



WATERY SAUCES OLDIES AND BOLDIES

Newsletter No 73

March 2014

NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

A Pearl of a Meeting

Included with this Newsletter is the notice for the Annual General Meeting of 2014 – our 30th such AGM.

You, your friends and colleagues, are invited to join us to mark this auspicious occasion. It's not every year you get to such a celebration. We certainly hope there will be a good roll up.

During the meeting itself, you will have the opportunity to hear reports on the activities of your Association over the past year and to participate in the election of next year's committee. As is customary, there will also be addresses from our patrons (or their representatives) informing us of departmental activities. With changes continuing in governmental arrangements, these will be of great interest.

But the main attraction will be that you will have the pleasure of meeting up with former colleagues. These get-togethers are always enjoyable and this one is particularly so because the Association will shout you lunch.

We look forward to seeing you there.

From the Editor's Chair

This year, 2014, marks 155 years since the State of Queensland was created. In order to commemorate this milestone, the Department of Energy and Water Supply, in conjunction with the Australian Water Association, is planning to hold a public seminar or symposium on 11 June and has requested involvement from the Water Resources Retirees Association.

The event is aimed at highlighting the importance of water resource development in Queensland. Indirectly, of course, it recognises the contribution that we, our predecessors and heirs have made. At this stage, plans are still being formulated but it is likely that one or more of our members will be participating. More details will be made available to members as they come to hand.

Until next time, au reservoir.

Ian Pullar, Editor

WRRA February Lunch

Club Central (formerly the Public Service Club) was again the venue for our informal get-together over lunch on 27 February.

The function was quite well attended (around 20 members) and was enjoyed by all. Unfortunately our regular photographer Terry Loos was unable to make it, so there is no pictorial evidence in this edition.

Programme for 2014

Following the AGM, the Committee will draw up a programme of events for the next year. Suggestions from members of possible activities would be gratefully received.

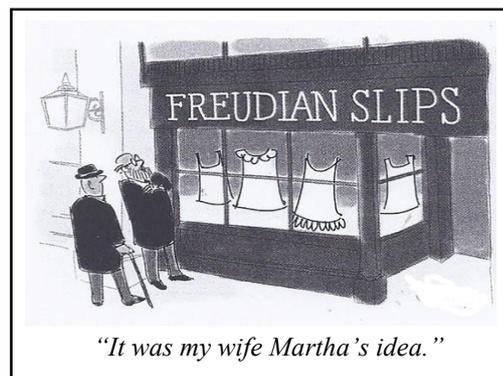
Welcome aboard

Despite our expectations that a number of retirees (or redundees) would swell the membership of our Association, we have recruited only one new member this year – Warren Shallcross. Welcome Warren.

New members are always welcome, so why not encourage your former colleagues to join up? Our secretary Peter Jones would love to hear from new recruits. And, remember, you don't have to be retired to join.

What is everyone doing?

Well, don't ask me, because I haven't been told. My regular column, Out and About, is a notable omission from this edition for that very reason. Please let me – and thereby all our readers – know what you or other Oldies are up to. That's what everyone wants to read about. - Ed.



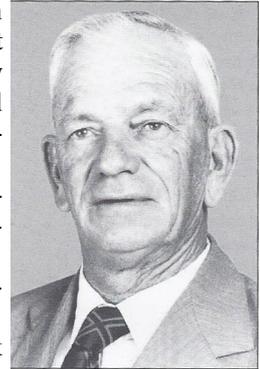
Can you help?

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) wish to honour Frank Learmonth on their honour board of prominent Queensland engineers. As part of the project they are trying to obtain more information about his work, but more particularly about his personal life. QUT is very keen to locate photographs. They have engaged professional historian, Margaret Cook, to assist and she is asking if anyone can provide information.

Frank Learmonth was born and educated in New South Wales but he was recruited by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission from the Hydro-Electric Commission to construct Tinaroo Dam. He was appointed Assistant Commissioner in 1971 and Commissioner in 1974, a position he held until 1976. He died, aged 78, in November 1992.

According to the note by Stan Ross in our Newsletter No 9 of March 1993, Frank was survived by a daughter Judith and sons Gregory, Malcolm and Stewart. Does anyone know the whereabouts of any of these people? Frank was a keen player of lawn bowls. Perhaps some of you remember playing with him and may have photos. You may have also played tennis with him. What do people remember about him?

If anyone is willing to offer information or photographs could you please contact Margaret Cook on 3812 7995 or by email on mcookhistory@gmail.com. It would be great if Frank Learmonth's contribution to engineering was properly recognised.



Media Studies

Terry Loos sent a link to a media article about megadams which you can follow up if you so desire. The link is:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-26512465>

Here is a small taste of the flavour of the article.

A new report from researchers at Oxford University argues that large dams are a risky investment - soaring past projected budgets, drowning emerging economies in debt and failing to deliver promised benefits. Do they ever really make sense?

In the vast majority of cases, they say, megadams are not economically viable. The mighty Hoover Dam is an obvious exception as it came in ahead of time and under budget.

But after a two-decade lull, large dams are once again being trumpeted as a ticket to prosperity. Countries from China to Brazil, via Pakistan and Ethiopia, are rushing to erect them.

The article is interesting, if somewhat controversial.

Ian Wallace sent a link to an article about a former colleague:

<http://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/itll-be-malcolm-hannah-to-the-rescue-the-caves/2185167/>

The story concerns a maxi fire engine named "Malcolm" in honour of Mal Hannah who donated significant sums of money to the Rural Fire Brigade. Mal himself is suffering from terminal liver cancer. Ian Wallace noted *Mal Hannah worked for "the department" under one or more of its many names and then at Sunwater. From memory I think he was on the Gladstone Awoonga pipeline and Stanwell pipeline electrical maintenance.*

He is a great bloke.

Recently *The Courier Mail* published a letter to the editor in which the author expressed the view that it is untrue that there are no viable dam sites left in south-east Queensland. What should happen, in his opinion, is that Wolffdene Dam should be built to replace Wivenhoe water storage so that that dam can be used for its original purpose of flood mitigation.

Wrong on all counts:

- (a) Wolffdene would not have enough capacity or yield to replace Wivenhoe
- (b) The chances of Wolffdene passing either the environmental or economic test would be negligible
- (c) Wivenhoe was always intended as a dual purpose dam

There has, of course, been no official response. Members of the public will continue to embrace these misconceptions and perhaps nothing can be done to alter perceptions.

But I see no reason why a knowledgeable retiree couldn't occasionally respond to misguided opinion and disseminate factual information.

Vale Desmond Terence Foster 9 July 1927 - 12 October 2013

Desmond Terence Foster was born in Brisbane on 9 July, 1927, the only son of Terence Patrick (T.P.) and Priscilla Mae. He was adored by his four older sisters. (His eldest sister, Kathleen, was Jim Uhlmann's mum). T.P. was an Engineering Surveyor with the Main Roads and played a major part on many important highways throughout Queensland. It's no wonder that Des went off to an MRD camp at Normanton to start on his career. He told great stories of those days of spartan camp life travelling through outback Queensland.

After a few years Des was seconded to IWS and he headed off to the Burdekin area where many later prominent IWS engineers etc had their grounding – mainly at Clare. After moving to working round Goondiwindi and Texas areas he was sent off to St. George for surveys pre Beardmore Dam.

This was to change Des's life as he caught the eye of the St. George office clerk-typiste, Daree Bang. Des and Daree were married in 1956 and had two wonderful children – daughter Terry and son Andrew, two fine grandsons, and over 57 years together.

Around 1956 the *Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act* was introduced and soon Des and family were off to Warwick to follow up on this scheme. The areas around Stanthorpe, Brookstead and Texas were first in the queue. Daree spent her time reducing levels and keeping up with the “paper work” – on a volunteer basis of course.

The Warwick District Office was established and soon had a few more field workers to keep up with the demand. Construction of Leslie Dam and then Coolmunda added to his administration work load, and followed by Glen Lyon Dam. Organisation of the openings of these with all the red tape and protocol involved is a story in itself. River Improvement Trusts were expanded and Des found himself the Chairman of no less than six of these with needs to visit other areas to gain extra knowledge to help in this district.

The Warwick D/O grew to be a very busy and happy atmosphere. Des was a fair and popular administrator (despite his red hair). In fact he was awarded the prestigious Graham Jobling award and for this he was nominated by his staff. They did this secretly whilst Des was taking an Australian Golf team to N.Z. He was amazed and very humbled by this gesture.

Retirement came in 1987, after 43 years of service.

Sport was always a great love. Hockey, cricket and tennis were played in many places where he was working in the early years and involvement in these pursuits was a way of getting to know the locals. It worked, and in later years he even had a wife who could handle a cricket score book with ease – as well as put the kettle on for smoko.

Golf, however, was Des's greatest passion and he gave many years of volunteer service to this sport in the district, Queensland and Australia. He officiated on rules and administration for state and national events and even at the 1990 British Open at St. Andrew's. At that time Des was serving as President of Australian Golf and was President of Queensland as well. During this time he was honoured with an MBE awarded for his services to golf. All this didn't help his own game as he was a very “iffy” putter – it was all in his mind.

Masonry was another love and Des had received his 50 year jewel a few years ago. Long dedicated service seemed to be the way to go for this bloke.

Sadly, Des's health let him down several years ago with replacement part complications. After struggling at home, he was forced into immobility and high care at the Oaks Nursing Home at Warwick for several months before going to his final peace. Now we hope D.T is “golfing with the angels” and the putts all drop.

– *This tribute was provided by Daree, to whom we offer our condolences.* – **Ed.**

Vale Darrell Butel

Darrell Butel was born in Inverell in 1945 but shortly thereafter his family moved to Yelarbon. He left school at 14 and remained in Yelarbon until, aged 18, he took a position at Leslie Dam as a form setter.

He was subsequently engaged at Maroon before joining Ken Bell's stream gauging construction team. Following that, he moved to Monduran, Clare Weir, Wivenhoe and Burdekin Falls. By this stage he had been promoted to Works Supervisor.

He spent some time in Brisbane working with Paul Johnson on Burdekin litigation. He left the department in 1992 and after working in Brisbane for some time, (a coffee shop and a lattice installation business were undertakings), he joined SMEC and spent four years in Botswana, Africa, building a dam and pipeline.

He returned to Australia in 2002 and took up a position with Coffey Mining, Perth, working principally on tailings dam projects, before finally retiring in 2012.

He was diagnosed with lung cancer almost exactly five years before he died and developed secondary tumours some two years ago. Darrell passed away during the evening of Saturday 1 March 2014.

– *This tribute was compiled from notes taken by Peter Jones at Darrell's funeral service from the eulogy delivered by his wife Pam, supplemented by notes from his close friend Ken Kennedy.* – **Ed.**

A Decent Holiday (Part 4)

by Patrick McCourt

Dublin is steeped in history like most parts of Europe, and it's very aware and proud of this history too. The city's name is coined from two old Celtic words. *Dubh* means "black", and *linn* means "pool". So the city is really Blackpool like its counterpart over the Channel. There are other Blackpools too. We visited the original site of the black pool behind the Chester Beatty library which is up the hill past Temple Bar. However, the Irish name for Dublin these days is *Baile Atha Cliath* which means the "town of the ford of the hurdles" which refers to a ford that used to exist long ago across the River Liffey near Father Mathew Bridge. Mind you, the story *Tain Bo Cuailgne*, or The Cattle Raid of Cooley, has it both ways when it refers to "*Dublind rissa ratter Ath Cliath*" which means "Dublin, which is called Ath Cliath". Still, that's the Irish for you.

They say that you can throw a brick anywhere in Dublin and you'll hit a writer of stories or a poet. This is true of all Ireland, but it's possibly especially true of Dublin. Australians would be hard pressed to name some famous Irish people, but they'd probably know of a few novelists, playwrights, and actors. Names that come to mind are Pierce Brosnan, Samuel Beckett, George Bernard Shaw, Bram Stoker, Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, William Yeats, and the incomparable James Joyce. This is the land of the story teller, and we saw some statues throughout our journey across the Emerald Isle which were dedicated to a local teller of tales who perpetuated old knowledge in this way. That oral tradition is still strong today. A strand of research by one of my Irish relations suggests that the McCourts were poets and bards in the druidic tradition before the onslaught of Christianity. Ironically, this relation is a member of the order of Christian Brothers.

We checked in to the same hotel in Dublin as before, and there waiting for us were two of my relations. We were quite tired, but they insisted on showing us Dublin of which they are very proud. This is understandable because my people came from Drummany which is very close to Butlersbridge in County Cavan which is only 60 kilometres to the north-west of Dublin. My paternal great grandfather came from the abutting County Monaghan. So the McCourts were originally situated not too far from Dublin. In any event, it was off on a walking tour of the city.

We went inside the Post Office where the Easter Rising of 1916 began. They say the bullet holes are still there but we couldn't see them. We had a look at the most hated public monument in the city – the 120 metre high Spire of Dublin. Dubliners are right. The Spire looks terrible and is completely out of kilter with the historical and contemporary streetscape. We walked over O'Connell Bridge and up to the hill behind Temple Bar. My relations took us through Dublin Castle, Christ Church Cathedral, and the wonderful Chester Beatty library. Then it was back to our hotel

where there were telephone messages from another relation of mine who'd come down from Mullingar to see us. So we set off again to meet her.

It was night time now, and this meeting with my relation was much more social. It was near midnight when we left her in Temple Bar to cross the Ha'penny Bridge across the Liffey back to our hotel with the cries of a group of lads to a security guard who had denied them entry to a bar to send us on our way. "*Ya coward, why don't ye come up here and fight the nine of us!*"

We're back in London now in a hotel up near Marble Arch to join up with a coach tour which will take us down to Dover to the ferry across to France, and then through Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and then back across France to Paris.

It was a rainy day when we set out from London very early in the morning to head for Dover, and the weather didn't improve during the crossing of the Channel. In fact, the white cliffs of Dover looked distinctly grey. The people on our coach once again proved to be great travel companions. We didn't see too much of Belgium which was a great pity. Our coach made a mad dash across northern France, through Belgium, and into Holland. We visited the picturesque town of Volendam beside the sea which reminded us a bit of Montville back home with its various types of shops selling curios, sea food, and lace for which the area is famous. We quite enjoyed strolling through this tidy and well presented town. The Dutch countryside was picturesque and we saw occasional old windmills which looked a lot better than their modern electricity generating counterparts.

We spent a couple of days in Amsterdam. I'm tempted to stop here. This city was unlike any other part of Holland that we had seen. It did not present well while we were there at least. Now I know that some of you will have been to Amsterdam and have nothing but good things to say about the city. However, the city seemed to need a good clean up and the water quality in the canals appeared to be of a lower standard than we are used to in Australia. Even many of the barges we saw during our canal cruise were not in the best of shape and I wondered how some of them stayed afloat. Then there is the dubious "red light" district and the infamous "coffee houses". The rule about bicycle riders having right of way over pedestrians is alright for the locals, but it doesn't do much for tourists and there were a number of near accidents with our group. On the other hand, Ros really enjoyed Ann Frank house.

I was impressed with the way Dutch television presents shows in English with sub-titles in Dutch. This is a deliberate effort to acclimatise the general population to English even though it is taught in schools.

- next time, we'll join Pat and Ros on their continuing, fascinating travels in Europe. Once again, many thanks Pat . - Ed.

Driving the Cape

Brian and Joanne Shannon

(continuing from Newsletter 72)

We arrived into South Africa through Johannesburg, the gold mining capital of SA alongside its sister non-white township, Soweto. Our itinerary involved taking the overnight train to Cape Town, then a self-drive around the Cape to Port Elizabeth and onwards to Durban.

Because of all the warnings about security in Jo'burg, we arranged to stay at Sandton, the financial centre in the northern suburbs. The ultra-modern, secure Gautrain took us directly from the airport to central Sandton where we were picked up by the hotel bus for the 1km transfer. The location proved very convenient being within walking distance of the centre and adjacent to a gated supermarket/restaurant complex. Sandton is centred around Nelson Mandela Square dominated by his huge bronze statue and surrounded by a rather incongruous Italian piazza. The adjacent shopping mall would do credit to any city with all the usual international brands. A most valuable purchase was an Eyewitness travel guide which served us well for our remaining trip.

Our one regret was that we did not extend our travel to Pretoria, the administrative capital, a 20 minute Gautrain trip away. We chose not to visit Soweto although we saw plenty of the townships on our later travels.

One highlight of our trip was the trans-Karoo tourist class train which took us overnight to Cape Town. The ever-dependable Gautrain delivered us to the central Jo'burg rail station to begin our 27hr journey. Although the Shosholozha Meyl is non-airconditioned, the cool weather of the central highland in spring made for comfortable travel. One essential was the hire bedding, for the sleeping berths, which was quite inexpensive, as were the dining-car meals.

Outward bound from Jo'burg we passed kilometre after kilometre of mine workings and numerous shanty settlements. Around midnight we passed through Kimberley, the diamond mining province then over the east-to-west flowing Orange River. As we approached the Cape province, we negotiated a mountain pass via a tunnel over 20km long to appear in the wine region around Paarl which provided a picturesque backdrop as we wended our way.

Once in Cape Town, we transferred only a short distance from the station to a penthouse apartment overlooking the harbour and alongside the Victoria Albert Waterfront, a re-developed tourist mecca of the city. Hiring a car in the city, we used it to explore the Cape surrounds and then to travel onwards. Against the odds, the weather treated us kindly which facilitated a trip in the cable car of a single span to the top of Table Mountain. As well as panoramic views as far as Robben Is, there were informative trails focusing on the typical fynbos (fine leafed) vegetation of the region. To the west of Table Mountain are the ritzy bay-

side suburbs of the Cape but they are open to the weather sweeping in from the Atlantic Ocean.

No visit here would be complete without a trip to Cape Point/Cape of Good Hope. The former is victim of its own success with myriad buses delivering people to the only food outlets. Nonetheless we saw a couple of whales frolicking in the ocean below. Escaping the crowds, we chose to have lunch near the latter but were immediately visited by baboons who even opened our car door in an attempt to get food. On our way back to the city we travelled through the Cape flats where the townships are located.

Exiting Cape Town, we headed to the winelands around Stellenbosch. Here we discovered that we had arrived for the "Uncorked" wine festival at the adjacent Franschoeck (French corner) where Huguenots were resettled around 1700. We quickly realised that this was the centre of wine tourism, found our B&B and spent another day doing the rounds of six or so wineries. A highlight was an exquisite lunch at Delaire Graff estate located in a spectacular mountain pass.

Heading towards the coast, we first visited Hermanus renowned for its shore-based whale watching. While it was a quaint village, the whales were notably absent on the day and we headed eastwards. Our original itinerary had us bypassing Hermanus but staying part-way along the Garden Route; rather we chose to stay at Mossel Bay, near the beginning, which turned out to be a better option. Consequently we had the best part of the day to drive the route hugging the coast, the penalty being a longer drive into Port Elizabeth (but on an excellent highway). An amazing part of the drive was through the National Park at Tsitsikamma. The road is lined with proteas which, when we passed, were about to burst into full bloom. Another notable was the regular warning of a \$50 fine for feeding the baboons!

The drive into PE leads through the highly industrialised section around the port but changes delightfully into the bay-side reaches near the centre. Marine Parade is tastefully landscaped and boasts a casino-resort across the road. Again we were able to find a convenient self-catering B&B at short notice.

In the interests of time we flew the last leg into Durban where we again hired a car to see the sights. The Golden Mile along the beach-front is wall-to-wall hotels (a little too like Surfers Paradise for our liking) but has fringing parkland along the seashore. It has a distinct Indian culture and hosts the greatest number of semi-permanent stalls that we have seen. To the north are some quite beautiful coastal developments but with limited public access to the beach.

From Durban we flew into Botswana for our final safaris.

Thanks Brian and Joanne. We look forward to the next chapter. - Ed.



DEWS News

As its name implies, the Department of Energy and Water Supply has two major groups, one focusing on energy and one on water. Under Deputy Director General Ken Sedgwick, the sections in water are Water Supply Planning, Water Supply Policy and Economics, the Queensland Water Supply Regulator and a small group concerned with the outstanding issues arising from the Flood Commission of Enquiry.

These notes summarise what's currently happening in water supply planning where there is now a strong focus on the developing drought and its potential impacts on urban water supply security across the state. There has also been a major study on how forecast mining water demands might be most effectively met.

For the south east of the state, levels of service (restrictions to apply during drought) for urban communities set at the end of the Millennium drought have been reviewed after an extensive period of consultation and adjustments, for some communities, are now proposed that better reflect recent water use levels. If approved by Government, the new levels will set the objectives for the operation by Seqwater of the region's bulk water supply schemes.

The department also intends to progress water supply security assessments for major growth centres in regional Queensland in collaboration with local government, the departments of Natural Resources and Mines and State Development and Infrastructure Planning and with the advice of the Local Government Association, Queensland. The purpose of this program is to support, empower and up-skill local government water service providers to better understand their water supply risks and assess the performance of water supply systems for regional urban centres across the state. The assessments will take into account all other users that rely on each water supply system.

A major study nearing completion has involved

SunWater Snippets

The winds of change are upon us once again – and how!

Shortly after the last report, the Queensland Government released its Commission of Audit Report, flagging significant impacts on the future operation of SunWater and its subsidiaries. The following four key recommendations regarding Regional Bulk Water were made, all of which were accepted by the Government:

- SW to finalise the transfer of its irrigation channels to private irrigators and withdraw fully from this activity.
- SW's dedicated water supply infrastructure servicing commercial and industrial clients to be offered for private ownership and/or private operation, depending on which solution provides the best value for money outcome for the Government.
- SW to remain as a GOC with a residual function to retain ownership and management of existing bulk water assets in regional Queensland.

development of a water supply strategy for the Bowen and Galilee coal basins where, although there has been a recent downturn, the demand for additional water supplies is forecast to increase very significantly. Even medium growth forecasts indicate demands of more than 40,000 ML/a to meet the needs of expanding and new mines and communities in the Bowen Basin and more than 65,000 ML/a to meet needs in the Galilee Basin. As has always been the case, there is no certainty as to which of the numerous mining proposals will be developed and when it will be developed. The strategy report includes a detailed assessment of current water use and availability and details options for increasing supply to each section of the two basins.

Water supply solutions in each area are likely to involve combinations of local water sources including mine dewatering, local storage development including off stream storages and, particularly in the Galilee Basin, if more than one mine is being developed, major regional pipelines. The sources of supply are likely to include currently uncommitted supplies, mainly in the Burdekin Haughton scheme, reserves nominated in the Burdekin and Fitzroy water resource plans, water trading and in the southern sections of the Bowen Basin, coal seam gas water.

Although not directly about new water supplies, major studies into optimising the operation of Wivenhoe and Somerset dams and into optimising the operation of North Pine Dam as recommended in the Queensland Flood Commission of Enquiry final report are nearing completion. These studies have considered seasonal changes in the dam storage levels and alternative gate operation and water release rules. Impacts on downstream flooding and on stream crossings upstream and downstream of the dams have also been examined to assess whether the existing operation manuals for the dam should be amended.

Lee Rogers

- Any future bulk water storage facilities be developed by the private sector, unless there are compelling public good or market failure reasons not to do so.

Importantly, the Commission recommended that SunWater be retained as a GOC, albeit with reduced scope of operations to focus on management of its existing bulk water assets. Subsequently, the reconfiguration of all internal business activities to align with the Audit recommendations commenced in August last year, with significant impacts on the size and shape of the organisation.

The government's policy to investigate Local Management Arrangements (LMAs) for the irrigation channel systems was reported previously. Interim Boards have been appointed for each of the channel schemes, led by independent chair Leith Bouilly. The Boards were charged with driving and participating in due diligence processes and developing business proposals to describe how the schemes would be managed by irrigator-owned entities. The proposals are yet to be finalised for consideration by Government.

Meanwhile, the new realigned SW structure was taking shape and, after a rigorous selection process, Senior Management appointments were made in early September, followed by other manager roles a month later. The remainder of the staff positions were then sorted out, with the new structure announced in late October and taking effect on 2 December. Around this time, Renee Butterfield and Tom Wallwork accepted positions to work with Queensland Treasury and Trade on the SunWater Industrial Pipelines Divestment and Phil Miller accepted a position to work with Tom Vanderbilt and Col Bendall on the LMA Project.

The realignment was not only about the QCoA recommendations, with a major impact on the structure being the declining economic conditions for our customers. This affected the generation of new business, particularly in the former Infrastructure Development group, which was geared for growth. Unfortunately, there are few significant infrastructure projects after the Wooleebee Creek to Glebe Weir Pipeline finishes in June 2014, despite a concerted effort to pursue consulting activities to fill the gap.

The economic downturn, combined with changes in the Government's focus on directing public funding into social infrastructure, impacted adversely on the previous development business model. With the Gov-

ernment signalling a preference for private funding of commercial infrastructure projects, this has placed limitations on how SunWater can use its capital.

These external challenges have been reflected in the new organisational structure.

In late November, while all the reorganisation was happening, the State Government announced that SunWater was to relocate all its Brisbane office functions to the new Icon Ipswich Commercial Tower at 117 Brisbane Street. Based on the Government's expectation that the move happens sooner rather than later, planning commenced immediately, with a completed move by mid-May this year finally being targeted.

On the retirements front, Peter Richardson eased into it from late last year after bouts of Long Service Leave, interrupted by handovers of dam safety inspections and report reviews. Both John and Peter Richardson are back in various capacities to assist with the overload every now and then. Bill Hewitt surveyed his last dam in September after a six month handover to his replacement Kev Devlin is still deliberating over whether or not he likes this retirement gig and has deferred the decision by closing the deal on the Hunter Downs Irrigation Project in New Zealand. It looks like it's back across the ditch for Kev.

Mark Lepper (SunWater)

CSIRO's Flinders and Gilbert Agricultural Resource Assessment.

Minister Truss released CSIRO's reports on this major study to assess the potential for irrigated agriculture in the Flinders and Gilbert River catchments in February.

President Geoff and I were lucky to be invited by CSIRO to work from October 2012 to May 2013 on one component of the study – the assessment of surface water storage options: Geoff worked on the geological and materials aspects while I concentrated on the dam layouts and cost estimates. Off stream storage options and regulating weirs were also considered.

Most of the storage options had of course been looked at before and study reports dating back as far as the 1960's were located in both the department's and SunWater's libraries – but a few new sites were identified as well.

It took a week travelling through the region to get to look at most of the more promising sites and then two days of helicopter flights to get to the less accessible sites. This was a "back to the old days" experience for us. It happened in December 2012 and the following January, so it was very hot indeed. From 15 options in the Flinders catchment and 7 in the Gilbert catchment, 6 options were short listed for more detailed analysis – three in each catchment were identified as the most promising.

Although the Flinders River catchment has vast areas of soils potentially suitable for irrigation, most storage sites have severe limitations – upstream of Hughenden sites have smallish catchment areas and poor geology and in the Cloncurry Corella River area to the west, again the sites have geological problems or smaller catchments limit yields.

The Gilbert River catchment is only half the size of the Flinders but has a much bigger average annual flow and flood flows occur more frequently. The Einasleigh River is larger than the Gilbert and has prolonged base flows. The most promising site evaluated had not previously been identified – a site on the Einasleigh on the Dagworth property. A dam here could store 498,000 ML and yield 326,000 ML/a at 85% reliability – fairly impressive in a hydrologic sense – but the suitable soil areas are a long way downstream.

CSIRO's broad conclusions were that off-stream storage developments would be more suitable than on-stream dams in the Flinders catchment but that the economics of these types of development would be challenging whereas in the Gilbert River catchment, major dams at Dagworth and at Greenhills on the Gilbert River itself could support 20,000 to 30,000 hectares of irrigated production – but again the economics would be challenging.

If you would like to see the reports, google CSIRO FGARA.

Lee Rogers

Many thanks, Lee, for this contribution. - Ed.

Answers to Terry's Trivia (page 9)

1. (iii) coal seam gas
2. (iv) veneration of the Virgin
3. (iv) 13 billion
4. (iv) Red Cadeaux
5. (i) Frederick
6. (iii) Samuel Johnson
7. (i) Superb Fairy Wren
8. (ii) cricket
9. (iii) a dessert
10. (ii) 95 GL/a
11. (iv) \$A153
12. (iv) Chesterfield

HEALTH *and beauty*

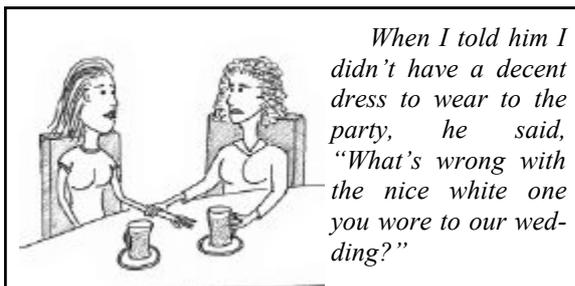
Food for Thought

I recently came across this account of a banquet at the court of Elizabeth I and thought it may interest readers and explain why her father Henry VIII and Great Grandfather Edward IV were a little on the large side. - Ed.

Cold food was the first of the ten traditional courses; the second was hot, the third sweet, and onward through a great array. The red gravies, blue custards, and yellow sauces looked especially festive against the layers of white linens covering the table, which glittered with silver plates and glass goblets. Huge saltcellars in elaborate shapes adorned each table. All the guests soon fell to with their personal knives and spoons.

Accompanied by the wail and beat of music from the elevated musicians gallery, sallets came first, some boiled, some compound, followed by a flow of fricasees, boiled meats, stewed broths, and sundry boiled fowls. Then all sorts of roast meats, everything from capons to woodcocks. Wild fowl, land fowl, and hot baked meats such as marrow-bone pie arrived to make the table groan. Next came cold baked meats of wild deer, hare pie, gammon of bacon pie, then shellfish, though not so many dishes of that since the rivers were solid ice.

Among the sweets came candied flower petals, fat green figs from Portugal, dates, suckets, tarts, gingerbread, florentines, and spiced cakes, and the Queen's childhood favorite, figgy pudding, though she merely picked at it now. At last came the annual massive marzipan masterpiece, rolled in on a cart. People stood at their places or even on benches to see a miniature frozen Thames with tiny booths upon it and a replica of Whitehall Palace on its bank side. All of this was washed down with a selection of malmsey, Gascon or Rhenish wines, beer, or ale.



When I told him I didn't have a decent dress to wear to the party, he said, "What's wrong with the nice white one you wore to our wedding?"

Exercise those Brain Cells

If the word pattern below is continued, what is the millionth letter?

MATHEMATICSMATHEMATICSMATHE...



CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Phil Sternes sent me this. Thanks Phil. It demonstrates a degree of acclimatisation beyond what my Scottish blood can bear. - Ed.

40 degrees F

Californians shiver uncontrollably
Scots sunbathe

35 degrees

Italian cars won't start
Scots drive with the windows down

20 degrees

Floridians wear coats, gloves, and wool hats
Scots throw on a T-shirt

15 degrees

Californians begin to evacuate the state
Scots go swimming

Zero degrees

New York landlords finally turn up the heat
Scots have the last barbecue before it gets cold

10 degrees below zero

People in Miami cease to exist
Scots lick flagpoles

20 degrees below zero

Californians fly away to Mexico
Scots throw on a light jacket

80 degrees below zero

Polar bears begin to evacuate the Arctic
Scottish Boy Scouts postpone "Winter Survival" classes until it gets cold enough

100 degrees below zero

Santa Claus abandons the North Pole
Scots pull down their ear flaps

173 degrees below zero

Ethyl alcohol freezes
Scots get frustrated when they can't thaw their kegs

297 degrees below zero

Microbial life starts to disappear
Scottish cows complain of farmers with cold hands

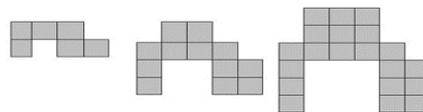
460 degrees below zero

ALL atomic motion stops
Scots start saying "chilly, you cold then?"

500 degrees below zero

Hell freezes over
Scots support England in the World Cup

Answer to last Issue's Teaser



Answer: 132

The first member comprises a 1x1 square with 5 adjacent squares.

The second member is a 2x2 square with 8 adjacent squares.

The third member is a 3x3 square with 11 adjacent squares.

Therefore the tenth member will be a 10x10 square 32 adjacent squares (11 on the left, 11 on the immediate right and 10 to the right of that).

Editor's Note: Bob McDonald got the same answer but by a different method! Congratulations, Bob.

How Come?

We have all become accustomed to people, particularly politicians, talking bunkum. So it is appropriate that the term should have originated from a politician doing just that.

A US Congressman, Felix Walker had been elected as the representative of Buncombe County, North Carolina. He wanted to make his mark and, of course get re-elected so he decided it was important that “the folk back home” knew that he spoke up for them. So he did, regardless of whether anything he said made any sense or had any relevance. He just rambled on, totally uncontrolled.

The other representatives grew weary of this and started coughing or leaving. Walker became aware of this but to make it clear that he didn't resent their reaction he said, “Gentlemen, don't think I'm annoyed. After all, I'm not talking to you, but I'm talking for the folks back home.”

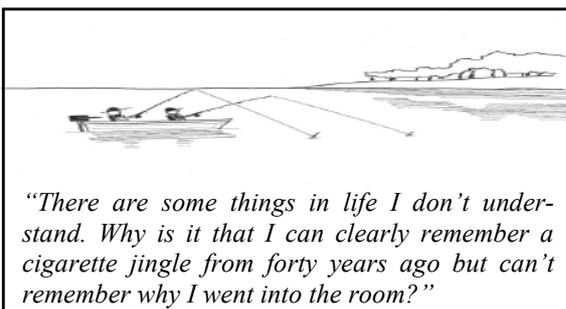
And as it was all about Buncombe, bunkum became proverbial for senseless and stupid talk.

A Travellers Tale Not So Well Bread

The little township of Bamford, built to service the Wolfram/Molybdenite mine near Mareeba, no longer exists. In 1916 Lee Lung was the local baker in the district, producing over a thousand loaves of bread each week. All his customers agreed that his bread was the nicest, whitest bread in all the north.

One night the mail train ran late, so it was well after midnight when the unofficial postman and another miner walked the three kilometres from Petford to Bamford. On the way they were attracted by the lights of the bakery and couldn't resist looking through the window. What did they see? – Lee Lung urinating into his bread dough. When they berated him, the baker explained that this was what made his bread so light and white.

Next morning, the miners reported the event to the Miners Protection Committee who decided the bakery had to be demolished that very night. But by then Lee Lung had left town with all his possessions. After that, Bamford had no baker and bread had to be brought in from Mareeba.



A Sign of the Times
In a southside café
We do not have Wi-Fi. Talk to each other.

Terry's Trivia

Questions from the 2013 Christmas luncheon. Answers on page 7.

1. CSG commonly stands for: (i) Cupric-sulpho gallium; (ii) could start grumbling; (iii) coal seam gas; (iv) client service guaranteed; (v) can't stand Geoff.
2. Who or what is 'Mariolatry'? : (i) An Italian Opera singer; (ii) A Toowong Restaurant (iii) A computer game; (iv) Extreme veneration of The Virgin Mary; (v) A chocolate .
3. The most distant galaxy yet discovered (recently) using the Hubble Space Telescope (confirmed by the Keck Observatory in Hawaii) is about: (i) 3 million; (ii) 13 million; (iii) 3 billion; (iv) 13 billion; light years away.
4. The runner-up in the 2013 Melbourne Cup was: (i) Mount Athos; (ii) Simenon; (iii) Green Moon; (iv) Red Cadeaux; (v) Fawkner.
5. Clive Palmer's middle name is: (i) Frederick; (ii) Arthur; (iii) Winston; (iv) Terence.
6. Who first said, "Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel"? (i) Winston Churchill (1874-1965); (ii) Boris Johnson (1964-); (iii) Samuel Johnson (1709-1784); (iv) Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948);
7. In a recent poll by Birdlife Australia our most popular bird was voted to be the: (i) Superb Fairy-wren; (ii) Magpie; (iii) Plover; (iv) Kookaburra; (v) Rainbow Lorikeet.
8. What type of new club has the Vatican launched to widen its appeal: (i) Comedy; (ii) Cricket; (iii) Bridge; (iv) Yoga; (v) Football.
9. What is 'syllabub'? : (i) a grammatical term; (ii) a fairy; (iii) a dessert; (iv) a silly boy.
10. The total 'take' from the GAB is around 570 GL/yr. The expected extra average 'take' due to CSG is: (i) 9.5 GL/a (1.7%); (ii) 95 GL/a (17%); (iii) 950 GL/a (170%).
11. A work by British painter Francis Bacon has just set a new auction record for art, at Christies NY, fetching: (i) \$A86M; (ii) \$A 119M; (iii) \$A 135M; (iv) \$A 153M.
12. The most twisted spire on the list of the *Association of the Twisted Spires of Europe* is at: (i) Gigny, Yonne France; (ii) Bad Ischl, Austria; (iii) Limbourg, Liege Belgium; (iv) Chesterfield, Derbyshire UK.

The Phoney War

We don't need to know what your medico said
So why do you feel you need tell us?
And maybe you think that your exploits in bed
Will make us all rampantly jealous.
We don't care at all if you're left on your own
Or engulfed by a passionate marriage,
We'd so much prefer if you'd turn off your phone
And let us enjoy our quiet carriage.

Book Club

Robert Galbraith is the author of *The Cuckoo's Calling* – or rather, that is the nom de plume of JK Rowling in this, her second venture into adult fiction. This is a contemporary crime fiction story set in London.

Cormoran Strike is a former soldier who lost a leg in Afghanistan who is attempting to support himself as a private investigator. Down on his luck, he is forced to sleep in his office – a fact he tries (not successfully) to hide from the temporary (very helpful) office help he has hired and whom he can't afford.

Then fortune intervenes. He is hired by the brother of a well-known model who has fallen to her death from her high-rise apartment in what the authorities are sure was a suicide. But the brother wants Strike to prove it was a murder. He has come to Strike because his brother, who was tragically killed as a lad, was a friend of Strike's. All three of these siblings were adopted; the beautiful sister is of African ethnicity.

Perhaps unusually in contemporary crime novels, the detective actually detects. Rather than having facts emerging by chance, the writer has her protagonist, through dint of his research, assembling information (which is shared with the reader) and leads to a conclusion.

I enjoyed this book far more than JK's *A Casual Vacancy* which I found rather forced and not populated by empathetic characters.

The media is suggesting that there will be a second Cormoran Strike novel published later this year.

Ian Pullar

Shakespeare Saved My Life: Ten Years in Solitary with the Bard by Laura Bates is a most remarkable book. Dr Bates is an Associate Professor at Indiana University where she is a Shakespeare specialist. As an extra-curricular activity, she obtained permission to work with the maximum security prisoners in Indiana Federal Prison on the study of Shakespeare.

One of the prisoners was Larry Newton who was convicted of murder at the age of 17 and sentenced to life in prison with no possibility of parole. When Dr Bates first met him, he had spent ten years in solitary confinement. He had had a very disrupted education with only intermittent attendance at school which he had finally left during Grade 5.

Yet Newton developed the most profound understanding of Shakespeare, largely because he had a clearer understanding of the situations of Shakespeare's characters than Bates's mainstream middle-class students. For example, Newton could empathise with the imprisonment of Richard II, with the incitement to murder of Macbeth, of the jealous rage of Othello egged on by Iago and with the vacillation of Hamlet. After working with Bates, Newton claimed that Shakespeare had saved his life twice; by persuading him not to suicide and by preventing him from descending into insanity.

Bates held her sessions sitting on a stool in a room with a group of prisoners who had all been brought in in chains and then locked in solitary cells. But between them these prisoners not only developed an understanding of and love for the plays, they devised play scripts and text books for further teaching. It is all quite incredible.

Ian Pullar

Credits

My thanks are once again due to Helen and Jean; to the contributors; to Olga Kakourakis who printed it; to Ann Liekens (DNRM), Rebecca Wall (SunWater) and Jennifer Lawrence (DEWS) who made it available to departmental staff; and to Jon Henry who placed it on our website – www.waterysauces.org.au.

Composer André Tchaikowsky had always had an ambition to appear in a Royal Shakespeare Company production but, alas, his ambition remained unfulfilled. So in his 1979 will, he left his head to the RSC to be used in a future production as Yorick. After his death, his head was surgically removed and after treatment placed in the RSC Properties Room. There was a singular lack of keenness to display the skull, but in the 2008 production of *Hamlet* David Tennant secretly used it. Ambition achieved!

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