



WATERY SAUCES OLDIES and BOLDIES

Newsletter No 83

July 2017

NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

33rd Annual General Meeting

Only 14 members (and one spouse) attended our 33rd Annual General Meeting on Thursday 27 April at the Victory Hotel

Both our co-patrons had been invited. Nicole Hollows was on leave but she was ably represented by Colin Bendall, Acting CEO. He delivered an interesting address on SunWater activities which is summarised (by Peter Jones) on page 9 of this Newsletter.

Paul Simshauser of DEWS was unfortunately called away at the last minute, leaving no time to arrange a substitute speaker.

Elections were held for an incoming committee. As Mike Merrin is planning to leave Brisbane, he considered it impractical to continue as President. Peter Gilbey, formerly Vice-President was elected in his place. The new Vice-President, elected from the floor is Daryl Brigden, while Mike automatically becomes Past President. Peter Jones, who had been a very conscientious Secretary since 2010, stood down and was replaced by Rolf Rose. The vacancy created by Rolf's "promotion" was filled by Russ Robson. We welcome newcomers Daryl and Russ to the committee. Brief biographies of them both can be found in this Newsletter. Treasurer Gary Corbett and Committee member Bruce Pearce were re-elected.

These changes mean that Geoff Eades (former Past President) and Peter Jones have left the committee after many years of service. We thank them very much for their contributions.

Daryl Brigden – Vice President

When Daryl joined the IWSC in 1965 he was assigned to the Civil Engineering Materials Testing Laboratory and became involved in a broad range of materials testing activities throughout the state. These activities included site investigation, design testing, construction quality control testing, sedimentation analyses and geotechnical instrumentation, fabrication and installation.

In 1979, he moved to the Burdekin Irrigation Area and was involved in the reconstruction of Clare Weir. At Clare, he conducted quality control testing, placement of concrete and general construction supervision.

In 1980 he moved to the central Brisbane laboratory and took on the responsibilities of second in charge of the Materials Testing Group throughout the state.

He was appointed to the position of Principal Materials Officer in 1984 with responsibility for the operation of the Civil Engineering Laboratories, including the central Materials Laboratory, Site Laboratories on projects and a Hydraulic Model Testing Laboratory.

continued overleaf

From the Editor's Chair

I'm feeling a little Tennysonian. "Men may come and men may go, but I go on for ever" (The Brook. 1855).

All the other members of the Committee are in their first or second year of office, whereas I

But it's wonderful that we have volunteers to take on these roles and the Association embraces renewal. The aim of the Association has always been to espouse camaraderie and participation. I am offering an extra opportunity for participation in our activities on page 10 and would love to hear from you. You will notice in this edition a dearth of news of members and I, and other members, would love more snippets. Further accounts of "the good old days" would also be treasured.

Until next time, au reservoir.

Ian Pullar, Editor

Program for next year

The incoming Committee has settled on the following program for the next year.

- 22 June mid-year luncheon (passed)
- 20 July Back to Bribie
- 10 August Golf Day at Keperra
- September-October (to be advised) technical talk
- 16 November Christmas Luncheon
- 22 February Social Lunch
- 26 April AGM

Daryl Brigden continued

The central laboratories were operated on a commercial “fee for service” basis which provided some interesting challenges for a government entity in those early days! In this role he developed specialist skills in management of materials testing, hydraulic modelling, geotechnical instrumentation and civil engineering construction.

Daryl's extensive experience and expertise in the geotechnical field was recognised in 1984 when he was appointed as an Assessor to advise the Mechanical Registration Advisory Committee of the National Association of Testing Authorities Australia.

In 2000 Daryl was appointed to the position of Project Manager, Minor Works Construction with responsibility for a commercial construction group primarily engaged in water infrastructure asset refurbishment and renewals. In 2002 the position was designated Manager Water Supply Services Projects South and the role expanded to include responsibility for a group engaged on water infrastructure planning.

Daryl assumed the role of Director Engineering Group South within the Engineering Services Management Team in 2003, being responsible for the direction and management of multidisciplinary project teams involved in the planning, design and construction of water storage and distribution facilities under contractual arrangements with clients. During this time Daryl also provided specialist consultancy services representing owners on Peer Review Panels associated with a number of projects delivered by Alliance Methodology. With specialist skills in the field of conventional concrete, mass concrete and Roller Compacted Concrete including mix design, laboratory testing and construction processes, Daryl has been involved in providing services in this field around Australia, S. E. Asia and in Jordan in the Middle East. Daryl “retired” from this role in 2013.

Now in semi-retirement, Daryl offers his specialist skills in a limited consultancy basis when time permits. Between enjoying the company of his family particularly his six grandchildren, travelling, fishing and just messing around on boats and beaches there is not much time left for “insultancy services”.

Russ Robson - Committee Member

Russ commenced as a Cadet Water Advisor in the Farm Advisory Service of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission in March 1967. Fellow appointees were Warren Hutton and Ian Bell, this cohort being the first appointees within a newly established formal cadetship structure for the FAS.

Russ was initially posted to the Farm Advisory group in Rivers and Streams Branch in Brisbane.

After nine months based in Brisbane, which included three months in Roma office assisting Tony Bucknell with stock water supply investigations on Brigalow Development blocks in the Arcadia Valley, Russ transferred to the then very small Toowoomba office of the Commission. While this was intended to be a 2–3 year posting followed by a shift to Emerald,

it was 30 years before he left Toowoomba.

Working from a base within the advisory service, from the early 1970s Russ was engaged in a range of surface water development, allocation, regulation and project operation activities in the South West. This included development and regulatory aspects of burgeoning water harvesting development along the Condamine River, its North Branch and tributaries, and overland flow development across the Darling Downs floodplains. It extended to a close relationship with Local Governments that operated parallel levee bank and drainage regulation, ultimately leading to involvement with River Improvement Trusts on the Downs.

Following an early 1990s part time engagement as Executive Officer to the Murray-Darling Basin Coordinating Committee, and extended periods in the mid-1990s relieving as District Officer in Roma and Operations Manager at St George, he returned to Brisbane in 1998 to take up a position as a Principal Project Officer in the Water and Catchment group.

Within a broader role of supporting Regions in water licensing activities, Russ was substantially involved in Native Title aspects of water and watercourses. He also was engaged in dealing with appeals to the Land Court and Supreme Court concerning water licence decisions and litigation involving watercourses.

Russ was seconded to the Water Reform Unit to assist in the development of the water licensing, watercourse, moratorium and related enforcement provisions of the Water Act 2000. This progressed to engagement in the establishment and administration of moratoriums in the Queensland sector of the Murray Darling Basin, which then extended to further moratoriums as Water Planning expanded across the State and to groundwater.

At the same time Russ, with Barry Lawson and Peter Hill, developed and provided training to Regional staff for the commencement of the water licensing provisions of the new Act and new world eventuating from bringing water ‘works’ into the then Integrated Planning Act jurisdiction.

While dealing with the implementation of the new Water Act, Russ was also involved with issues relating to Sunwater’s separation from the Department, including ‘orphan assets’. This involvement included the continuing administration of SunWater’s Interim Resource Operations Licences and ultimately the development of Resource Operations Licences as various Water Resource Plans came to fruition.

Russ was appointed Director, Water Management in the Water Allocation and Management group of the Department in 2008. Russ commenced pre-retirement leave at the end of 2010 by which time a reorganisation had seen the Water Management unit relocated to the Water Planning group. He retired from service in early 2012, only weeks before completing 45 years service.

Mid-Year Luncheon

COTAH was the usual pleasant setting for the mid-year luncheon on 22 June. The 29 attendees enjoyed the setting, the food, the company and the entertainment.



Helen Pullar, Geoff Eades, Francoise van der Heide, Daryl Brigden, Hein van der Heide, Ian Pullar and Peter Borrows getting ready for lunch.

The main entertainment was provided by our two guest speakers – Leith Bouly, Chair of the SunWater Board and Richard Priman, representing DEWS.

Leith Bouly grew up in the bush near Roma on the Muckadilla Ck. After university in Armidale and a number of years working with indigenous people in central Australia she settled back in Qld at Dirranbandi in the lower Balonne floodplain – just as the water wars were beginning, at least in Qld. By necessity Leith became a strong advocate for water planning and the environment and rural communities. She has been privileged to serve in many roles at local state and national levels and was recognised in the Australian Financial Review 100 women of influence awards in 2016 winning the local and regional category for contribution to the water sector.

Leith is currently chairman of SunWater, board member of Murrumbidgee Irrigation, Isis central sugar mill and QRAA. In addition she runs leadership programs for the Peter Cullen Trust for mid career leaders in the water sector. A summary of Leith's talk (by Terry Loos) is also on this page.

Richard provided an illuminating talk about studies carried out on whether Callide Dam had caused or contributed to the flooding of the township of Jambin during Cyclone Marcia. The conclusion was that Jambin was flooded well before there were any releases from Callide Dam and the impact of the dam was minimal. His talk has been posted on our website – “Presentations” on our home page.

Further “entertainment” was provided by Terry Loos with a more diabolical set of Trivia questions than usual.

The lucky door prize was converted into a ‘heads or tails’ game of chance and after a series of head, head, head, tail, head, head we found Terry Loos the only one left standing with his hands on his head.

His prize was a bottle of NZ Wither Hills pinot gris. The second bottle was presented to Leith to thank her for coming.

Flushed with the pleasure of actually winning something, Terry jauntily boarded a Translink bus at Southbank – only to be told by the driver that he couldn't bring a bottle of wine on board.

This was notwithstanding that it was clearly unopened. The compromise was that he could hide it by wrapping it in the jumper he was carrying.

Subsequent checking with Translink found that there is no regulation against carrying unopened bottles of alcohol on board a bus, however Terry was advised that individual bus drivers have been known to be ultra cautious about on-board consumption of food or drink and sometimes put their own interpretations on the rule against that.



Leith Bouly

Leith noted that some of the ‘golden oldies’ water resource developers in the audience may remember her from the 1980s and 90s as a vocal opponent of the construction of dams and irrigation schemes where they were clearly uneconomic and unsustainable. So, it may seem strange to see her as Chair of the Sunwater Board. However, a lot of water has passed over the spillway since then and today she is reconciled with the current approaches to water resource development and management.

Water is no longer a topical issue and this is due in no small part to the fact that now have a mature water industry, and, broadly speaking, things are going well. Water today is bought and sold on credible markets in accordance with water resource plans that statutorily require the take of water to be sustainable. Australia's big city water supplies now show great resilience and a high level of water use efficiency is now common practice in urban centres. Irrigation agriculture in the Murray-Darling Basin has never been more successful. There has been a consolidation of irrigation based agricultural businesses, even to the point that greenfields irrigation schemes are opening up on the Murrumbidgee.

Unfortunately in Northern Australia the myths continue to be perpetuated. The limitations of the extremes of climate and environment have yet to be properly recognised.

The needs that remain to be met by the water industry can be summarised in terms of three ‘C’s and one ‘E’:

Firstly ‘Customers’. Water Authorities need to better recognise their customers and their needs.

Secondly ‘Communities’. They need to be better educated about the factors influencing their lives. Many of the disaffected communities in the MDB conveniently blame the water reform process for their problems when in fact it is broader economic circumstances that are adversely affecting their businesses. Water Authorities also need to better explain to communities how dams work, particularly in relation to flood events. The community education process in northern Australia needs to be completely different from the one needed for southern Australia.

Concluded overleaf

The third ‘C’ is Capital. It has got to a point now where no-one can afford to build a dam. New innovative funding approaches are needed if there is to be greater investment in water infrastructure.

Finally ‘E’ for energy. The nexus between water and energy is now very strong. The energy inefficiency of water schemes is now a major burden on their viability. The Bundaberg scheme is a particular example. Sunwater would be open to considering a joint approach with a private sector developer to develop a

solar farm to power the irrigation scheme and for other energy uses.

Leith was questioned about the extent to which Sunwater would adopt climate-sensitive dam management regimes – with flood management as a key consideration. Implicit in this would be a lower dam operating level and so a sacrifice of yield. She pointed out that Sunwater is facing a dam safety upgrade bill of around \$1 billion over the next 6-7 years. Where’s the money coming from?

Vale Gordon Reginald Mobbs Mullen 1927 – 2017

Prior to commencing work with IWSC at the Rocklea Workshops in 1963, Gordon (otherwise known as GRMM for short) had started his working life in 1944 as an apprentice ground engineer with Aircrafts Pty Ltd at Archerfield Aerodrome working on Cheetah radial engines for RAAF Avro Anson aircraft. In 1949 Gordon moved on to work as a ground engineer for QANTAS until 1952 when there was a slump in the aircraft industry. Gordon then moved to a temporary job with Wilson Metal Company at Norman Park where his expertise and loyalty were soon recognised resulting in his “temporary” job lasting until 1963.

Not long after commencing at the IWSC Rocklea Workshops as a Fitters Assistant, Gordon’s talents were once again recognised and he was approached to join the then fledgling Soils and Concrete Laboratory as a Trainee Soils Tester. The laboratory was at that time operating out of the old wartime butcher’s shop for the American army camp while a new structure was being built a little further up Medway Street, the butcher shop being eminently suitable as it had large metal bench tops and a cold room that provided rudimentary temperature controlled conditions! Gordon went on to study part time at the then QIT and graduated as a Technical Assistant in 1972. Gordon became an integral part of the laboratory team in those formative days and, as was his wont, played a very important role as a Mentor and Trainer for junior staff. Gordon’s meticulous attention to detail and his unquestioned loyalty meant that he played a pivotal role in the establishment and development of the “new” laboratory service.

Gordon retired in September 1988 but his input was sorely missed such that he was approached in mid 1989 to return to the Laboratory to assist in the training of junior personnel and to establish and conduct an annual Practical Course for field laboratory personnel. Always willing to help, Gordon returned and excelled in this role until his second retirement in 1992.

Gordon married Margaret Bremmer on 14 December 1968 and the happy couple went on to have four children Shayne, Christina, Annette and Ian. Tragically Gordon and Margaret lost their eldest son Shayne, then aged 19 years, to cancer in 1991. Shayne’s passing hit the family very hard but with the strong love shared by the family they coped with their sad loss and moved on.

Outside of work Gordon pursued his passion for aircraft, engines, music and helping others through many organisations such as the Red Cross, Treasurer of his Church club, Member of numerous Church Choirs, Secretary of the South Queensland Midget Speed Car Club, Block and Area Coordinator Neighbourhood Watch and numerous other community groups. Gordon believed in service to others and was always content to be in the background, never seeking recognition for his efforts. His efforts were recognised, however, by members of the community and in 2003 Gordon was awarded the Centenary Medal for Distinguished Community Service from the Queen via the Commonwealth Government.

Doris Robinson, (nee McKean), widow of Stuart (Stu) Robinson, late of Aspley, passed away peacefully, on 1 March, 2017, aged 91.

Tony Nieuwenhuis passed away at the age of 97 in Atherton on 5 April. Tony will be more remembered by those who worked in the northern areas of the state. He worked for years for IWSC in Tinaroo and the Burdekin, mainly in fabrication and welding.

The funeral for **Joan Mary Forbes Ross**, widow of Stan Ross, late of Carseldine was held on 31 May. She was aged 86.

Cecilia Martha Redmond, widow of Len Redmond, late of Salisbury, passed away on 12 June, aged 88. Cec was herself a former employee of IWSC. She and Len met and married in Theodore.

Free at Last

Robert Ellis

Toowoomba 12th May, 2017 at 12 noon in the BBQ area, DNRN, Toowoomba.

The invitation stated:

'Few men of action have been able to make a graceful exit at the appropriate time.' *Not so our valued friend and colleague David Free.* Over 40 years of groundwater and geological knowledge and expertise is about to be lost from the department and indeed the wider community. The GIAT team prepares for David's exit with sadness along with celebration of his well-earned retirement.

Former Departmental colleagues who attended (not an exhaustive list) were John Hillier, Bruce Pearce, Robert Ellis, Leon Leach, Linda Foster, Steve Flook, Dennis Russell, Andrew Sloman, Jim Mylne, Peter Evans, Iain Hair, Andrew Moser, Frank van Schagen and many others from the groundwater gang. David's wife Lynn and daughter Megan were also present.

After a few warm up drinks and idle chat, an ample BBQ was provided by the locals. The formalities commenced with Ross Carruthers as MC. Ross said he was going to tell the story of Dave's career.

David said "*thanks but no thanks*, if anyone is going to speak about me it will be me." David gave details of some of his early pre-departmental life, and then went into the things he had done during his long groundwater career. He mentioned many of the former Groundwater staff who are no longer with us today. He said he had made some bad decisions, but overall he was proud of his achievements, and of those who worked with and for him.

Several people gave brief talks about their experiences with David, and mentioned how many of the things we all did in the 'old days' wouldn't be allowed under all the new safety laws.

Presentations of farewell gifts and cards followed. Many went on to Fitzy's Hotel for a quiet ale or two. Coincidentally, Fitzy's is just along from where the old IWSC offices once existed.

Thanks very much to the people at DNRN Toowoomba for making this an excellent send off for David. In just a few days David and Lynn were starting a cruise around the world, and coincidentally Bruce and Jenny Pearce will be on it too.



David Free with the cane and warning bell presented to him to help him in retirement.

More Adventures of Young Ian

Who remembers the heady days of the late 1980s when Strategic Planning came to the Water Resources Commission? This was an era of change with a new Commissioner (Tom Fenwick) and a new management team. Observing the Socratic adage, "The unexamined life is not worth living", they implemented a number of ongoing review processes.

Staff were introduced to the "New Age Thinking" of Louis Theis, for which I have particular reason to be grateful. Once, following his dictum, I became in my own mind a non-smoker who smoked instead of a smoker trying to kick the habit, quitting was relatively easy.

New staff members, Princess Anne (Anne Epstein) and Lady Di (Dianne Wallace) were heavily involved in the new approach. Dianne, in particular was given the carriage of Strategic Planning under the guidance of Peter Noonan. She told the Directors that she wanted them to think about what their goals and objectives were. Some said they didn't have time for that, they were too busy getting on with the job!

Despite this, each Branch was required to hold Strategic Planning workshops using predominantly their own staff but with outsiders to provide input and to perform the "honest broker" role. Because Project Planning was a user of information from the data collection branches and the provider of information to the "doing" branches of Design and Construction, it was usual for someone from Planning to be recruited to other Branch's workshops. And so it was that I found myself at a number of venues including Villa Maria convent and the Sunshine Coast.

Some participants found the process gruelling and frustrating. I well remember Di Wallace writing contributions from participants on the ubiquitous butcher's paper, "Customers, slash, clients, slash, stakeholders ..." and the ever-cynical Ian 'Charlie' Chalmers added "slash wrists".

Despite a certain degree of cynicism, each Branch did produce its own Strategic Plan, complete with Vision, Mission Statement, Goals and Strategies and was undoubtedly better for it.

And then came the wonderful Value Engineering (which morphed into Value Management) in which I had the good fortune to succeed David Gaff as Facilitator. But that's another story.



"When the boss said, 'Why did you do that?', I replied, 'If you approve, it's called initiative; if you don't approve, it's called stupidity.'"

Tall Tailor Tales

Gary Corbett

Continued from Newsletter 82

Fish Smoking

One of the rituals on each trip is that of the smoking of freshly caught fish, specifically tailor and dart, the latter of which is the most delicious and for which you would die. In true hunter-gatherer fashion, the fish-smoker (as with 'the-loo' which has the view) is home-made and looks that way, with its various components having been salvaged from discarded cooking pots and the like. What used to irk me a little was that the smoker itself cost very little to make, but each time you used it you burnt up hickory shavings that can cost up to \$10 for 100g, so one year I decided that I was never going to pay \$100/kg for smoking sawdust ever again. So I eventually tracked down a company in Victoria which made hickory paddle-pop sticks out of food-grade hickory and sold the hickory shavings for \$8/kg. I ended up buying quite a few kilograms, so the group has now been advised that they have to live and fish out to 2100 in order to use up all the hickory stocks.

Tailor-Taggers vs Tailor-Takers

One of the funniest things I have ever seen was at Waddy Point one year back in the 80s, at a time when DPI was conducting research into the migration of tailor up the east coast, with Indian Head and Waddy Point having long been recognised as areas of great spawning significance to the species. DPI had engaged the assistance of volunteers from fishing clubs to take part in the tagging process, which involved those fish caught by the volunteers being fitted with an identifying tag. The idea was that the recreational fishing community would report back to the DPI where and when any tagged fish were caught, so that migration patterns would start to emerge up and down the east coast of Australia. So on the beach one night, we had the tailor-taggers down one end of the beach and our group of tailor-takers down the other. It does not take too much imagination to work out what happened as the tailor were really on the bite that night. We started to bring in tailor which had been tagged possibly less than 20 minutes earlier and at a spot less than 200 metres from where they were caught. One of the brighter members in the group asked what we should do, to which he was told by the others that he should take it to the DPI further down the beach and report it – which he dutifully did (tongue-in-cheek), much to everyone's amusement!

The Bankcard Incident

Another story involves a BankCard around the time they were first introduced. A member of the group had had a BankCard issued only days before we went to Fraser, and he was like a kid with a new toy having purchased any number of items. One day during the happy hour he chose to lecture the rest of the group about the benefits and virtues of this cashless society we were now entering and was boasting that

he could now get anything on BankCard – anything! Seeing a possible opportunity, another one of the group challenged him that he knew of one thing that he couldn't possibly get on BankCard – 'a tailor'! Not to be outsmarted, this bloke threw caution to the wind and proceeded to punch holes in either end of his prized new Bankcard; thread it onto his line just above the rig and the bait; and then proceed down the beach to prove the pundits wrong – which he did on his very first cast – and had the last laugh!

Dingoes

Although there are dingoes around, over the years we have never felt threatened by them, at least not by the ones we have seen. It is the case though, that they do roam through the camp after everyone goes to bed. One night a few years ago I lost the inners out of one of a pair of ugg-boots taken from



A dingo inspecting the camp

outside my tent; and Gilbo also had a packet of bacon taken out of what was considered to be a well secured esky

– even though the culprit was never found, the remnants of the packet were – and it was concluded that it was a female of the species, as it had put the lid down when it was finished!

The Japs

Over the years we have made our own unique contribution to the island's folklore but one story stands out for me from the rest. The story starts in Mundubbera just before Anzac Day 1998, where I was conducting a meeting with a cross section of water user representatives from the Boyne scheme. As part of the get-to-know-you process with the new committee, I disclosed that I travelled to Fraser around August each year with a group chasing tailor. One of the Committee members who was also an ex-Shire Clerk and on the Anzac Day Committee for the town as well, said, "Of course you know that the Japs landed there, don't you?" to which I replied "No." He then went on to say that not only did they land there, but "they also shot two blacks!" This, coming from this gentleman who was well respected in the local community, made me think that there had to be some degree of truth in it and that it was not another one of those tall-but-true fishing stories. He maintained that he had it on good authority that this had actually happened but that you wouldn't find it recorded anywhere for some reason. I have trotted this story out on many occasions and in many circles and trot it out here yet again, in the hope that someone else out there may also have heard of it as well.

Again many thanks, Gary, for this entertaining contribution - Ed.

Around the World in 104 Days

Part 2

Bruce Pearce

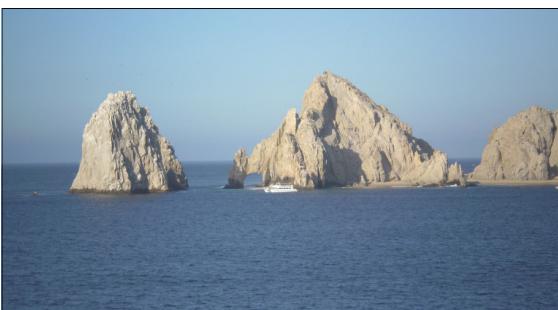
In the early hours of day 25 *Dawn Princess* entered Californian waters, switching heavy fuel oil to marine diesel because of California's strict environmental laws. We passed underneath the iconic Golden Gate Bridge and by Alcatraz Island before berthing.

Many picture perfect moments can be found in this "City by the Bay" with its hilly streets, famous bridges and historic cable cars. Fisherman's Wharf, once home to San Francisco's fishing fleet now hosts seafood vendors, souvenir shops and tourist attractions such as the Wax Museum, vintage sea craft from World War II, and a historic maritime park.

We crossed Golden Gate Bridge to Muir Woods, a National Park filled with towering redwood trees, the largest of which had girths of the order of two metres. A mandatory clam chowder served in a loaf of bread rounded off the day.

For the next three days *Dawn Princess* maintained a south-easterly course down the west coast of America where she crossed over the border into Mexican waters and maintained a south-easterly course down the west coast of America – very pleasant sailing.

We anchored in the Bahia San Lucas and used tenders to go to shore at Cabo San Lucas. Cabo San Lucas (population 41 000) is located on the southern tip of the Baja California Peninsula and calmly watches the cool Pacific merge with the Sea of Cortes. Originally a safe haven for pirates, Cabo has grown into a magnificent resort destination. It has crystal clear waters, white sandy beaches and a dry welcoming climate. A particular feature is the spectacular arched rocks of Los Arcos



After leaving Cabo San Lucas, *Dawn Princess* set a south-easterly course towards Acapulco, which has a population of approximately 721 000 people and is situated in Mexico's southern region. The city hugs Acapulco Bay and is nestled between the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Sierra Madre mountains on the other. It is the closest Pacific port to the capital, Mexico City. With its rugged headlands and picture-perfect sunsets, Acapulco's blue waters welcome an average of 3.5 million pleasure-seekers each year. The city proudly claims some of the most beautiful white sand beaches in the world of which there are almost 40. It also offers an array of aquatic activities and the La Quebrada cliff divers who are world renowned.



The sights include its famous beaches and luxury resorts, including hotels built in the shape of Aztec pyramids and Mayan Temples, mansions often owned by Hollywood movie stars and the world famous La Quebrada where daredevil cliff divers risk their lives as they leap from the top of 130 foot rock formations into deep chasms below.

Next day, *Dawn Princess* was manoeuvred to a small pier in shallow water only about 50 metres from the beach at low tide at Huatulco, located along the Pacific coast of the state of Oaxaca in the south-eastern part of Mexico. It is home to 18 miles of cove studded coastline forming nine beautiful bays. It has a backdrop of jagged Sierra Madre del Sur peaks and is a tropical Eden with crystalline waters, coral reefs and uncrowded beaches.

Our tour included Mexico's newest Pacific resort near Chahue Bay, panoramic views of Bahias de Hauataco and La Crucesta, a more traditional Mexican town.

Dawn Princess set sail in mid-afternoon for the Panama Canal past the west coast of Honduras and Costa Rica. We had some excitement when the ship suddenly went into reverse and shuddered. A fishing boat had been reported missing by a Mother vessel and the captain thought his crew had spotted it. The boat was in trouble with broken down engines, had had a small fire on board and the crew were waving frantically when spotted. One of our ship's tenders was lowered and a crew despatched with provisions, torches and other emergency gear for the stricken crew who declined an offer to be taken to Panama. Our captain advised that we would have to put the pedal to the metal for us to make it in time for our booked passage through the Panama Canal.

On day 34 we reached the Panama Canal.

In 1534, Charles I of Spain ordered the first survey of a proposed canal route through the Isthmus of Panama. More than three centuries passed before the first construction was started. The French laboured 20 years, beginning in 1880, but diseases and financial and engineering problems defeated them. In May 1904, the United States purchased the French Canal Company rights and properties for \$40 million and began construction. The huge project was completed in 1914 at a cost of approximately \$387 million. Until recently the longest ship to transit was the *San Juan Prospector*, an ore-bulk-oil carrier that is 973 feet long and has a beam of 106 feet. The total cost for *Dawn Princess* to navigate the Canal was approximately \$270 000 US. Tolls are levied on a net tonnage basis under a special Panama Canal measuring system. The average toll for ocean-going commercial vessels is approximately \$35 000.

Around the World in 104 Days - continued

We were up at 5.30 am to witness the entry to the Canal at the first set of locks, known as Miraflores. We travelled for a short passage and made our second ascent to higher ground using the Pedro Miguel locks. The operating systems and the actual gates on the locks are all still the originals that are now over 100 years old. The locomotive system used to guide the ship through the locks was amazing. Our ship had less than a metre to spare on each side, yet progressed very smoothly through the locks with the locomotives beside the ship keeping it straight in the Canal. The Canal was very busy with lots of merchant ships passing through. Once we were clear of the first two sets of locks we proceeded through the Canal with the help of the Panama pilot, passing through Gatun Lake and then through the Gatun locks in her descent into the Atlantic Ocean. The whole passage took about 8 hours. We then set sail on a course towards Cartagena, Colombia in South America.



Panama
Canal with
locomo-
tives

On her approach to Cartagena, *Dawn Princess* passed through a narrow channel called "Bocachica" where on our port side we passed Fuerte San Fernando and on the other side Fuerte San Jose, before manoeuvring to the berth. Cartagena's fortress walls, quaint narrow streets and balconied houses are all vivid reminders of Spain's hold on the city and throughout the Caribbean and South America. This is the land of El Dorado and flamboyant adventurers in search of the ever elusive gold. Cartagena's well-constructed fortifications defended its borders against seafaring pirates whose attacks lasted for more than 200 years. Today this modern and bustling city, seaport and commercial centre still boasts much of its original colonial architecture.

Our tour for the day visited the primary historical sites in the most impenetrable city of the Spanish

Main, a preferred target until the construction of an impressive fortress was completed. We visited the Fort of San Felipe de Barajas, a 17th century showcase of Spanish military engineering, passed through Simon Bolivar Square, visited the Inquisition Palace before continuing on to the Church of San Pedro Claver, the patron saint of slaves.

During this tour there was one very noticeable difference from what we had experienced on our previous tours. The whole tour route was guarded by military personnel armed with machine guns at the ready, each soldier spaced at about 200 metre intervals. A number of them were located on the old stone walls surrounding the route, looking down on us. In addition, in Simon Bolivar Square wandering around amongst the crowd of tourists were what were known as "Tourist Police" who were also armed with machine guns, while we admired the beautiful Spanish architecture that surrounded us.

The historic Old City of Cartagena (population 1 million) is completely surrounded by a 12 foot high stone wall which took 194 years to build. Along the ramparts, 16 of the original 23 guard towers still stand. These small forts, located at strategic points along the wall, served as lookouts and gunneries to protect the city from siege. This is where some of the soldiers were stationed on our tour. The Old City contains stunningly beautiful examples of Spanish colonial architecture. Some buildings are in their original condition, others having been meticulously restored. Notable features include barrel tile roofs, bay windows and second floor balconies. Construction on Fort San Felipe began in 1536 and lasted 121 years. The result is considered to be the most outstanding feat of Spanish military engineering in South America.

In the afternoon *Dawn Princess* slipped her mooring lines and proceeded with an armed escort out of the harbour setting a course for Aruba and our next port of call, Oranjestad. The Captain advised us that while we were ashore there had been a major drug bust on the ship moored in front of ours. This apparently was a common occurrence in Columbia.

Aruba is one of the most beautiful islands in the southern Caribbean. It is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and is located some 20 miles off the coast of Venezuela. It is the smallest of three islands which also include Curacao and Bonaire. (the ABC Islands). These islands were discovered in 1500 by the Spanish and inhabited by Spanish adventurers until they were acquired by the Dutch in 1634. Aruba's Dutch influence lazily lingers on in the island's official language and the languidly turning arms of white-washed windmills. *To be continued*



Answers to Terry's Trivia (page 11)

1. (i) vodka, etc
2. (iii) The Liffey
3. (i) Glenfiddich
4. (v) 100 years. (if opened then 5 years)
5. (iii) It gives off excess heat
6. (ii) Dirk Hartog
7. (ii) 29
8. (iii) The Simpsons
9. (v) USA-Canada.

Address by Colin Bendall

With our Co-Patron, Nicole Hollows away overseas, Colin Bendall, SunWater's Acting CEO joined us for the AGM and gave an outline of current Sunwater activities and challenges ahead.

Organisational Change

During the last year, Nicole Hollows took up her appointment as CEO following the retirement of Peter Boettcher. She brings a perspective from the private sector to the position.

The year also saw the appointment of a new Board of Directors and changes in the Senior Management of the organisation. A reorganisation was undertaken to bring all operational areas back together as a single entity (the arrangements put in place in 2012 were to meet the Newman Government's asset sales objective).

SunWater has achieved a significant gender balance in both its Board (with 60% female representation) and at the executive level (50%)

Much work has been done in developing an organisational culture to take the organisation forward.

Activities/Successes of the last 12 months

Safety

There is a renewed focus on safety. The 2015/16 year saw recordable injury frequency rate drop from 4.18 the previous year to 1.37. There are improved mechanisms for incident reporting including use of new technology in smartphone apps and the establishment of a Safety, Health and Environment Committee.

Callide Dam

Recommendations of the Inspector-General, Emergency Management's review of the impact of the automatic opening of the gates are being implemented. SunWater has established a 24/7 operational centre for improved monitoring of weather and dam height. Additional flood modelling and a downstream early warning system are now in place. The system is fully activated when an extreme weather event is expected.

Kinchant Dam/Eton Area

Cyclone Debbie produced some flooding in the Eton area with some public concern that Kinchant was a major contributor. Studies indicate that Kinchant contributed only 2% of the flooding. An independent review is being undertaken by the Government Chief Scientist with his report expected towards mid-year.

Community Education/Media

A not uncommon comment from the public/media is to operate dams at less than full supply level. While this may result in an increase in flood mitigation, it will also lower the reliability of supply.

Presentation of "facts" by the media is problematic. ABC radio Mackay ensured that their reports were factual and accurate, but commercial outlets were at best questionable. Social media poses another challenge as anything can be posted whether it has a basis in fact or not. The challenge is to get factual information out during times of crisis. SunWater continues to work with the Local Disaster Management Group to ensure that information about the water storages in the area and likely response to an extreme event is promptly given to the Group.

Challenges

Critical Water Levels

Almost 90% of the state was drought declared and some affected regions are experiencing unprecedented dry conditions.

A number of SunWater dams reached critical water supply levels which impacted on SunWater's ability to supply our medium priority customers, who are primarily irrigators. Medium priority water releases had to be temporarily cut for customers in the Upper Condamine (Leslie Dam), Boyne (Boondooma Dam) and Mary River Barrage.

A major learning for SunWater has been the importance of improved customer communication of critical water supply cut-offs. Leslie and Boondooma have a requirement to maintain high security for water supply to power stations and townships. There is a minimum cut-off for releases to ensure this critical supply can be met. The situation has arisen where the cut-off had been reached but irrigators still had unused water allocations.

Cyclone Debbie

SunWater activated its 24/7 Operations Control Centre for the first time for this event. It successfully managed the major event with new and improved modelling, forecasting and community early warnings. Up to 12 dams were spilling at the height of the event.

Local Management

Work is continuing on the transfer of distribution assets to local management arrangements. The Government has approved that four of the eight proposals for local management proceed - Emerald, Eton, St George and Theodore. All have accepted the transition proposal.

The other four under consideration, Bundaberg, Burdekin, Mareeba and the Mary currently have work being undertaken to demonstrate sustainability prior to a decision approving transfer to local management.

Dam Safety Improvement

Maintaining integrity of its infrastructure network has been the cornerstone of SunWater's capital investment program.

Current projects include:

Paradise Dam Primary Spillway Improvement (complete mid-2017)

Fairbairn Dam Spillway Safety Improvement (complete late-2018)

Burdekin Falls Dam Foundation Drainage Improvement (commenced April 2017)

Boondooma Dam Spillway Repairs Project (complete end-2017).

Rookwood Weir

SunWater and Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB) will be the joint owners of this infrastructure. The Federal Government has committed \$130 million to the project. The State, SunWater or GAWB have to match this commitment. The business case for the project is currently being developed by SunWater, GAWB and Building Queensland, assessing demand for the water including overseas proponents.

HEALTH and beauty

The Curse of Research

If you don't like #!%#! swearing, get over it. It can actually be good for you.

Richard Stephens, from Keele University, carried out research to investigate the persistence and power of swearing in human language. "Swear words," he said, "are powerful words. There are strong links between swearing and emotional arousal."

His research into pain involved people holding their hand in iced water until they could bear it no longer, while either repeating a swear word of their choice or another neutral word. The experiment showed that those who swore lasted longer and also had a higher heart rate. "This suggested the mechanism might be to do with the fight or flight response."

He also investigated how fast people could cycle and how strongly they could grip. In both cases the swearers did better.

One explanation is that swearing lessens pain and so improves cycle speed and grip. It is also possible that the word itself provides the power. "The interesting thing about swearing is it's not the semantics of the word that matters. There are other ways to say the meaning that swear words convey. It's the fact that it's taboo, we know it's taboo, but we are saying it anyway. Maybe by swearing we throw off our shackles and those everyday constraints and just go for it a bit more."

- from The Times



Exercise those Brain Cells

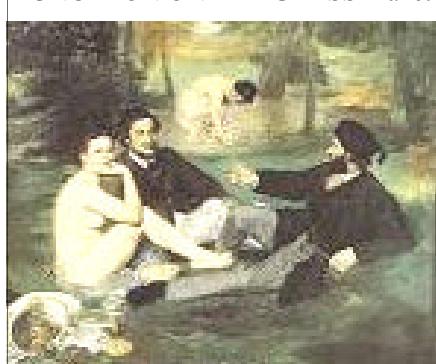
A cabinet maker gave his apprentice a piece of plywood 240 mm square and challenged him to cut it into four identical pieces that could be passed through a ring with an internal diameter of 50 mm. Can you do it and prove yourself smarter than the apprentice?



An Artful Competition

In previous editions of the Newsletter, I have published works of art with fanciful captions such as those below. In an attempt to foster greater participation in the contents of Newsletters, we are holding a competition. Entrants simply select a work of art – a painting, a sculpture, a tapestry (but preferably a fairly well known one) – and give it a caption. Then send the picture, its title, the name of the artist and the caption to me along with your name. I will then send them anonymously to a panel of independent judges who will select the winning entry. That competitor will receive the handsome prize of \$50 with the compliments of WRRA. There is no limit to the number of entries. The closing date for entries is 30 September.

LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS Manet



The women did everything they could think of to stop the men talking about cricket

BAYEUX TAPESTRY



"I spy with my little eye, something beginning with A."

Answer to last Issue's Teaser

Answer: Cindy is 90 metres behind Betty when Annie finishes. In the time Betty runs her remaining 200 metres, Cindy will fall a further 9 metres behind. So Betty will finish 99 metres ahead of her.

If Only

If only weeks had far more days:
And every day a few hours more:
Why then we'd have the means and ways
To finish each and every chore.
If only we weren't diffident,
I'm sure that we could all go far;
Things would be so different
if they were not the way they are.

A Week Reason

Why do weeks have seven days? The number is clearly purely arbitrary. The only times that are fixed are the day (the length of the earth's rotation on its axis) and the year (the rotation of the earth round the sun). The month (etymologically related to the moon) could have been made closer to the moon's rotation by having thirteen months, but that number has been fiddled. The Romans had ten months (as can be seen from the names of September, October, November and December until they stuck in July and August to honour a couple of Emperors).

So why seven days in a week? Once upon a time, the month was the smallest calendar unit of around 28 days to correspond with the moon's rotation. These were gradually grouped into units of four to ten days, mainly depending on the frequency of markets. The seven day week was adopted by the Babylonians whose scientists had identified seven 'planets' which they regarded as divine celestial bodies who guarded and influenced life.

The Hebrews adopted the Babylonian seven day week and enshrined it in the book of Genesis where God created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. They had no names for the days. The Egyptians named the days after their seven 'planets' which included the sun and the moon. The Romans assimilated the Egyptian system (they were brilliant at assimilation) and spread it throughout their conquered area. The Anglo-Saxons simply substituted the names of their own deities (Tuw, Woden, Thor and Freya) but retained the Sun, the Moon and Saturn.

So we blithely accept that each week has seven days with familiar names, without any thought that they are derived from myth, astronomy and astrology.

The Last Word

For the past ten years, the last word in the Oxford Dictionary was "zythum" – an ancient Egyptian malt beer. But that coveted position has been taken by "zyzzyva" – a genus of tropical weevil found in palm trees in South America. The word has been discovered, used by entomologist Thomas Lincoln Casey Jr., in a book first published in 1922.

So zyzzyva will be the final listing of 826,000 entries in the dictionary's collection and appears unlikely to be beaten. And "once it goes into the OED, it never comes out."

A Sign of the Times

Outside a gym in Kensington, London

FIT HAPPENS

Terry's Trivia

From the 2016 Christmas luncheon. Answers on page 8.

1. The ingredients of a Harvey Wallbanger are:
(i) Vodka, Galliano and orange juice; (ii) Dry gin; Campari, Sweet vermouth; (iii) Salt, Tequila, Cointreau; Lime Juice; (iv) Dry gin, Dry Vermouth; Orange bitters; (v) Peach juice, Champagne.
2. The major river that flows through Dublin, Ireland is: (i) The Condamine; (ii) The Boyne; (iii) The Liffey; (iv) The Clyde; (v) The Lagan.
3. The single malt whisky that sells the most around the world is: (i) Glenfiddich. (ii) The Glenlivet; (iii) Glenmorangie Original; (iv) Laphroaig; (v) Aberlour.
4. An unopened bottle of good scotch stays OK to drink for: (i) 10 years; (ii) 25 years; (iii) 50 years; (iv) 75 years; (v) 100 years. (if opened then 5 years)
5. Why does Rudolph the Reindeer have a red nose: (i) To match Santa's nose; (ii) Ancient myth; (iii) It gives off excess heat; (iv) A commercial fabrication.
6. 2016 is the 400th anniversary of the landing of which Dutch explorer in WA: (i) Vasco da Gama; (ii) Dirk Hartog; (iii) Willem Janszoon; (iv) Abel Tasman.
7. Great Grandad Sir Mick Jagger 72, is to become a father for the 8th time. His American ballerina girlfriend Melanie Hamrick is: (i) 19; (ii) 29; (iii) 39; (iv) 49.
8. Which US comedy show in 2000 foreshadowed a Trump Presidency: (i) Seinfeld; (ii) Friends; (iii) The Simpsons; (iv) Mash; (v) South Park; (vi) Cheers.
9. The longest international land boundary is between: (i) China-Mongolia; (ii) Chile-Argentina; (iii) USA-Mexico; (iv) Russia-Kazakhstan; (v) USA-Canada.



"When my wife is angry, she is a woman of small words."

"Don't you mean 'few' words?"

"No, small words .. with only four letters."

Book Club

Black Water Lilies by French author Michel Bussi (translated into English) is set in Giverny, where over the last 20 years of his life Claude Monet produced upwards of 200 paintings of water lilies. The local residents are outnumbered by endless streams of tourists who come to see Monet's garden and hordes of budding artists seeking inspiration.

When a body is found in the stream which Monet created to support his water lilies, a team of police arrive to investigate a murder which has clear parallels to a death that occurred many years ago.

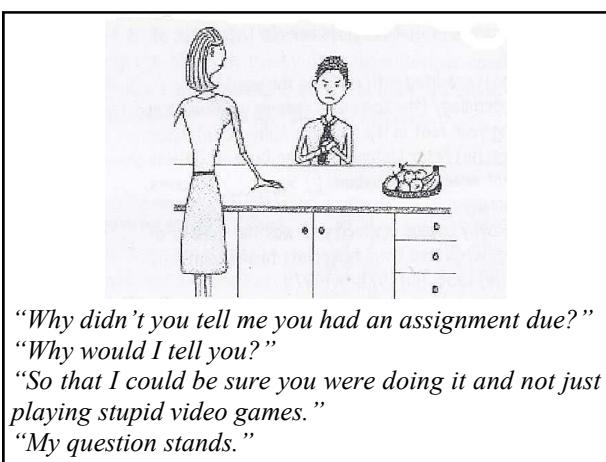
There are three women integral to the tale: a very old woman who lives in the old mill which was fed by Monet's stream, the beautiful village schoolteacher and an artistically gifted ten year old girl. The old lady, who can view much of the village from her eyrie at the top of the mill, tells much of the story.

Why was the man killed? Did it have something to do with the photographs of the passionate art collector with a number of women? Is there a connection with the rumoured painting of black water lilies hidden somewhere in the village? Will the mystery be solved through the leading detective's intuition or his deputy's methodical approach?

The well-drawn characters are brilliantly complemented by extremely intricate plotting. I was as baffled as the detectives by some of the revelations.

A very enjoyable read.

Ian Pullar



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Philippa Gregory is the author of a large number of large historical novels set during the reigns of the late Plantagenets and Tudors. I found her *Three Sisters*, *Three Queens* particularly rewarding.

The three queens are Katherine of Aragon, Mary Tudor and Margaret Tudor. The story of their interwoven lives is told by Margaret.

Katherine was sent from Spain at the age of 14 to marry Arthur, son and heir apparent of Henry VII of England. When Arthur died, she was left stranded in England for ten years as Ferdinand of Spain refused to pay her dowry. Eventually she was married to Henry VIII, but her failure to produce a male heir resulted in her divorce and further impoverishment.

Margaret Tudor, eldest daughter of Henry VII was sent to Scotland at the age of 12 as the future wife of King James IV to create peace between the two countries. The marriage took place when she reached child-bearing age at 14. A reasonable life was shattered when James was killed in battle with the English at Flodden. Margaret was left with an infant son, now king, and pregnant with a son who died in infancy. She became a pawn in struggles between the Scottish barons, the Scots and the English and the French who, because of the 'auld alliance' sent in a regent. With nowhere to turn, she married a man who turned out to be totally untrustworthy, so further difficulties were added to her lot as she tried to persuade the Pope to grant her an annulment.

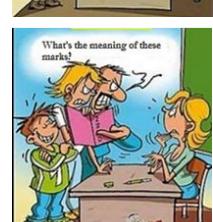
The third queen, Mary, was Henry VII's younger daughter who was married off to King Louis XII of France, a man old enough to be her father. When he died a year later, Mary married Charles Brandon without the king's permission. She was eventually forgiven and went on to lead a relatively quiet life. Her granddaughter, Lady Jane Grey later claimed the English throne, reigned for 6 days and was beheaded, aged 16, in 1553.

These were turbulent times, but the plight of young princesses is almost unimaginable with foreign lands, gender discrimination, internecine feuds and the pressure to produce heirs coupled with the perils of childbirth and infant mortality.

Ian Pullar



1957



2017