering retribution in a single, wordless blast of exhaled air.

- from a letter to the *Times*

Condamine-Balonne Water Resource Plan Finalised (at last!!)

The Minister, Stephen Robertson, released the finalised Water Resource Plan for the Queensland part of the Condamine-Balonne catchment on 12 August 2004. The Plan, initiated in 1996, has been finalised following extensive analyses and a long period of community consultation with Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council's Independent Audit Group, community advisory committees and reference groups, irrigators, graziers, and independent scientists such as Professor Peter Cullen.

The final Plan also includes the following key features:

- performance indicators to ensure that decisions made under the Resource Operations Plan do not adversely affect the amount of water available to the environment or existing water users;
- the conversion of existing water authorisations to volumetric tradable water allocations;
- event management rules to enhance low and medium flows in the Lower Balonne and water availability to the Narran Lakes;
- the development of water sharing rules for Water Supply Schemes in the catchment;
- a continuation of the moratorium on new works pending finalisation of the Resource Operation Plan;
- the formation of a Ministerial Water Advisory Council for the lower Balonne (and for other parts of the catchment if required);
- the regulation of the take of overland flow water throughout the catchment; and
- provisions for a formal review after five years to include information on research and monitoring of the Plan outcomes for the Narran Lakes and the Culgoa floodplain.

Queensland has now finalised Water Resource Plans in all its Murray-Darling Basin valleys, and consequently has provided a framework with a strong legislative basis, that caps diversions from water courses, lakes, springs and overland flows. The plans provide a consistent approach to management across the catchments, while taking the specific issues of each catchment into account.

The gazetted plans and consultation reports for each of the water resource plans are available on the Department's website.

Draft Resource Operations Plans, including diversion caps, are currently being developed and are expected to be released progressively over the next two years.

Greg Claydon NRM

Water Resource Charges – Discussion Paper

As many of you have probably gathered from media reports, the Department is reviewing water charges in Queensland. In late August, we released the *Water Resources Charges* discussion paper for public comment. This paper is the latest in a series prepared by the Water Management & Use group and highlights our commitment to community consultation on water issues.

The discussion paper seeks to inform the community and promote debate on future water resource charges in Queensland. However, as Minister Stephen Robertson has pointed out 'the debate is not about whether charges should increase – or by how much – but what the charges should be recovering and how they should be set and implemented'.

And yes, you would be correct in thinking that there is an air of finality in Minister Robertson's comment. Water resource charges will be introduced extensively across Queensland and will apply to some water users, such as stock and domestic, who have not paid charges before. As increasing demand and the on-going drought continue to put pressure on the State's water resources, there are compelling reasons for reviewing charges.

In the past, the answer to ensuring adequate and reliable supplies of water was to build more dams. However, new water infrastructure can carry with it significant financial and environmental costs. Today, the solutions to sustaining our water resources lie in reusing, recycling and using water more efficiently – making our existing supplies go further. Water resource charges are an important component of any strategy to improve water use efficiency.

The discussion paper has naturally generated significant comment and criticism in the media. However, there has also been support from segments of the community who understand the need for a comprehensive and effective charging system. It is these constructive comments that will help shape future water resource charges in Queensland.

To obtain a copy of the discussion paper, please visit the Department's website at www.nrme.qld.gov.au/water/reform/ or phone us on (07) 3406 2189.

Ruth Dow NRM

A Boring Story of Control

In June, the Courier Mail – first with the news – carried a story on bore rehabilitation. Here's the story from the horse's mouth.

A lot of water has stopped flowing from the GAB.

There have been major falls in artesian pressure in the GAB since development of the basin started more than a century ago. As a result many bores stopped flowing and the rate of flow from the others reduced. The cause was uncontrolled bores and inefficient bore drain stock water distribution systems that waste more than 90% of flow to evaporation and seepage. The bore drains also cause a range of environmental impacts on the landscape.

In recent decades the availability of new bore casing materials and piping materials have made it more economically viable to repair old bores and replace drains with efficient piped systems. This has ushered in a modern era of improved management that seeks to replace the old works with new piped systems that not only save water but enable better management of properties.



Although work started in South Australia, it was under the leadership of Col Hazel and John Hillier in Queensland that the movement was placed on a firm public policy footing across the four state jurisdictions that share responsibility for management of the basin. Public subsidy arrangements were established to assist landholders to carry out the work and arrangements were established to provide technical and design support.

continued on next page

GABSI (continued from p.4)

The first formal program, the Great Artesian Basin Rehabilitation Program, commenced in 1989 and was complemented with the Bore Drain Replacement Program in the early '90s. In 1997 a basin wide Great Artesian Basin Consultative Council produced a Strategic Management Plan. Under the Plan the State and Commonwealth governments approved the first 5-year phase of the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative (GABSI) to accelerate the work. Funding was approved in June 2004 for the second 5-year phase. The Strategic Management Plan calls for a third and final 5-year phase of GABSI to commence in 2009 to complete the work.

To date some \$75M has been spent by landholders and governments under the various programs. This has resulted in 497 bores being repaired (or replaced) and some 4600 km of bore drain being replaced by pipe. A total of 114,000 ML/a of water has been saved which has resulted in arrest of pressure declines or pressure recovery in many bores. This amounts to a State investment of some \$220 for each megalitre of water saved – a very good investment by comparison with other water development works. State contributions this year will be \$4 M rising to \$5 M in 2009. This year will also see a milestone in the completion of the 500th bore. There are still 490 bores to be repaired and 13,600 km of drains to be replaced.

It is satisfying to see the work of forward thinking water managers in the '80s being developed over a long period to achieve valuable outcomes for Australians in general and western communities in particular.

Tony Horton NRM

Burdekin Hydro Power Station

A hydro power station at Burdekin Falls Dam is looking closer today than even before. A large power station was included in the original design but, for a variety of reasons, was never built. SunWater and Stanwell Corporation are currently nearing the completion of a feasibility study for a smaller hydro power station at the dam.

In August 2004, SunWater and Stanwell sought tenders from the market to design, construct and commission a 30 MW power station. The tender will provide final costing and technical information that will enable the feasibility study to be completed and be presented to the two organisation's Boards and the Shareholding Ministers who will decide whether to proceed with the project.

The power station, about 200 m from the dam wall, would generate enough power to supply 24,000 homes using water released from the dam for the environment, customers and dam overflows. A 200 m penstock from one of the dam's three existing outlets will transport water to turbines some 30 m below the bed of the Burdekin River and returning to the river via a 200 m 18 m deep tailrace channel. Electricity would connect into the electricity grid via a transmission line to Ravenswood, 72 km away.

The station is designed to generate "green" electricity, which has made this station design economically viable. The introduction by the Federal Government in 2001 of Renewable Energy Legislation adds \$40 for each MHW of green electricity generated.

Construction of the station will face challenges including continuing to supply water throughout the year to SunWater's customers as well as catering for substantial floods during the wet season.

Construction could commence in June 2005 with the station to be fully commissioned by December 2006.

Deborah Silver SunWater

Paradise Regained

I could no more have resisted that heading than a chocoholic could have resisted a Tim Tam! - **Ed.**

In late May, Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC) considered the future institutional arrangements for the Burnett River Dam (BRD), Eidsvold Weir and other associated weir projects. As a result of this consideration, it was decided that the most appropriate arrangement was the integration of Burnett Water Pty Ltd (BWPL) with SunWater at or near the completion of dam construction.

To manage the processes associated with the transfer, CBRC agreed to the establishment of a Steering Committee, chaired by Treasury. This Steering Committee has been meeting regularly to consider a range of issues associated with the transfer, including the appropriate form for the transfer, regulatory oversight arrangements and pricing issues.

KPMG were commissioned to review the tax, accounting and commercial implications of the two major methods for conducting the transfer – sale of the assets of BWPL or sale of the shares in BWPL held by the Department of State Development and Innovation (DSDI). For a number of reasons, the transfer will take the form of a sale of shares and BWPL will become a subsidiary of SunWater. BWPL will hold the assets, environmental approvals and the Water Allocations.

SunWater and BWPL have developed a 'due diligence' process to allow SunWater access to key documentation relating to potential liabilities associated with the BRD and Eidsvold Weir, and to construction data and reports which will allow SunWater to assess the structures' 'fitness for purpose' and estimate maintenance and other ongoing costs.

As well as the commercial and construction 'due diligence', SunWater is developing a water sales strategy for the 'new' water which is made available by the new infrastructure – some 30,000 ML/a from Eidsvold Weir and 140,000 ML/a from the BRD.

Developing a pricing and sales strategy for the Burnett scheme is complicated by factors including: the location of the infrastructure in an existing scheme where storage and delivery charges are currently under review; the likelihood that existing channels will not have sufficient capacity in the medium to longer term to deliver the additional water from the BRD, and the circularity of the links between pricing, water sales and asset valuation.

To address the channel capacity issue, SunWater has commenced consultation processes to clarify the extent of existing spare channel capacity and existing irrigators' delivery rights, which are currently undefined in any contracts or customer service standards. This process will allow SunWater to design a suite of water products to use existing spare capacity, as well as to estimate the cost of any channel capacity upgrades.

The SunWater people working on this interesting project reckon you wouldn't be dead for quids.

Garry Grant SunWater

Note: It is hoped to visit the site during the Bundaberg trip postponed to next year.

HEALTH *and beauty*

Blue Bloods

Apparently, the term *blue bloods*, as applied to the aristocracy, has a factual rather than a metaphorical basis. Being born *with a silver spoon in your mouth* and the constant eating off silver plate causes ingestion of excessive silver compounds that can result in fatal diseases for which blue colouration of the blood is a recognised symptom.

Having the wealth to live in houses with water reticulated through lead pipes, could also lead to fatal consequences. Fashionable ladies who painted their faces with lead-based cosmetics didn't know what they were letting themselves in for. So much for the privileges of rank.

On the other hand, the peasants, with no mod cons, had no such problems with chemical pollution and could be content with dying of natural causes such as malnutrition, scurvy and rickets – not to mention typhoid, cholera, the Black Death etc.

Recipe for Marriage

Some years ago I was lucky enough to attend a workshop where the principal speaker was an American expert in communication, negotiation and mediation. He claimed that, among his lifetime's achievements, was a long and successful marriage. This he attributed to the agreement reached by him and his wife at the outset of their joint life. 'We agreed,' he told us, 'on a distribution of responsibility. She would make all the small decisions and I would make all the big ones. We have stuck religiously to that agreement and my wife has made all the small decisions – where we would live, where the kids would go to school, where we would take vacations, what sort of cars we'd own, how big our mortgage should be ... And I've made all the big ones – whether we should bomb Bosnia ...'

Neighbourhood Revels

That party going on next door
Till all ungodly hours
Is far too noisy and, what's more,
It interferes with ours.

Exercise those Brain Cells

A woman stands at a shop counter and is asked by the assistant what she would like. She points to some objects and says, 'I'd like one.' The assistant wraps it and charges her \$1. A second customer points to the same objects and says, 'I'd like ten.' He is charged \$2. A third customer asks for one hundred and is charged \$3. What were the customers buying?



OPERATING SYSTEM

Dear Tech Support:

Last year I upgraded from my Girlfriend 7.0 to Wife 1.0. I soon noticed that the new program began unexpected child processing that took up a lot of space and valuable resources. In addition, Wife 1.0 installed itself into all other programs and now monitors all other system activity. Applications such as Poker Night 10.3, Football 5.0, Hunting and Fishing 7.5, and Racing 3.6 no longer run, crashing the system whenever selected.

I can't seem to keep Wife 1.0 in the background while attempting to run my favourite applications. I'm thinking about going back to Girlfriend 7.0, but the uninstall doesn't work on Wife 1.0. Please help!

Thanks,
A Troubled User (SEE REPLY BELOW)

REPLY:

Dear Troubled User:

This is a very common problem about which users are complaining. Many people upgrade from Girlfriend 7.0 to Wife 1.0, thinking that it is just a Utilities and Entertainment program. Wife 1.0 is an OPERATING SYSTEM and is designed by its Creator to run EVERYTHING!!! It is also impossible to delete Wife 1.0 and to return to Girlfriend 7.0. It is impossible to uninstall, or purge the program files from the system once installed.

You cannot go back to Girlfriend 7.0 because Wife 1.0 is designed to not allow this. Look in your Wife 1.0 manual under Warnings-Alimony/Child-Support. I recommend that you keep Wife 1.0 and work on improving the situation. I suggest installing the background application "Yes Dear" to alleviate software augmentation.

The best course of action is to enter the command C:\APOLOGIZE because ultimately you will have to give the APOLOGIZE command before the system will return to normal anyway.

Wife 1.0 is a great program, but it tends to be very high maintenance. Wife 1.0 comes with several support programs, such as Clean and Sweep 3.0, Cook It 1.5 and Do Bills 4.2.

However, be very careful how you use these programs. Improper use will cause the system to launch the program Nag Nag Nag 9.5. Once this happens, the only way to improve the performance of Wife 1.0 is to purchase additional software. I recommend Flowers 2.1 and Diamonds 5.0!

WARNING!!! DO NOT, under any circumstance, install Secretary With Short Skirt 3.3. This application is not supported by Wife 1.0 and will cause irreversible damage to the operating system.

Best of luck,
Tech Support

- Thanks to **Jim Uhlmann** for this invaluable contribution

Answer to Last Edition's Puzzle

The humanoid had six fingers.

The problem appears to be an addition sum to an unknown base. As there are five different symbols, it appears likely that the base will be 6. And indeed, from the left hand side of the sum it is apparent that the symbol **O** is equal to 1 and that **V** is equal to 0. Solving simultaneous equations shows that the base is indeed 6.

The QCS test published in the Courier Mail incorporated a question on bases, too!

Out of the Mouths of Babes ...

Jake, aged four, was in no doubt. 'You have to believe in Santa Claus. Otherwise you won't get any presents.'

* * *

Gervase Phinn, in *The Other Side of the Dale*, told of the boy who was cheesed-off at being cast in the Nativity Play as the innkeeper instead of in the plum role of Joseph. When Joseph knocked on the inn door, the boy emerged and said to Mary, 'You can come in', but to Joseph, 'and you can push off.'

* * *

After Sophie, aged 12 and the oldest of three, received her sex education talk, she exclaimed, 'Yuck! Mum and Dad did THAT – three times!'

* * *

When, about 50 years ago, 12-year-old David learnt about the facts of life he couldn't wait to fill his 10-year-old sister Ruth in. She was astonished. 'You mean the Queen does THAT!?' 'Oh,' replied David, 'I think she makes other arrangements.'

Mondo Greens

Many years ago when I was a student, I had vacation employment at Leslie Dam under Project Engineer Alan Taylor. On my first Friday evening there, I asked the lass serving in the Mess what was on the dinner menu. I distinctly heard her say, 'Seminary souls.' It all became clear when the food turned out to be salmon rissoles.

Much later, I was told that such mishearings actually have a name – Mondo Greens. The title comes from the words of an old Scottish ballad, *They've slain the Earl of Moray and Lady Mondo Green*, which is really meant to be *They've slain the Earl of Moray and laid him on the green*.

There are many, many examples of Mondo Greens and here are just a few.

The title of this Newsletter, *Watery Sauces*.

Gladly the cross-eyed bear (from the hymn *Gladly, the cross I'd bear*).

The child's drawing of the nativity scene with a little fat man next to the manger, who she said was *Round John Virgin*.

Australia's sunset ostriches (which can no longer happen as the first words of our National Anthem have been changed to *Australians all let us rejoice* instead of *Australia's sons ...*)

A current officer of NRM referred to a stream near Proserpine as *Leafy Brook*. As any Classical Greek scholar would know (if he were wide awake, but perhaps under the circumstances he could be forgiven for not being so), it is actually *Lethe Brook*.

If any readers can add new examples to my collection, I'd be only too pleased to receive them. – Ed.

A Certain Age

Have you been guilty of looking at others your own age and thinking, "Surely I cannot look that old?" You may enjoy this short story.

While waiting for my first appointment in the reception room of a new dentist, I noticed his certificate, which bore his full name. Suddenly, I remembered that a tall handsome boy with the same name had been in my high school class some 30 years ago.

Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, grey-haired man with the deeply lined face was way too old to have been my classmate. After he had examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended the local high school.

"Yes," he replied.

"When did you graduate?" I asked.

He answered, "In 1971. Why?"

"You were in my class!" I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely and then the S.O.B. asked, "What did you teach?"

Marilyn Caton

Thanks, Marilyn, very much for your contribution. Hope springs eternal that others will follow suit. - Ed

Accidents Do Happen – Fortunately!

History is littered with tales of accidental inventions. Everybody knows, for example, that Alexander Graham Bell was working on a hearing aid when he invented the telephone. Weren't we lucky he did? – some more than others.

In 1856, the famous chemist William Perkin (don't tell me you don't remember him despite the continuation of the prestigious Perkin Medal?) set out to invent a cure for the pestilence of malaria. He was experimenting with coal tar and noticed that the contents of one of his petri dishes had developed a distinctly mauve hue. This was the beginning of synthetic dyes which, by replacing the older, duller, expensive natural dyes, revolutionised the textile industry.

In the gastronomic world, many renowned dishes were created completely by accident. The caterer who had forgotten about the sweets course and so decided to cover some less-than-fully-fresh sponge cake with chocolate icing and coconut created the Queensland invention of the lamington – named after the same Governor as the Lamington Plateau.

The sous-chef in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in New York who, some time between 1910 and 1920, failed to heat the potato and leek soup was saved from disaster by chef Louis Diat who added more cream and chopped chives and served it as vichyssoise.

And it was an apprentice cook who tried to cover up the fact that he had left the butter out of the pastry mix by rolling it in later. The result was the puff pastry that is the bread and butter (so to speak) of patisseries.

•

Signs of the Times

On a hotel in a Perth suburb:

Don't be like Mary and Joseph - book early for Christmas.

There are three characteristics of great lovers. One, they all have bad memories and I can't for the life of me remember the others.

Book Club

Oh frabjous day! Callooh callay! Contributions from readers! More to come?

For months Sue Grafton lay in bed plotting how to kill her ex-husband; but she knew she'd bungle it and get caught so she wrote a book instead. Now she is the creator and alter-ego of Kinsey Millhone a thirty-three year old twice divorced private investigator. Women in particular will enjoy her mysteries as they are fast paced, smart and funny. She started with *A is for Alibi* and is more than half way through her alphabet of crime. Certainly worth a read.

* * *

The Greatest Game Ever Played by Mark Frost is a book for anyone who loves golf, good writing and a great story. Before 1913 golf had been a minority sport in the US. A British import, it was a game dominated by its creators, and none more so than Harry Vardon, multiple Open champion and *King of Clubs*. Francis Ouimet had developed a love for the game despite his father's fierce disapproval. His part in the 1913 US Open was meant to be as a spectator, but after a strong performance in the National Amateur Championships the powers that be insisted that he compete. No-one gave Ouimet a chance, especially with a ten year old caddy, but as the tournament went on, galleries got bigger and people began to think the unthinkable ...

This book makes fascinating reading in that it marries social history with sporting biography.

Marilyn Caton

MURDER - MYSTERY - SECRET SOCIETIES - RELIGIONS

The book which has all of the above, and is set in real places, with real people that we feel we know well. A real nail biter which will really make you think ... it is Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*. It really does make the mind work, not just to determine who the murderer is and how he does it, but more importantly – what is fact and what is fiction. A real brain teaser, very well told.

* * *

On a lighter note, but again murder as told by a journalist actively working on the scene, who knows exactly what does go on. I found great enjoyment in the author's skill in the telling of the story. The latest written by Carl Hiaasen, crime reporter from Miami, *Basket Case*, is excellent. All his books are good, well worth a read.

John Moreton

Set in Restoration England, *An Instance of the Fingerpost* by Iain Pears, tells of the circumstances surrounding the death of a young woman from the perspective of four different people with some knowledge of the events.

Against a background of embryonic science (blood transfusions, chemistry etc) and political intrigue, the book is enlightening and riveting, particularly for those with an interest in social history and religious conflict.

Ian Pullar

A Recipe for Enjoyment

Another new column. Readers are invited to swap recipes for tasty meals that are nutritious and sufficiently easy for even a retired engineer to prepare. Here is a starter:

Parmesan Veal with Caper Sauce

Take two thin veal steaks, dip them in lightly beaten egg and coat with equal parts of grated parmesan cheese and corn flake crumbs. Cook in a hot pan in a little oil.

For the sauce, mix 1 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp lemon juice, 2 tbsp Italian dressing and 2 tbsp drained capers and warm in the pan.

Serve with steamed vegetables.

Delicious!

Signs of the Times

On the back of a delivery truck:

Icypole's in boxes

Dave Morwood, who supplied this gem, can imagine that there are plenty of icy Poles in Warsaw in Winter, but wonders if they have inboxes – in IWSC tradition they would have had in trays



Credits

My thanks are once again due to Helen; to Trevor Lynam who printed this; to the contributors; to Scott Spencer; Peter Noonan, Natasha Gajda and Katrina Mack who put it on departmental intra-nets; and to Bob Kay for his cartoons.

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Current Office Bearers of the Association are given below for the information of anyone wanting to contact them. There have been some changes.

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