



# WATERY SAUCES OLDIES AND BOLDIES

Newsletter No 88

March 2019

NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

## Annual General Meeting

Members are cordially invited to attend our 35th Annual General Meeting on Thursday 2 May. The formal notice etc is included with this missive.

Traditionally this meeting has been held on the last Thursday of April but this year, because of complications with Easter and Anzac Day, we have moved the date to May. The venue will be the same as recent meetings of WRRRA – the Victory Hotel, 127 Edward Street.

Do come along for the usual meeting activities – reports and elections. Our co-patrons have been invited as usual for them, or their nominees, to grace us with a “State of the Nation” address.

As is customary, the meeting will be followed by a convivial lunch at the expense of the Association – this time in the congenial atmosphere of the Victory Beer Garden.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

## St Helena Tour

Also included in this missive is an invitation to participate in a walking tour of St Helena Island on Thursday 16 May. We are delighted to have engaged the services of “Old Boy” Dennis Howarth-Crewdson as our guide for this excursion.

To whet your appetite without, hopefully, stealing too much of Dennis’s thunder, here are some extracts from Wikipedia.

St Helena is a heritage listed island 4 kilometres east of the mouth of the Brisbane River in Moreton Bay. Originally used as a prison, it is now a national park. Local aborigines called the island Noogoon but it was renamed St Helena after an aboriginal named Napoleon was exiled there in 1827. The island is visible from the mainland. It has its own permanent water supply, a spring in the centre of the island. Many migratory birds use the island as a watering hole. Part of the Moreton Bay and Pumicestone Passage, it is an important bird area because it supports large numbers of migratory waders or shorebirds.

In the 19th century St Helena Island was a quarantine station which became one of the most profitable prisons in Queensland history. The island was used to house prisoners and staff for 65 years. Many of those involved in the 1891 Shearers Strike were imprisoned there along with murderers and bushrangers.

This no doubt will be a most enjoyable day out, but we have a maximum of 30 places available, so early booking is advisable.

We’ll see (some of) you on board the *Cat-O-Nine-Tails*.

## New Members

We are always pleased to welcome new members to the Association and are delighted to add Stuart Duncan and Doug Flanders as our latest members.

There is no limit to the number of members and it would be nice to swell our ranks. You could encourage your former colleagues to join us: they don’t even have to be retired!

### From the Editor’s Chair

*Once again, the weather has brought catastrophe to the north of the State. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to all those adversely affected.*

*But as usual, there is a clear lack of understanding about a large number of factors. No distinction is made between flood mitigation (which dams can provide under some circumstances) and flood prevention (which they clearly cannot). And the uneasy alliance between flood mitigation and water storage functions of multi-purpose structures continues to exercise public opinion.*

*The Townsville flood event was described as the one in a hundred year flood. When that was subsequently changed to a one in five hundred year flood, the implication was that this resulted in five times as much water! And of course, such a flood won’t happen again for another 500 years! (See also page 9)*

*Inevitably, there have been calls yet again for the Bradfield Scheme to be implemented immediately along with many new dams and flood prevention infrastructure. It all seems to depend on where we sit in the hydro-logical cycle.*

*Until next time, au reservoir.*

**Ian Pullar, Editor**

## Queensland Future Climate Dashboard

On 21 February, Dr Ralph Trancoso addressed an audience of 20 very interested attendees at our regular February get together on the subject of “Queensland Future Climate Dashboard”.

Dr Trancoso works at the University of Queensland at the Global Institute and for the Department of Environment and Science. Originally from Brazil, Ralph is enjoying living in Queensland (although he prefers a cold climate) and is engaged in groundbreaking work which is intended to help the authorities to deal with the effects of climate change. He started his talk with a number of graphs showing an increasing trend in both sea and air temperatures through the rest of this century. He provided the following information on his fascinating talk. More information can be obtained from the WRRRA website and from the links below.

Understanding the need to provide reliable regional scale simulations of future climate, the Science Division from the Department of Environment and Science (DES) has downscaled 11 state-of-the-art global climate models to 10 km grid-cells. Higher spatial resolution means that Regional Climate Models (RCMs) take into account local biophysical properties such as topography, vegetation and land-sea contrast and better simulate local climate as a result. Another relevant improvement in Queensland’s future climate simulation is the continuous projections until the end of the century rather than previously used time-windows. However, improving spatial and temporal resolutions produces larger files and creates new barriers for data accessibility. In order to facilitate data access and support climate adaptation policies and management, DES has conceptualized and implemented a new online platform with information about future climate. The **Queensland Future Climate Dashboard** summarises information of 11 state-of-the-art climate models with regional scale simulations until 2099. The dashboard is a visualisation platform composed of drop-down menus, maps, plots and tables whereby users can customise, visualise and export summarised future climate information according to their interest. The **Queensland Future Climate**

**Dashboard** provides high resolution simulations for **30 different metrics** grouped in six climate themes: (i) **Mean Climate**; (ii) **Heatwaves**; (iii) **Extreme Temperature Indices**; (iv) **Extreme Precipitation Indices**; (v) **Droughts**; and (vi) **Floods**. The spatial information for regional projections was spatially aggregated from 10 km pixel-size grids to specific regions. The following five specific regions in which regional projections are presented are: (i) **Local Government Areas**; (ii) **Regional Plan Areas**; (iii) **Bioregions**; (iv) **Major River Basins**; and (v) **Disaster Districts**. In addition, users can visualize and download future climate data across **calendar seasons, wet and dry periods** as well as **annual basis**. Information is summarized for four 20-year time slices centred in **2030, 2050, 2070** and **2090**. The **Queensland Future Climate Dashboard** offers a fully interactive interface; that is users can customise maps and plots, as well as download summary statistics, screenshots and spatial data for different purposes such as local and regional planning, biodiversity management, water management and emergency services. By combining cutting-edge high resolution climate models and latest trends in big data visualization within an interactive visualisation platform, DES expects to bridge climate science and adaptation through an enjoyable experience for end-users.

For a snapshot of our modelling approach and its benefits: <https://app.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/climateFacts/>

Future heatwaves: <https://app.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/heatwave/>

Future water security: <https://app.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/water/>

Queensland Future Climate Dashboard: <https://app.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/dashboard/#responseTab1>

Following the presentation, many of the attendees enjoyed the company of the others over lunch in the Victory beer garden.

It was another enjoyable reunion for those who attended, as well as an enlightening experience. (There was also some discussion over lunch about climate change and its implications, with relief that it is no longer our problem to deal with.)

Member **Bill Fossett** passed away on 17 December 2018 aged 91.

Bill was an administration officer and was in charge of ordering materials for the construction of Tinaroo Dam. During the construction of the MDIA channels Bill lived in Muchilla. Once the work finished he moved into the office in Mareeba and worked there until he retired. In his retirement he loved making items in timber such as toys. Our condolences to his widow, Pat.

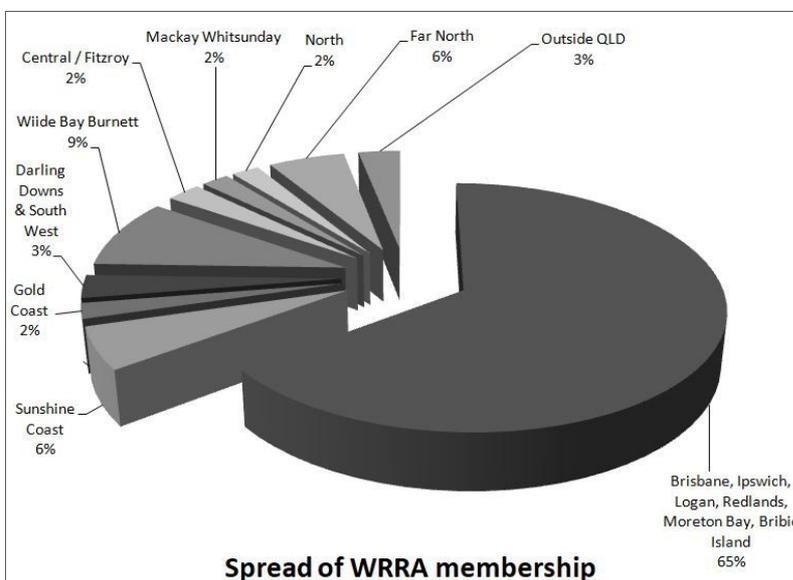
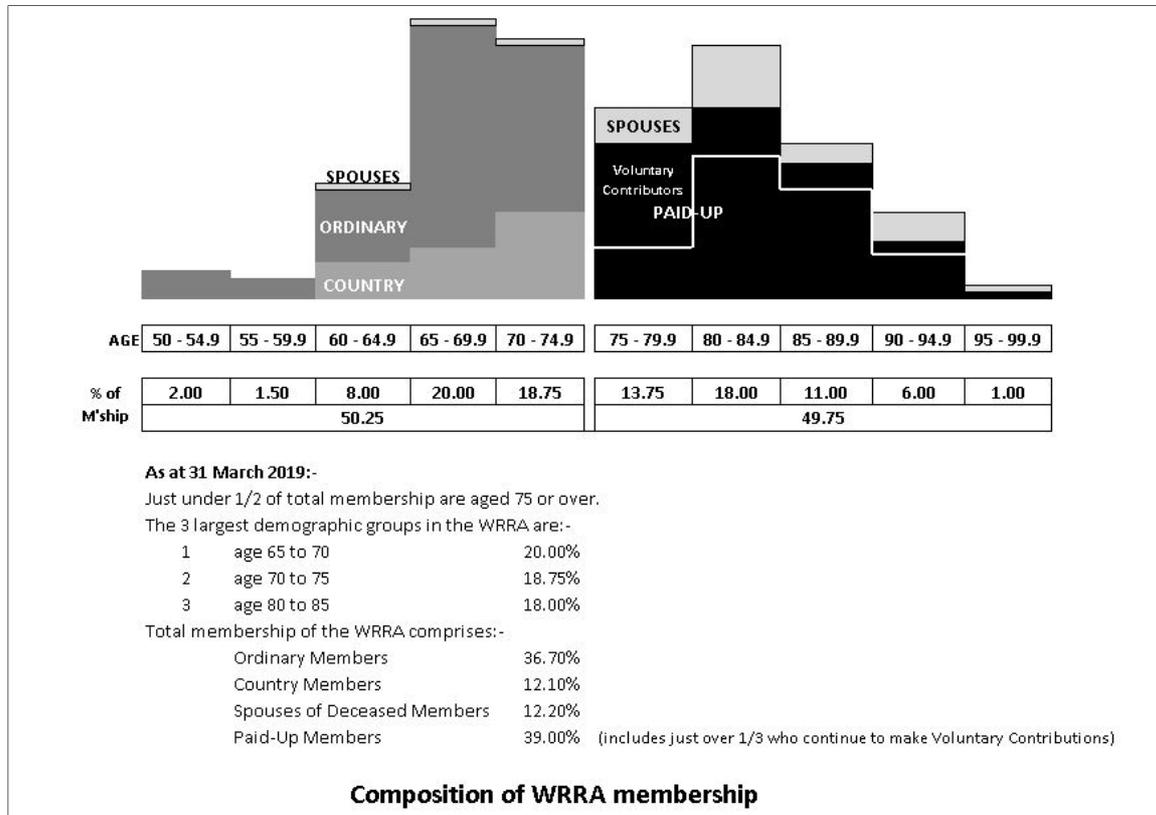
Members might also be interested to be informed of the passing of other former colleagues.

**Bob Deskins** was an administrative officer in the Department of Local Government prior to and after its amalgamation with Water Resources. He died in February at the age of 74.

**Mike Wilke**’s death in February was also reported. Mike was an engineer who left the Commission many years ago to pursue a career in the consulting world. This led to a number of jobs, including a major managerial post in the USA for a number of years. Mike had been ill for some time before his death at the age of 71.

# Profile of WRRRA Membership

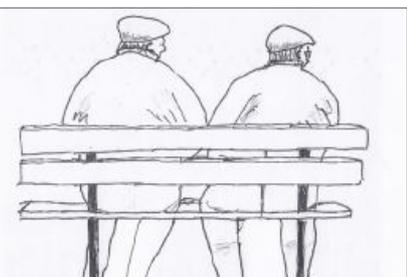
(For as long as I have been associated with WRRRA, membership has been constant at around 200. In response to a number of questions, Treasurer Gary Corbett has produced some interesting statistics on membership.- Ed.



Obviously it is much easier for residents of south-east Queensland to attend WRRRA functions, but the offer is still open for sponsorship from the committee for any event organised in the regions.

It is always a pleasure to welcome the occasional country member who manages to make it to one of our gatherings.

We always love to hear of events such as the (now) annual Central Queensland event.



“Do you think back to the good old days when we still went to work?”  
 “Yes. Saturdays and Sundays.”

## Answers to Terry’s Trivia on page 11

1. (iii) Chest hair 2. (v) Beat his wife 3. All ‘ten pound poms’
4. (iv) Peach 5. (iv) 5 ft 4 6. (iv) 4 (Nicklin, Pizzey, Chalk, Bjelke-Petersen) 7. Laphroaig (a whisky) 8. (ii) Julia Creek
9. Cross Counter 10. (v) Their second toe longer than their big toe.

## Toowoomba Office – An Evolution

### Part 2

**Russ Robson**

*(Continued from edition 87. Immediately following publication of Part 1 Daree Foster rang me to tell me how excited she was to read of the 'Good Old Days'. That's why I encourage such articles. Ed.)*

Later in 1969, Mike Hopkins resigned to better position himself to meet his obligations outside the IWSC. Harry Plint took over as Officer in Charge, so relieving the anomalous hierarchical situation that hitherto existed.

The need for additional storage to accommodate U&SWS equipment, and the need for storage for Farm Advisory equipment arising from the loss of access to Mike's garden shed on his resignation, resulted in the acquisition of storage and workshop space in the decommissioned and repurposed Toowoomba Gas production facility on Neil Street, a few blocks from the office.

Then along came the 1970s.

Staff expansion continued in 1971 with the appointment of Bob Neal as a Cadet Water Advisor and the employment of a second surveyor's labourer, Jim Meredith. These staff additions resulted in six personnel sharing three desks and a drawing table in the original space allocated to the farm advisory staff – a very cosy arrangement when all were in the office.

The numbers remained more or less stable through until 1973-74. At this time, demand for advisory and licensing services, along with an increasing requirement for U&SWS service, including in particular attention to the Condamine groundwater, triggered the need for expanded capacity.

George Clewett, transferring from his position as Investigations Engineer, Farm Advisory in Rivers and Streams Branch, was appointed in this period as the first District Engineer.

On George's somewhat delayed arrival to that position a junior engineer, Graham Rettke was appointed. Similarly, John Cameron (Jeff's son), having taken up drafting studies following his recent discharge from the Navy, commenced as a Cadet Draftsman. Graham and John formed an embryonic design office that was to grow substantially in ensuing years.

Further, Ian Young transferred into the office as a Cadet Groundwater Advisor early in 1974. Assistant Boring Inspector Jim Kurtz had also arrived.

At the same time, administrative staff numbers expanded to three typists and an office assistant plus, ultimately, a junior clerk.

The Strand Arcade office accommodation was substantially adjusted to cater for this expansion. With the exception of its Special/Remedial Education Unit, the Education Department shifted out to leave space for the expanded IWSC contingent. The original IWSC group still enjoying street front locale, moved to the new space at the back of the Arcade, leaving this prime real estate to the Education Department unit.

Early in 1975, hydrogeologist David Free transferred into the office from U&SWS Branch in Head Office. This appointment established a significant local plank for attention to the Toowoomba Basalts and the Condamine alluvium. Dave was to remain in the office through its several Departmental reincarnations until his very recent retirement.

Later in 1975 Jim Mylne, on the final step of his 9 month graduate engineer rotation, transferred in to fill the vacant engineering position arising from Graham Rettke's resignation. While Jim transferred to Bundaberg in 1979, he was later to return as District Engineer (in restructured arrangements established under the regionalisation initiative of the mid-80s).

The design office came of age with Dennis Gillbard's 1976 transfer into the office (from Glenlyon Dam construction) to head up the drafting group into which Glen Matthews had also been appointed.

The space required for the additional staff entering in the mid-late 1970s resulted in the relocation of the Education Department to an alternative site to free up the entire Strand Arcade for the IWSC.

If nothing else, the relocation of the Education Department freed up some parking space in the rear shed facility. This was positive as it relieved the need for Commission staff to manually adjust the position, and on occasions relocate, a Volkswagon beetle whose remedial teacher owner had a habit of parking so as to block vehicle movement in the shed prior to leaving the office precinct.

Following George Clewett's retirement in 1978, Jim Uhlmann was appointed to the District Engineer position that shortly after evolved into a Regional position covering a relatively small Darling Downs Region. This region comprised Toowoomba District (with no District Engineer) and Warwick District, where Des Foster remained Officer in Charge.

And then the 1980s.

Regardless, the office was outgrowing its Strand Arcade home by the end of the 1970s. Hence in 1981, after a substantial period of expectation, the entire office shifted to occupy pristine space on the ground floor of the new Toowoomba Court House in Hume Street.

This accommodation was a considerable change and not only in terms of its open plan configuration. It had north facing windows giving natural light and also offered modern ducted airconditioning – no wall bangers or strip and floor heaters, and no natural air and dust circulation through door gaps. Additionally, it was entirely off-street, so no traffic noise. Indeed it was difficult for some old hands from the 1960s to get used to as they reckoned they couldn't concentrate without familiar discomfort.

This office also had the attribute of the entertainment value afforded by observation of the daily parade of felons (real and wannabes) enroute to their date with destiny. It also meant that Land Court attendance required only a stroll upstairs.

## Toowoomba Office – An Evolution

(Continued from previous page.)

Following the relocation, staff numbers further increased. The Farm Advisory group increased to be the largest such group in the State; the design office grew to contain an additional engineer and two additional draftsmen plus a drafting aide; an additional Stream Control officer was appointed. Additionally, with delegated licensing decision making and the need to process meter readings resultant from the 1978 Condamine Groundwater metering initiative, administrative staffing increased.

Accordingly, the original Court House space was quickly at bursting point, resulting in the need to breach a section of the back wall to include additional space from an adjacent vacant room.

A further development in the early 1980s was the establishment of a substantial new purpose built shed and storage facility in the Industrial Estate at Wilston on the western side of Toowoomba. This housed equipment from all of the constituent groups in the office, but in particular heavier drilling and pump testing equipment relocated from Rocklea.

This status quo continued until Tom Fenwick's regionalization initiative in the mid 80s saw Toowoomba as the base for the newly minted South West Region. By this time the Commission had become an uncomfortable fit in the Court House, not only in terms of space, but also in a more philosophical context. Frank van Shagen, on appointment as the first Regional Engineer, initiated the search for alternative premises.

As a consequence, the office shifted in 1987 to new premises on Ruthven Street in the city centre. This accommodated not only the Regional Engineer and supporting administrative staff, but also all of the Toowoomba District staff, including District Engineer, along with a full contingent of hydrographic staff. A Regional Mechanical and Electrical Inspector was also added to staff at this time, as was a local government services officer.

The cohort in the Ruthven Street office represented the peak staff number in Toowoomba. No immediately accessible record of the actual total number is available, but a guesstimate head count puts it at about 40.

Finally, the 1990s

The 1990s of course saw the revolving door of Departmental change as well as the end of the State's post WW2 water 'development era'.

In the middle of the decade the office shifted from Ruthven Street to a new block on the Department of Primary Industries site at Tor Street (away from the City, on the western side of Toowoomba). On the back of further departmental rearrangement, it shifted to another new block on the Tor Street site where it remains.

The staff mix and number have changed with the shift away from water resource development to management of the resource through the development and implementation of Water Resource Plans. The days of the Strand Arcade and its foibles are long gone.

[With sincere thanks to Mike Hopkins, Warren Hutton, Jim Mylne, Dave Free, Ian Young and Dennis Gillbard for their assistance with the story]

(And my thanks too to the authors - Ed)

## Around the World in 104 Days

### Part 7

**Bruce Pearce**

Day 67

In the early hours of the morning, *Dawn Princess* crossed the Marmara Sea before approaching the Bosphorus Strait where Istanbul is located. Istanbul is a unique city, situated on the edge of two continents with part of the city in Europe and part in Asia. Few cities have seen as much history as Istanbul. Even fewer places in the world have been the central points of entire civilisations. But for all its great heritage, Istanbul remains beautiful, mysterious, friendly and welcoming.

Our tour for the day included a visit to St Sophia, a superb work of Byzantine architecture, a tour of Topkapi Palace and Treasury and a visit to the Blue Mosque. St Sophia, the Church of Holy Wisdom, was built to be the "queen church" of the new Roman Empire. Designed by Isidore of Miletus, the basic design is a Greek cross inside a square, capped with a massive central dome. The interplay of light and shadow in this enormous space is truly inspiring.

The Imperial Palace housed the Emperor's family and government in great splendour although somewhat

remote from the people. One of the Emperor's throne rooms had a curtain of silk woven with gold and precious stones. Terraces, courtyards, fountains and gardens made the interior spaces of the palace wonderfully pleasant.

The beautiful Blue Mosque has a multitude of small domes and semi domes, as well as six minarets. One inside you can understand why it is called Blue; the interior is decorated with some 20 000 delicate Iznik tiles with a shimmering blue cast. The 216 stained glass windows and the geometric decorative patterns complete the cheerful, airy image.



### Around the World in 104 Days continued

We had a delicious Turkish lunch at a restaurant overlooking the Straits of Bosphorus and then attended a carpet demonstration and display followed by a visit to the Grand Bazaar. The Grand Bazaar is the largest covered market in the world and boasts over 4 000 shops and has its own school, mosque, post office, banks and police station.

The traffic chaos in Istanbul was unbelievable. When we were being transferred to the Blue Mosque from our ship berthed only a couple of kilometres away, we sat in traffic for about an hour and had only reached about half-way, at which point the coach driver suggested we alight from the coach and walk the remainder of the distance up a hill to the Mosque. We easily beat the coach to the Mosque!

In the evening the *Dawn Princess* retraced her tracks to the Marmara Sea and towards the Dardanelles.

Day 68 – 9 September. With over 2 000 Australian and New Zealand passengers on board, this morning was a very special one and a highlight of the trip. Before dawn, *Dawn Princess* anchored at Anzac Cove and held a brief dawn service. We could see the Anzac Memorial where the Anzac service is held on Anzac Day and two major cemeteries as well as four large flags on the tops of the ridges which are memorials to New Zealand, Australian, Turkish and British troops who fought there.

A full Anzac service was held in mid-morning with almost all passengers and most of the ship's company attending. The service was conducted by a New Zealand senior officer of the ship and a wreath was thrown overboard as part of the service. The choir assembled from passengers on the ship sang the national anthems of Australia and New Zealand. Overall it was quite a moving experience.



Next stop was Rhodes which is the largest of the 'Dodecanese' group of islands, which contains twelve large and 150 minor land masses. Blessed with a delightful climate and fertile soil, Rhodes produces a variety of the finest fruits, vegetables and red wine.

We travelled to Monte Smith for views of Rhodes Old Town, the Palace of the Grand Master and Mandrak Harbour, and then south of Rhodes to Lindos to view the ancient Acropolis, crowned by a 4<sup>th</sup> century

Greek Temple and a Byzantine church. Lindos is in earthquake country and the resort we dined at was sitting right on the fault line. The buildings are built like fortresses with lots of supporting columns up to a metre in thickness. The return drive was through very dry country with lots of olive trees but commanding outstanding views of St Paul's Bay where the Apostle is said to have sought shelter during a storm. After lunch we strolled from the ship to visit Rhodes Old Town, home to grand medieval structures. In the evening we set various south-easterly courses towards Cyprus and our next port of call, Limassol.

Cyprus is large, ancient, friendly and rich in history. It is an agricultural paradise with crops such as wheat and barley, grapevines and olive trees, figs, citrus fruits and melons, and every variety of vegetable. Cool weather predominates in the mountains, but hot, sunny conditions in the valleys provide a sort of greenhouse condition for food growers.

Our tour for the day took us on a one hour scenic drive west of Limassol to the old port of Paphos. Here we viewed the Rock of Romios, where myth claims the goddess Aphrodite emerged from the waves. We visited the House of Dionysus, an excavated 3<sup>rd</sup> century Roman villa decorated with astonishing mosaics depicting wine drinkers and hunting scenes.

Port Said has been the "gateway to the East" for ocean liner passengers since the opening of the Suez Canal. Situated where the marshes of the Nile Delta meet the sands of the Sinai Peninsula, the city has a history stretching back to Pharaonic times. Today, Port Said is a popular resort destination for Egyptians, who prize its many duty-free stores and boutiques. Port Said is the gateway to Cairo and the Nile Valley with the famed Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx.

As Cairo is about a 3.5 hour trip from Port Said, it was a major logistic exercise to get there. Our tour consisted of a convoy of about 25 coaches. The authorities in Port Said closed the streets to allow the convoy to proceed out of town. The convoy was escorted by police both on motor cycle and car and also had an armed military escort as well as an armed guard on each of the coaches. About half an hour out of Port Said the military personnel suddenly donned their helmets and had arms at the ready. This made us wonder if it had been a good idea to be in the first coach in the convoy. After about twenty minutes they put their arms and helmets away and relaxed for the rest of the journey. The procedure was repeated on our return journey.

The Pyramids are certainly very impressive even on a very hot, dusty day. Interesting observations included the police using camels to watch over the crowds. We were constantly harassed mostly by young children trying to sell souvenirs to tourists. Following our visit to the Pyramids, we visited the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, home to the world's greatest collection of Egyptian antiques and the royal treasures of Tutankhamen, which alone are worth a trip to Egypt to see.

*To be continued*

## There's Locks and There's Locks Climbing the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal

Gary Corbett

'Reaching the Summit' has long been the talk of aspirational climbers with boundless energy. However, on a trip to Europe in mid 2018, my wife and I, with neither climbing aspirations nor boundless energy, managed to 'Reach the Summit' of a significant climb and take in a commemorative marker – a large wedge-shaped structure – on the divide between the catchments of the Danube and the Rhine Rivers.

But what is even more spectacular is that in doing so, we were in the company of some 200 or so other 'climbers' and instead of raising the flag to commemorate our arrival at 'The Summit', we instead raised our glasses – to toast our crossing 'from Danube beer country into Rhine wine country' – in a ship! We were in fact travelling on a canal cruise ship at 406 metres above sea level between Budapest and Amsterdam, with the Black Sea at one end and the North Sea at the other.

406 metres ASL in the overall scheme of things may not seem too high, but when you consider that all 200 or so of us at this point had in fact reached the highest point on earth reachable by a ship capable of reaching the sea, the credit for reaching 'The Summit' does not lie at the feet of all of us 'climbers' but at the feet of all those with the foresight and ingenuity to have constructed this engineering masterpiece of a canal.



**The summit** – marked by a granite sculpture by accomplished German artist Hanns Jörg Voth.

In all, we were to pass through some 56 locks on the entire canal which collectively enabled us to get to 'The Summit' (and down again!). The locks commenced on the Danube at the German border at Passau, and finished on the Rhine River at Mainz, covering a distance of some 764 kilometres, 171 of which take in the Main-Danube section. In this section, lifts in the locks ranged from 5.3m (Forchheim Lock) to 24.7m (Leerstetten; Eckersmuehlen and Hilpoltstein Locks – the highest such lifts in Germany).

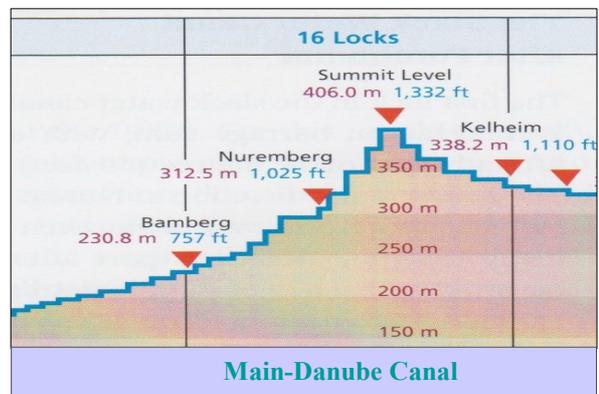
As someone who worked in an Irrigation Area Design drafting office for a good part of my career, I was able to draw some parallels between some of our own proud engineering feats, and the nature of what we were seeing in this canal – the sheer scale of it all meant that I was to take more than a passing interest.

This interest was further fostered when we were joined on the ship by 'Lock-Hopper' Daniel Gurtler, who between locks gave a very informative power-point presentation on the design and other aspects of the canal. 'Lock-Hoppers' jump on at one lock; give you a good dose of their particular entertainment (whether it be singing; dancing; glass-blowing etc); and then get off at the next lock – in my case, after selling me and others a book entitled 'The Main Danube Canal'.

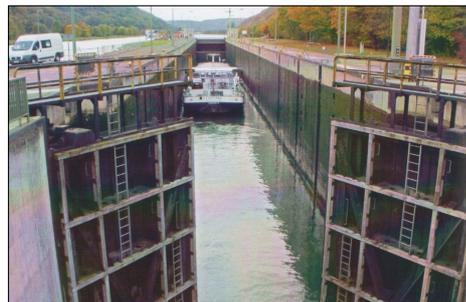
In the forward, Mr Gurtler, as author, describes the book as '*not intended for experts but for those who live near the waterway and for the many visitors to the region*'. So it is meant to be more of general interest, but it does contain an amount of technical information re the canal.

So instead of making a contribution to the Newsletter of a blow-by-blow description and countless photographs of the many castles and other points of interest we saw from the canal, I was wanting to share some of its more interesting technical aspects.

The Rhine-Main-Danube Canal (also called the Europa Canal) provides a navigable artery between the Danube River (which flows to the Black Sea) and the Rhine (which flows to the North Sea). The section of the canal containing The Summit is known as the Main-Danube. At The Summit, the canal crosses over the European Watershed, which has a triple divide with the Main-Rhine flowing into the North Sea; the Danube into the Black Sea; and the Po draining into the Mediterranean / Adriatic Sea.

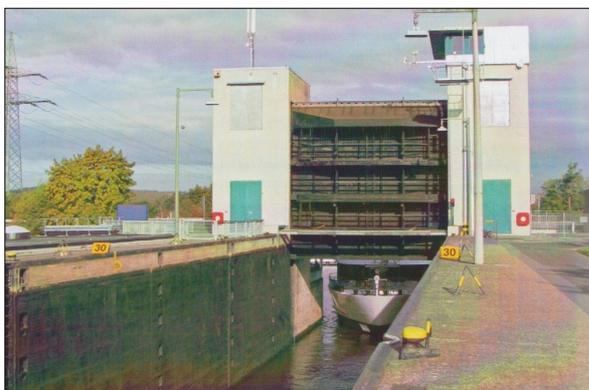


The range in height of these locks requires that gates of quite different designs be used. In the smaller locks (eg Kelheim) we passed through 'mitre gates' which open in traditional farm-gate fashion.



## Climbing the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal

In the larger locks, such as at the Hausen Lock (pictured below) we actually passed under 12 metre vertical lift gates.



The first power stations on the canal were built on the lock on the Main River at Viereth near Bamberg (1925), and on the Danube at Kachlet, not far from Passau (1927). Since 1993 and with the help of a performance-efficient Francis turbine, a power station at the Hilpoltstein Lock (with a 24.7 metre lift) has been producing 5.4 million kilowatt hours of electricity per year. There are reported to be 34 power stations on the Main River controlled from a base in Langenprozelten near Gemunden.

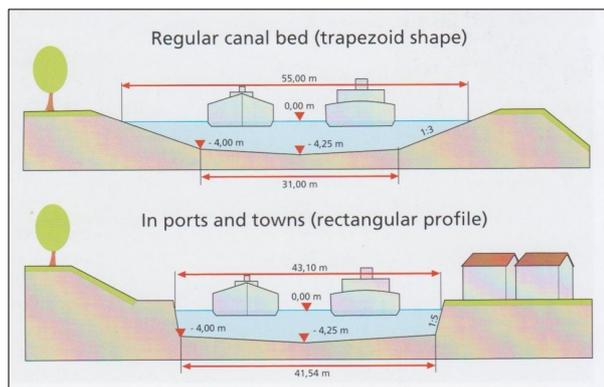
To overcome the problem of having to pump huge volumes of water (after each lowering of a lock), an ingenious “thrift lock” system was devised using off-stream reservoirs.

Initially, guidelines for the construction of the locks were based on the requirements of the ‘Europa Ship’, a standardised European barge 80 metres long and 9.5 metres wide, with a draught of 2.5 metres. However, with the advent of integrated tug barges 183 metres in length, the lock length was subsequently fixed at 190 metres, with the clearance height at bridges and lock entrances set at a minimum of 6 metres.



Two integrated tug barges passing one another near Erlangen, a rare sight.

The canal is primarily trapezoidal in shape, except where it passes through ports and towns. It is 4.25 metres deep at its centre.



We saw a considerable number of container ships travel along the Rhine. However, we did not see too many on the Main; the Main-Danube Canal (where ships can only carry up to two tiers of containers); or on the Danube itself.

On more than one occasion I can recollect, our vessel was double or triple parked at a wharf with other canal cruise vessels, requiring us to literally walk through one or two other vessels to get to ours, so canal operators would appear to be deriving a great degree of benefit from tourist operators. In fact, it is reported that a number of ports along the canal, originally designed as goods-handling areas, have been largely converted into landing stages for river cruise ships. So river/canal tourism in this part of the world has come a long way since the opening of the canal in 1992.

Construction of this major canal did not come without its hiccups and challenges. Construction stalled in 1981 with only 12 or so kilometres to go, and it was finally completed in 1992.

### The Darkest Hour

However, the 1981 cessation of construction came only two years after what authorities record as ‘its darkest hour’ which occurred on 26 March 1979. On that day, the canal – which was still under construction – burst a bank at Katzwang, not far from The Summit - from what would appear to have been a ‘piping failure’, completely emptying its entire quota of water stored between the Nuremberg and Eibach Locks. In the process, it caused widespread damage and chaos; damaged 120 houses; destroyed another 14; and took one life.



Many thanks, Gary for this contribution. Ed.

## Litter to the Editor

*Inevitably, the recent North Queensland disaster produced its own flood – of letters to the editor. It's great to know that there are so many experts in the community that the Government and its instrumentalities could call on. Here are a few samples - Ed.*

The majority of the older population wholeheartedly agree that it is time to harness flooding rain to break the drought. The question is where will the money come from? In the case of the Snowy Mountains Scheme, in 1949, Australia was broke as were most nations around the globe. The money to build it came through the Commonwealth bank. And where did the bank get the money? The Government printed it.

Which is more important, water to grow our food and our future exports to Asia or a vote-catching cross-river tunnel in Brisbane?

As our population grows, we need to know where our food will come from in 10, 20 or even 30 years. Most of the population has never experienced a serious food shortage.

Do we want our younger generation to learn from experience or do we educate them now?

*And the same day ...*

When water is behind a dam wall it changes from water into money.

Wivenhoe was built as a flood mitigation dam but, in the first flood, we came close to losing the infrastructure.

Humans have been building dams for thousands of years yet managing dams seems to elude us. The Burdekin Dam is the state's largest and has exceeded its capacity, while the nearby Ross River Dam is threatening thousands of homes in Townsville. Dams should not threaten people or homes, but should aid them.

*And here's another gem(?)*

Millions of dollars have been allocated to save the reef but no one says how this money will be spent or if results are guaranteed. The answer is obvious: divert flood water from the Reef to where it is needed and solve two problems at once.

Stop talking and stop unwanted water spoiling our Reef and make it available to our farmers and fire fighters through pipelines or canals.

*But wait, there's more!*

...When will our government create pipeline infrastructure from the Ross River dam west to cattle country? The Townsville floods must be the catalyst. If the Premier would consult with proven engineers then the next flood and drought could be avoided.

*If only it were that simple! - Ed.*

**James McNeill Whistler. Arrangement in Grey and Black No 1**  
aka Whistler's Mother



*And just how long am I supposed to sit like this, Jimmy? Why don't you use the camera?*

## Letter to the Editor

*Did anyone happen to notice a letter to the Courier Mail editor the day after the first coup against Malcolm Turnbull failed?*

Thank goodness there was no change of prime minister yesterday.

When you get old and have memory problems, one of the questions the doctors ask you is "Who is the prime minister?"

We have had so many in the past 10 years that it is easy to get this question wrong.

I do not want to be diagnosed with dementia because the politicians can't work together.

*Astute readers will have observed that there is no news of members in this edition. The explanation is very simple – no one supplied any!*

*I (and I think the readers) would very much appreciate contributions of tidbits or longer articles, particularly of anecdotes from "the good old days".*

*The next edition is due out in July, so there is plenty of time for respondents to supply material by early June. Please! - Ed.*



### St Barnabas Bulletin Board

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.

# HEALTH *and beauty*

## Exercise for People Over 60

*(from an American Health magazine)*

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface where you have plenty of room on each side.

With a 5lb potato bag in each hand extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10 lb potato bags. Then try 50 lb potato bags and eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100 lb bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

## Tonic and Gin

Back in the 18th and early 19th century, the British army overseas was losing more men to malaria than in battle. Then there was a breakthrough: it was discovered that the bark of the chinchona tree could be distilled to produce a product (now known as quinine) which could provide relief from the disease of malaria. The problem was that the taste was terrible.

While the other ranks were just ordered to "suck it up", the medicine was made more palatable for the officers by mixing it with gin. The custom stuck, albeit the other way round.



## Exercise those Brain Cells

Q. A mediaeval chef has to cook the main dish for his lord's banquet for precisely 45 minutes but he has no timer. He does however have access to wicks which take an hour to burn, but not evenly (i.e. burning three quarters of one will not necessarily take exactly 45 minutes). How can he achieve a precise 45 minutes?



## Body of Evidence

Here is a novel approach to the hereafter, already embraced by 850 living souls.

In a secluded forest at the base of the Blue Mountains, the Australian Facility for Taphonomic Experimental Research (AFTER) is a huge outdoor laboratory where experiments are carried out on donated corpses to investigate taphonomy – the science of decomposition.

The aim is to provide answers for the families of missing persons, victims of homicides and mass disasters by studying rates of decomposition under different circumstances. The information will be of great benefit to law enforcement agencies.

Forensic taphonomy involves multiple disciplines from entomology to archaeology.

Of the 850 people who have gifted their bodies to this research, 19 are already decomposing in various scenarios. One is enclosed in an aluminium hood to study odour profiles for the training of cadaver dogs. Others have been out in the elements for almost three years protected from scavengers by wire grating. A surprising result is that the bodies are mummifying which the researchers would not have known without the study in the Australian environment. Previously they relied on data from US Body Farms where factors affecting decomposition such as climate, temperature, soil, bacteria and insects are vastly different from those in Australia.

Local studies used pigs as the best alternative. They followed classic decomposition stages of bloat, active decay, advanced decay and dry remains or skeletonisation. But humans in the precinct dried out and were preserved.

Through the research it is hoped to provide more informative time-of-death information to investigators and to assist in defining causes of death.

So, anyone who is looking to continue to provide a useful purpose in the after-life could consider making a donation. You can be sure you won't feel any pain.

## Answer to last Issue's Teaser

Grandma has six grandchildren.  
(You can solve this by trial and error or by algebra.)

## Glorious Insults

*"The definition of a gentleman was someone who was never unintentionally rude". This is one of my lines in my current appearance in the play "Quartet". Daryl Brigden sent me a collection of obviously intentionally rude insults some of which I am happy to pass on. I trust their attribution is correct (I know at least one wasn't and I have corrected it). Ed.*

***He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary."***

-William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)

***Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it."***

-Moses Hadas

***I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it."***

-Mark Twain

***I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."***

-Clarence Darrow

***He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends."***

-Oscar Wilde

***His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork."***

-Mae West

***He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up."***

- Paul Keating

***In order to avoid being called a flirt, she always yielded easily."***

-Charles, Count Talleyrand

Lady Astor to Winston Churchill: ***"If you were my husband, I'd put poison in your coffee."***

Churchill to Lady Astor: ***"If you were my wife, I'd drink it"***

***Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."***

-Oscar Wilde

Earl of Sandwich to John Wilkes, MP: ***"'Pon my soul, Wilkes, I don't know whether you'll die upon the gallows or of the pox."***

Wilkes: ***"That depends, my lord, whether I first embrace your Lordship's principles, or your Lordship's mistresses."***

## The Right to Vote

With an election in the offing  
Is it right that we're all scoffing?  
For, if we all could have our druthers,  
Which lot's better than the others?  
Make no mistake, it's all confusion:  
We're faced with double dis-illusion

## A Sign of the Times

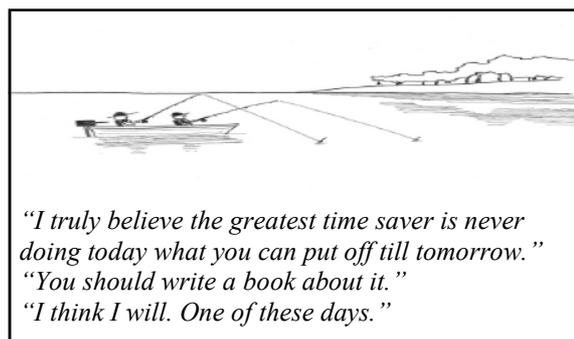
On a van in Devon, England

## Walter Wall Carpets

## Terry's Trivia from the 2018 Xmas lunch

Answers on page 3.

1. Men without what are more likely to get Cirrhosis of the liver? (i) Freckles; (ii) Curly hair; (iii) Chest hair; (iv) Worries; (v) Partners.
2. In Arkansas a man can legally once a month do what? (i) Walk his dog; (ii) Go to the pub; (iii) Buy a full tank of fuel; (iv) Leave the State; (v) Beat his wife
3. What do Julia Gillard; Tony Abbott; Alan Bond; Frank Tyson; Harold Larwood; and the Bee Gees have in common? .....
14. Which colour is NOT on any national flag?: (i) Purple; (ii) Black; (iii) Orange; (iv) Peach;
5. How tall is the Queen? (i) 6 ft; (ii) 5 ft; (iii) 5 ft 8; (iv) 5 ft 4; (v) 4 ft 10.
6. How many QLD premiers were there in 1968? (i) 1; (ii) 2; (iii) 3; (iv) 4; (v) 5.
7. Which of these (according to John Cleese) is *not* a cheese?: Red Leicester; Tilsit; Caerphilly, Bel Paese; Red Windsor; Stilton; Ementhal; Gruyere; Norwegian; Jarlsburg; Lipta; Lancashire; White Stilton; Danish Brew; Double Gloucester; Cheshire; Dorset Bluveny; Brie; Roquefort; Pol le Veq; Port Salut; Savoy Aire, Saint Paulin, Carrier de lest, Bres Bleu, Bruson; Camembert; Gouda; Edam; Case Ness; Smoked Austrian; Japanese Sage Darby; Wenslydale; Greek Feta; Gorgonzola; Parmesan; Mozzarella; Pa-per Cramer; Danish Bimbo (Fymbo?); Czech sheep's milk; Venezuelan Beaver Cheese; Cheddar; Illchester; Laphroaig; Limburger.
8. Which outback Qld town hosts Australia's only annual bog snorkelling championship? (i) Birdsville (ii) Julia Creek (iii) Boulia (iv) Eulo (v) Windorah.
9. Which horse won the 2018 Melbourne Cup?
10. What have Prince Harry's three publicised girlfriends had in common?: (i) A degree from Oxford; (ii) A UK country mansion; (iii) Blonde hair; (iv) Fluency in French. (v) Their second toe longer than their big toe.



*"I truly believe the greatest time saver is never doing today what you can put off till tomorrow."  
"You should write a book about it."  
"I think I will. One of these days."*

## Book Club

King Richard III of England is infamous for his supposed murder of the Princes in the Tower and other crimes as recorded, particularly by Shakespeare. He died at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485 with his body being taken to the Friary in Leicester. Its subsequent history was not fully recorded.

Members of Ricardian Societies have long endeavoured to clear Richard's name. As a result of years of research, Ricardian Philippa Langley became convinced that Richard's grave could be discovered. *Digging for Richard III* by Mike Pitts is a lively account of a fascinating archaeological investigation.

The University of Leicester were very keen to learn more of the mediaeval friary and their interests overlapped with Langley's. She identified a tarmacked carpark as a likely site for his grave while the University archaeologists thought that it could be the area once occupied by the Friary.

Once funding was obtained (with difficulty), the archaeologists formulated a series of trenches. Remarkably, on Day One of the first excavation, a skeleton was encountered. Even more remarkably, this subsequently proved to be that of Richard himself. Philippa Langley may have had mixed feelings about the fact that the bone structure clearly showed a hunched back, when the Ricardians had tried to debunk the Shakespearean portrayal of "crookback" as Tudor propaganda.

The identity was proven through DNA analysis of descendants of Richard's sister (although two of the descendants revealed a discontinuity in the male line!)

I was absolutely enthralled by the book – though I have to confess to Ricardian sympathies.

**Ian Pullar**



*"I got a brand new set of golf clubs for my husband."  
"That sounds like a pretty fair swap."*

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Just bought a book from IKEA



*Dark Emu: Aboriginal Australia and the Birth of Agriculture*, by Bruce Pascoe, contends that Australians have always been taught that the indigenous inhabitants of the continent were primitive hunter-gatherers who wandered "from plant to plant, kangaroo to kangaroo, in hapless opportunism." This idea, he writes, has often been used to justify the dispossession of the country's First People in favour of those who would supposedly use natural resources more efficiently.

But in examining the writings of the first explorers and colonists, Pascoe found them filled with references to "industry and ingenuity applied to food production" by indigenous Australians. He demonstrates that they intensively cultivated land, engaged in sophisticated forms of aquaculture, including the construction of dikes and fishing weirs, built substantial houses, developed effective forms of food storage and preservation, and used controlled fires to regenerate soil fertility.

This is a thoroughly researched book which sets out to set the recorded history straight and is a stark warning about the danger of accepting received wisdom at face value.

**Ian Pullar**



*"I don't think I'm better than other people because I've got a Master's degree. I've got a Master's degree because I'm better than other people."*