



WATERY SAUCES OLDIES AND BOLDIES

Newsletter No 97

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NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

No Present Like the Past ...

Twice a year for around thirty years, members of WRRRA gathered to enjoy each other's company and a pleasant meal provided by the staff and students of COTAH at South Brisbane. Quite apart from taking advantage of the convenient location, we were always pleased to be able to assist the students with their training. We have enjoyed excellent cuisine and good service at a reasonable price,

But now that experience is in the past and we are no longer able to support COTAH. The rules of engagement have changed and management has insisted on a minimum number of 40 diners. This of course is beyond our normal patronage. So we will no longer be able to return there.

The search has been on for an alternative venue. And such a thing has been hard to find. We need somewhere that is readily accessible – preferably by public transport – which will give us a reasonable degree of privacy in which addresses can be delivered and which is not too expensive. Treasurer Gary Corbett in particular put his mind and efforts into finding a new meeting place.

His search led him to the Norman Hotel near the Gabba which seemed to fit the bill. He discussed a possible date with the Hotel management and circulated a proposal to the WRRRA Committee. This was viewed favourably. At last we had a solution to our problem. But wait! Queensland opened its borders and COVID infection rates began to rise and then soar. The Chief Government Medical Officer predicted it would be at least a month before the infections would peak with many affected.

Under these circumstances, the Committee considered it would be irresponsible to invite our members to a gathering and, in any case, there would be considerable reluctance for members to attend. Accordingly, the decision was made to defer a luncheon to a future date to be advised – perhaps mid-year.

The Committee had also scheduled a meeting for late January and had made a booking at the SunWater office before that also went into lockdown with the staff working from home again. Needless to say, the Committee meeting was cancelled with business now being conducted via email.

Future Programme

Not surprisingly, it is difficult to be definitive during this state of uncertainty.

At this stage it is still hoped that we will host a technical seminar in April, with details to be announced.

The AGM is still planned for June. A booking has been made for 23 June in the Community Meeting Room in Brisbane Square Library (with a maximum attendance of 26).

And we certainly hope we will be going full steam ahead with the Anniversary Milestone (see page 2 for current plans).

From the Editor's Chair

If ever we needed to be reminded of how the success of our former employing department depended on a huge range of skills from so many professions, this edition will serve.

...Fascinating articles from men of very different backgrounds give a simple taste of the diversity of activities that we collectively undertook. And to use a currently abused, but nevertheless true, phrase "we are all in this together". They also highlight the camaraderie which we all enjoyed in the organisation in which fate placed us.

Until next time, au reservoir.

Ian Pullar, Editor

P.S. As two of the series have come to an end, I will be needing new articles by the middle of the year. PLEASE!

You gotta laugh!

Novak Djokovic is the first player to be knocked out of a grand slam tournament after missing only 2 shots.

Should that be Novax?



Marking a Milestone, 100 Years On

(100th Anniversary in 2022 of passage of the Irrigation Act of 1922)

Plans for celebrating this important milestone have been, like everything else in our current state of existence, impacted by the advent of COVID. The Committee has been unable to meet in person and so has encountered difficulties in formulating plans. This has not been helped by the fact that there was only a limited response to the letters sent to members from the President. No doubt members have been caught up in the usual Festive Season activities and caught in by the current restrictions.

Nevertheless, the committee is proceeding with plans and would appreciate responses from members who are interested in participating, but have just neglected to respond. It is expected that a detailed plan of events will be published in the July edition of the Newsletter as well as further communications from the committee. We hope to catch up with a lot of members and friends in the second half of the year – restrictions permitting!



Helen Pullar OAM

In the Australia Day Honours, Elizabeth Helen Pullar was awarded an OAM for “services to the Arts, particularly theatre”.

Helen joined **Ipswich Little Theatre** in 1967. Since then ILT has grown from a small group of adults into a complex organisation with 200 members. Apart from the adult group, there are sub-groups for 5-8 year olds, 9-12 year olds, High School students, people with special needs, a Daytime Theatre Troupe (who present pantomimes to young people) and a group that host tours to ILT’s unique home, the Burley Griffin Incinerator Theatre. This building was saved from demolition by ILT who have continued to develop the precinct. ILT also hosts the longest running Drama Festival in the southern hemisphere.

Helen has acted in, directed and written numerous plays. She is a Past President and has been a Life Member since 1985. She is currently Secretary (since 2004), Chair of Building Committee, Convenor of the tour group and Archivist. She is an organiser of special functions (for which she is also usually a caterer) and has written histories and compiled quite a few visual presentations. She was Festival Director for a number of years.

She was formerly Head of Drama at **Ipswich Girls’ Grammar School**. As extra-curricular activities, she directed nine school musicals and a number of student plays for competition in Drama Festivals, winning awards. She is Co-President of the IGGS Old Girls Association. In order to raise funds for this, she produced four Theatre Restaurants.

Helen is Honorary Archivist at Ipswich Girls’ Grammar and knows more of the history of the school than anyone else. Her historical articles are often featured in OGAPress which she edits for the Old Girls Association. She has also edited a number of books concerning the history of the school. Over the past few years, she has been establishing a Museum to display the history of the school.

In 2001, she and her husband Ian devised, wrote and directed a multi-cast presentation at the Ipswich Railways Museum as the city’s principal contribution to Australia’s Centenary of Federation. For this, they were presented with a congratulatory certificate.

In 2009 she received an Australia Day Award from Ipswich City Council for her contribution to culture.

Helen and Ian were “commissioned” to write an entertainment for the Amiens History Association to celebrate 100 years of soldier settlement in 2020.

A related article concerning IGGS can be found on page 7.



Helen in front of a painting of the Incinerator

Regretfully, we have to report the passing of **Sheila Lynch** in October at the age of 101. Some members will remember Sheila joining our COTAH lunch at the age of 98.

We also record the death of engineer **Donald James Cock** in January at the age of 70. Our condolences to his widow and family and all his work colleagues by whom he was held in high regard.

Thirty Years a Water Boy

Part 2

Jon Chapman

While Theodore is not dead (we visited in 2019) it's not the place it was in 1991. There are no banks, and the old Govt Offices look a solemn and lonely building in the middle of town. The pub is still a co-op and the focal point in town which still has cotton etc. The grey nomads are now a big part of the town's income.

1992 - 1995 Gatton (DPI) District Administration Officer

The exit from Theodore meant we were sent back to Gatton (not given any choice). Unlike the downsizing in Theodore, Gatton was upsizing. Organisationally we were squabbled over by Brisbane and Toowoomba, but we ultimately remained part of Southeast region. We took some of Bundaberg's patch around Blackbutt and we took on the Lower Lockyer Irrigation Project.

Viv Wright had left, and Peter Shoecraft was now the farm adviser come stream control officer. Dan Coutts moved on and Steve Moller replaced him. Kurtz and Brownie were still infamous raconteurs, but the govt changes were starting to cramp their style. Government cars could no longer be taken home – Jim lived at Rosewood and Brownie in Toowoomba, Peter Shoecraft at Murphy's Creek and Peter Myatt at Karalee. Fringe Benefits tax was a buzz word, and the red tape was multiplying rapidly. Because there were no car parks at our office the QGs were parked behind the Police Station, but I could take one home (bonus).

By 1993 we were well established as DPI Water Resources, and I had an admin role with DPI as well. They had offices and staff at Helidon, Gatton town and the Research Station and there was the Centre of Excellence at the Gatton College, run by Dr Elizabeth Woods who recently retired as the DG of DAF. I was now part of Corporate Services rather than "Water", yet 75 % of my job was water licensing and billing for the Central and Lower Lockyer.

Government downsizing talks continued into 1994 and more redundancies saw Jim Kurtz, Kevin Brown and Peter Shoecraft depart, along with several DPI long termers. Ashley Bleakley had joined the water team and my admin team seemed to change regularly. Morale was low and declining.

By 1995, yet another reorganisation / rebranding saw the partial demise of Gatton as a water office and much of the work returned to SERO. How quickly this had changed! The Office was set to move to the Research Station closing both town offices. Water Commercial was being formed.

Because of that, I was asked by Alan Murray and Phil Miller to help make it happen and that included working part time in Brisbane. By March 1995 I was working

three days per week minimum in Mineral House and the separation of Water Commercial from DPI WR was underway.

July 1995 - Feb 1997 Brisbane (DPI) (Senior Officer)

In July 1995 we moved to Brisbane and bought a house in Lawnton, just around the corner from Bob Bell. I was again considered "Corporate Services" but much of my work was still water related. This was mainly because there were no skilled water admin staff around, due to redundancies or being drafted to Water Commercial. My role was to manage the fleet, assets, document management and IT for some 38 offices across Brisbane, the Lockyer, and the southeast from Caboolture to the border and west to Boonah and Gatton. That covered the old departments of DPI, Forestry, Boating and Fisheries and Water (Resource Management).

I still "led" the water licensing team and focused on training ex forestry staff in the art of water admin. Forestry too had had a major shakeup, and most admin staff were not required in their non-commercial areas. Despite the separation I had to do the Lockyer water billing for all of 1995 and the first half of 1996. The staff that went to Water Commercial had simply never performed billing before.

During 1996 yet another reorganisation saw DPI leave DPI WR, and Water and Lands came together (to make mud! sorry) to make the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Mineral House was made subordinate to an Ipswich (West Moreton) region. I shared a senior admin role with a Lands guy based in Ipswich. All the time the water roles rolled on. I was working a lot of unpaid overtime just to stay afloat. Travel was now often between Ipswich and Nambour.

Feb 1997 to Sept 1998 (DNR) (Project Officer)

In 1996 it was clear that the Client Operations database (COD) that had served water since 1988 /89 needed an overhaul. Peter Hill who had created the Groundwater Database with Dave Schmiede was now heading a team to create a new system that would take us through the next 10 years at least, hence the Water Entitlements Register Database (WERD) project commenced.

I joined the project in February 1997, although the pull back to the region never really went away until late 1998. The project meant long hours and hard work dissecting the business, understanding how a system could make processes easier and more enforceable. WERD was lots of meetings, 2 or 3 per day, often until 6 at night.

During 1997 I got to visit every DNR office in the State as head of the data cleaning project. From July until December, I would spend a week or more in each of the 20 water offices showing staff the fixes that needed to be made to allow the new system to progress.

Continued next page ...

Thirty Years a Water Boy *continued*

The Data Cleaning Project meant long hours often working at the regional offices until 8 or 9 at night, weekends included in some places. Lots of time away from family but the Travel Expenses money was good.

During 1998, the WERD Project and the data cleaning exercise morphed into a Help desk with Bob Bell as we reran the data validation routines and stayed in touch with the regional staff. I returned to Mareeba for two weeks in February to assist with data cleansing before WERD went Live. The normal work plus the WERD project demands meant paid overtime for Bob and me to June 30 and then again from August to October. It was a rarity to be paid for overtime, but the impacts of the earlier redundancies was starting to emerge earlier than I thought.

During this project I worked with a great group of contractors, well paid but very smart people. I also worked with some of the best wateries of that era.

October 1998 - April 2000 (DNR) (Senior Administration Officer)

In January 1999 DNR West Moreton moved from Mineral House to Landcentre. It was the worst place I worked at in my career, easily!

1999 was a year of turmoil for admin staff as the Corporate Services days were being killed off. The constant actions of change had worn a lot of people down. People demanded more of their admin staff, yet the admin staff more than any others had lost all sense of identity; we were no longer Water or Forestry or Lands people, we were everybody's fetch and carry people.

We had Managers who hated what "their" organisation had become. Generally, it appeared everyone was unhappy. Bruce Brogan and Greg Long were the water leaders at the time. Keith Bedford, Peter Cochrane, Rob Drury and Neville Ablett were also part of the water team at the Landcentre. We had an ex-District Forester as the boss and his lack of knowledge of water led to many a heated discussion. His disdain for Admin people was troublesome at best but greatly demoralising.

The major benefit of the Landcentre was the easy access to the Gabba for cricket, I would often pop over for two-hour lunch and back after 4.

On the personal front, Tanya was named School Captain at Bray Park SHS, Aaron's big time cricket journey began with Northern Suburbs Cricket Club under Jimmy Maher's leadership and we lost Grandma Chapman who gave me that advice back in the 70's.

April - June 2000 (DNR) (Project Officer)

I had a short stint in CHQ Admin (MH) under Stewart Patterson working on the Asset Management Information System Built Asset Register (State Assets). The job morphed into a new direction as DNR and State Water Projects formally separated.

First was a role to make the splits for offices, staff, houses, depots, and budgets between DNR and SWP with Peter Thompson and Dudley McIntosh.

I had encountered Dudley in Theodore in 1991. He was the messenger boy for Tom Fenwick. I had been to a town meeting where people spoke out about the direction government was headed and how Goss was killing small country towns. I was seen and I spoke about the issues. The message was PULL YA F&*^% HEAD IN!

Second was the job to set up water use and billing for DNR under Tony Horton and Lee Rogers. The separation meant DNR had a water use and billing responsibility but no system to cater for recording water use, meters and ultimately bill users.

Separation happened in June 2000 and the first meter readings were in August. In quick time I developed workflow diagrams, meter reading and maintenance contracts (with SWP), formulated ways to get readings and maintenance recorded and put staffing in place across the regions. The fun had just begun!!

My life in a district office was over, but I still wasn't far from regional issues, and I was back as a fulltime Watery.

July 2000 - August 2006 – (Natural Resources and Water) (Senior Project Officer)

The separation of the commercial and non-commercial water businesses had all sorts of fallout. Roles that were seen to be something SunWater would do often fell back to DNR. One of those roles was recording water use and billing in (mainly) groundwater areas. Water Commercial had taken responsibility for some of these areas, but it was quickly found they had not placed much importance on them. The glaring example was the Bowen area where no billing had occurred since 1995.

Our first solution ((Bob Bell's and mine) was an Excel database to record the meter readings. This didn't resolve how to record meters (assets) and their maintenance, nor did it provide a way to issue invoices.

A data download from Water Commercial proved unreliable in the areas handed back and so a complete on the ground validation was required.

Our job was to create an interim solution until the requirements could be added to WERD. The Interim Water Use and Billing System (IWUBS) was that interim solution.

By August 2001 we had issued our first invoices, "manually" creating spreadsheets that were fed into the Department's accounting system. The reports created invoices, and water use reports that were placed in envelopes and sent to clients. This was very labour intensive and stressful, but with Bob by my side we got it done.

To be continued ...

My Life of Hydrography

Part 8

Ray Alford

After the endless black soil plains west of Charters Towers, the stark spinifex covered red hills of Mt Isa were a welcome relief. The town itself was also in stark contrast to the string of sleepy small towns that we had passed through alongside the long road from Townsville. Dominated by the towering smoke stacks of the Mt Isa mine, the town straddled the Leichhardt river, baking under the hot sun. It was modern and alive with activity. The town had a young population, mostly transient workers attracted by the high salaries at the mine and supported by Government workers, nurses and teachers, seeking promotion, adventure or escape.

John Pitts had worked several wet seasons in the Isa and was well settled there, settled enough to have a rented flat and found a live-in girlfriend. Accommodation was usually arranged at the Mt Isa mines barracks but I guess that John thought that his arrangements were superior. I moved in with John and shared the rent but we spent little time in his flat. John was very serious about his job and about getting flow measurements. He would drive the landcruiser through water that came half way up the doors if necessary. His method was to cover the front of the vehicle with a piece of canvas and then charge the stream. If the engine died, as it often would, he would spray the engine with WD40 to get it going again. There were many times when I thought we were doomed but somehow, we always managed to get where we were travelling to.

Many of the sites were impossible to access during the wet season despite John's prowess with a four-wheel drive. The commission had a prearranged charter for helicopter hire with a company called helicopter operators. This company had won the contract several times previously and were used to flying hydrographers.

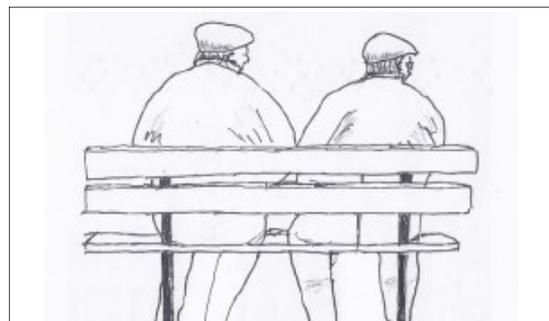
The war in Vietnam had all but ended by this time with the fall of Saigon only weeks away. The US had been steadily reducing troop numbers for the previous few years, withdrawing and demobilising thousands of men. Among this group, there were thousands of highly trained helicopter pilots wanting to keep flying, seeking work wherever they could find it. One of this group, Peter Underhill, found employment with Doug Braun's company, "Helicopter Operators", mustering cattle during the dry and flying hydrographers in the wet.

Peter was a wizened, small framed man who didn't instil much confidence in me. I thought he looked old but was probably only in his thirties. He seemed frail and shaky when I first saw him, stooped inside the machine, one hand on the stick, one on the collective and a lit cigarette dangling from his lips. I realised on that first flight that looks can be very deceptive. He was probably the best helicopter pilot I flew with during my career.

The helicopter was an old Korean era Bell B47 (B47G-3B), the type you see in MASH. The Lycoming engine didn't produce much power and with three of us and service equipment aboard, performance was seriously challenged. On one occasion, I noticed that the pilot veered away from the highway we were following. This deviation didn't make much sense to me as our new route was a little longer. I figured that the change in direction was about avoiding the headwind we were battling but when I questioned the pilot later he said it was because he didn't like being passed by the semitrailers on the highway. I'm not sure if he was joking or not.

Each of our remote gauging stations had a designated helicopter pad, a glorified name for a small clearing with, sometimes, a few white painted rocks around the perimeter. It was the job of the responsible hydrographer to keep the pads cleared of regrowth, an arduous and time-consuming task often neglected or underdone. As a result, the pads would slowly shrink in size over the years, requiring a tight landing or resulting in the pilot landing at an alternative location, always somewhat distant from the objective. Helicopters don't take off and land as you would expect. Unless the machine is highly powered and lightly loaded, it doesn't take off and land vertically. Instead, it lands like a conventional aircraft, but at a very steep angle. Our Bell B47 was not highly powered and was always highly loaded and needed every inch of the helicopter pad to take off. One manoeuvre in a tight pad was for the pilot to hover close to the ground, back the helicopter as far back as possible with the tail rotor just missing the undergrowth and then charge forward until the ground lift effect was sufficient to allow the helicopter to clear the tree line. This was always a heart stopping moment for me but it didn't seem to faze the ex-army pilot. I much later read a book by Robert Mason, another US Vietnam helicopter pilot who described some of the unconventional techniques he used to get his Huey in the air when evacuating wounded from "hot" landing zones.

Continued next page ...



My daughter gave me a subscription to Netflix but there's no viewer guide so I don't know when I can watch any of the programmes.

My Life of Hydrography (continued)

I recognised most of these. I wonder if our pilot was remembering the cry of battle and the zing of bullets passing through the helicopter as he performed these manoeuvres. I was too young and ignorant of history to ask the pilot these questions but I never forgot the experience. After I became a party leader, helipads at my gauging stations were always well maintained.

Working from a helicopter was nowhere near as glamorous as you would imagine, but I always enjoyed the final landing for the day. This was invariably outside a pub or motel and often drew a crowd of amused locals. The morning take-off in the Bell was not always a dignified affair. The self-starter on the engine was problematic necessitating, on occasions, the use of the hand crank for the first start of the day. Our gear was tied to litters on either side of the machine. If the machine needed cranking, we would have to unload of the litters to access the hole for the crank handle. After the engine fired, we would reload the gear, jump aboard and head off. This performance amused the locals who had gathered to watch us take off.

My time in Mt Isa passed quickly, servicing recorders, measuring flow and doing the paperwork on John Pitts' kitchen table. I saw my first colour TV in the bar of the Overlander Hotel, amazed at the vibrant colours and the colossal price. When it was time to return, the road to Townsville was still cut. John stayed to wait for the road to reopen but I was flown back to Townsville on what was my first commercial flight. I can still remember that aircraft, a Douglas DC3.

My time in Mackay ended that year, just after my twenty-first birthday. The transfer list was circulated in June and both Geoff and I were on it. Geoff was going south to Emerald and I was going to Townsville. The three-man team experiment in Mackay office came to an end with only one replacement transferred in. Laurie Patterson would replace us both, staying his whole career in Mackay, and finally retiring there, marking the end of a hydrographic party stationed in that city.

The adventures of Ray Alford have afforded me great enjoyment. Many thanks, Ray, for your valuable contribution—Ed.

Memories of Leslie Dam

Part 6

Hector Macdonald

About a year later when I was in Design Branch in Head Office, it was decided that more soil samples should be collected from the site. This time I was sent out with Walter Peak, an elderly executive engineer who had just joined the Commission after finishing up as the Project Engineer on the Nerang Dam. Walter, who shortly after became a Senior Engineer and then Chief Investigation Engineer, was a thorough gentleman. (He was the father of Patty Purves, wife of John, who lives at Brookfield. From the early 1980s until the present time the Brookfield Runners, a group of about ten, including John, Andy Orr and me, at 5.30 on Saturday mornings, has assembled at the junction of Gold Creek Road and Savages Road, run until 7 am, and then had a cup of tea and toast at the Purves's house.) Walter and I stayed at the Inglewood Hotel. It was run by the Ziegenfuss family. One of their sons ended up working for me in 1973 in the Department of Harbours and Marine in our office in Manning Street, South Brisbane. Walter was a man of sober habits but I spent a night or two in the bar with Frank Lennon. Before we left town Frank said to Walter – "I'll put my seal on this fellow". He was telling Walter I was a reliable bloke because I could go the distance with Frank at the bar. I don't know if Walter was impressed.

The collection of soil samples on this occasion was a different exercise from the previous one. This time we were taking samples from the side of the hole. Walter

was the brains, I was the work horse. On average the holes extended about 25 feet into the ground. This meant getting a 24 foot wooden extension ladder and lowering it into the hole. I went down the ladder to the bottom of this three foot diameter earth-walled tube. I carried a torch, a bucket of metal tubes about one and a half inches in diameter and about eight inches long, a hydraulic ram, about two feet long and capable of extending to around three feet, a piece of timber to place between the front of the ram and the back of the hole, and a hand pick. The idea was to force a metal cylinder into the side of the hole at various depths. These depths were measured by using a tape hanging down the side of the hole from the top.

The job was not easy. I had to balance on the ladder at various heights (if I had fallen down the hole I don't know whether anybody would have managed to get me out), hold the metal cylinder in position, balance the ram on my shoulder, pack the timber between the base of the ram and the wall and pump the handle on the ram so that it expanded and pushed the tube for its full length into the hole. After the tube was pushed in, I then had to dig around it with the hand pick to extract it, thereby obtaining a relatively undisturbed soil sample from the hole. I worked hard for a week doing this. Nobody else was considered suitable to do the work as they were not 'technical' enough. Walter stayed at the top and gave me encouragement. Eventually the job was over and I was pleased to leave Coolmunda and head back to the comforts of Head Office..

Continued next page ...

Memories of Leslie Dam (continued)

I have never been back to see this dam which was built a few years later. Shortly after my return I was sitting at my drawing board in Design Branch in mid-1963 when Frank Learmonth, the Chief Construction Engineer, and Walter's immediate boss, came around to see me. "Walter told me you did a good job out there at Coolmunda", he said. "We'll have to get you back in construction again one day." They never did.

One day in January 1963, I was in the office at my desk reading some plans when Taylor came out of his office. He announced to me in front of everyone else in the office that I had been transferred to Design Branch in Head Office as from the following Monday week. Taylor was hoping I would be upset. How could I – I had travelled to Brisbane each weekend for 40 of the last 44 weeks at the dam. I had thoroughly enjoyed my year or so in construction – I loved the work and I liked the people with whom I worked. However, I had seen what happens to people who spend too many years working in construction camps. Single men became alcoholics. I had a good idea of what construction life was all about. I was happy to move on.

Epilogue

Around 1989 my son Lachlan and I headed off for a few days on a camping expedition. I revisited the Warwick Golf Club and we played golf together – the same course on which I had first played. Later that day we visited Leslie Dam. When I walked around the site of the works and saw where the office had been, where the canteen had been, where my twelve feet by eight feet room had been, where the aggregate crushing plant had operated, where the batching plant had mixed its 100,000 cubic yards of concrete, and where the head tower and tail tower had stood, I experienced a feeling

of nostalgia and was reminded of the part in Book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid* which I read at university in the early 1980s. Here Aeneas visits the old defences of the Greeks on the outskirts of Troy and reminisces about battles hard fought:

*hic Delopum panus, hic saevos vendebat Achilles
classibus hic locus, hic acie certare solebant.*
(Here is the echelon of the Delopians, here the cruel Achilles was camped. Here the fleet was moored, and here was the usual ground for pitched battle.)

But 27 years later all the people and all the town had gone. Even after I had been on site for only ten minutes or so during my visit I felt that I was the only one from the whole town who had remained, that all the others had left without me. There was a caretaker at the dam and he lived in one of the staff houses which had been left on site. I told him who I was. He did not care. I asked him where I could camp for the night. He did not know. Lachlan and I left.

I have really enjoyed Hector's account and have been delighted to share it with our readers.

For the record. Hector did return to Head Office and worked in Designs and then Underground Water. He then took a promotion to the Department of Harbours and Marine. More promotions followed before he eventually accepted an offer of early retirement at the age of 70 after 54 years of Government service. In the meantime, he had pursued his career with the Army Reserve, rising to the rank of Brigadier He also continued his studies, including the Latin referred to, and obtained a degree in Law.

He wrote "A Long Letter to my Children" which I have been privileged to read and from which his memories of Leslie Dam have been reprinted.

Many thanks, Hector – Ed.

Connections

When Ipswich Girls' Grammar School was opened in 1892, the Secretary to the Board of Trustees was William Field. His daughter Susan was a first day enrolment. His daughter Jessie followed and won a Fairfax medal, competing against students from NSW as well as Queensland. Jessie later became the mother of George William Pearce and through our mutual connection with IWSC, George returned his mother's medal to the school where it is now displayed in the museum.

In 1934, 'old girl' Phyllis Browne married Walter Peak. Their daughter Patty is a friend of Hector Macdonald (see page 6), Walter's son John sent his two daughters to IGGS.

Another 'old girl' Joyce Williams married Peter Phillips who joined the Board of Trustees, becoming its Chairman. Their daughter Catherine became a Grammar Girl.

And in 1966 'old girl' Helen Birrell married Ian Pullar. Their two daughters, Margaret and Jean, attended IGGS.



St Barnabas Bulletin Board
Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Answers to Terry's Trivia (page 9)

1. (ii) Germany; 2. (iii) The Havana syndrome;
3. (ii) Caroline Kennedy; 4. (iii) hated to hear people whistling; 5. (i) trypanophobia; 6. (i) Liverpool; 7. (iv) WA; (good old Marble Bar)
8. (ii) Dart; 9. (iii) Verry Elleegant; 10. (v) Muttiah Muralithiran

HEALTH *and beauty*

In This Together?

It was confidently predicted that lockdowns imposed by Governments in response to the COVID pandemic would lead to an increase in togetherness and a consequent upsurge in the birth rate.

But the world's biggest manufacturer of condoms has confirmed that the pandemic has devastated its sales. Less than two years ago Karex, a Malaysian company that makes one in five of the world's condoms, was predicting that stocks would run out because of demand from house-bound lovers. Instead it has suffered a 40% drop in sales as condom use and distribution has slumped.

Can it be that in normal times the use predominantly took place outside the marital home? Perhaps by couples who were married, but not to each other?

Karex has been forced into the manufacture of an alternative product – rubber surgical gloves. The report did not specify a use.

On the other hand, sales of plants and gardening equipment, along with computer and board games, have surged. Staying home might have become a different sort of fun.



Exercise those Brain Cells

Q. Lily is so bored with her Maths homework that she starts to flick through her text book. She calculates that there are 615 digits in total that make up the numbers at the bottom of the pages and that 237 of those numbers occur after the page her homework questions are on. What is the number on the next page of Lily's Maths book?



Edgar Degas 1834 – 1917
L'Absinthe



“Some sort of a date this is. I might as well have stayed home and watched TV.”

The Good Oil on Health

It has long been touted for its health benefits, particularly when it comes to protecting the heart, but olive oil's reputation as a life-enhancing elixir was boosted dramatically with a new study showing it can slash your risk of dying prematurely from a much wider range of diseases.

According to a team of Harvard nutritionists who reported their findings in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, you don't even need much of it to make a difference. They showed that just a teaspoon of olive oil daily was associated with a 12% reduced risk of death from all causes compared with those who rarely or never consumed olive oil.

Findings showed participants experienced a 29% reduced risk of early death from neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimers and Parkinsons disease.

Sugar is Sweet...

Every year Australians consume 2.4 billion litres of sugary drinks. And they are making themselves sick.

Every sugary soft drink contributes to obesity and preventable diseases like type-2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some cancers, the Australian Medical Association warns. Doctors are calling for Australia to follow the UK in introducing a tax on the sugar in the drinks. “Sugary drinks used to be a treat, but they've become an everyday product, bringing addiction and health problems.”

Grandchildren beware.

Answer to last Issue's Teaser

OLD AGE

Heart of stOne, leading Light,
deaD end, top Actress, mid niGht,
wedgE tail.

A Sign of the Times

On a pharmacy window

**To the burglar who stole our anti-depressants,
We hope you're happier now.**

Mondegreens

In Newsletter 96, it was asserted that some people used the expression "it all goes well" having misheard "it augurs well." This is a good example of a **mondegreen**, a name coined by American writer Sylvia Wright in 1954, writing that as a girl, when her mother read to her "The Bonny Earl of Moray" she misheard the line "They've slain the Earl of Moray and layd him on the green" as "Lady Mondegreen" .

We have found it necessary to watch television programmes from overseas countries such as the UK (particularly Scotland) using subtitles. Quite frequently the subtitling service remains on when we revert to normal free-to-air Australian programmes. While I don't envy whoever has to write the subtitles from the spoken word within a few seconds, I do derive considerable amusement from the mondegreens that occur, a few examples of which follow:

- People applying for exemptions to cross the Queensland border have to tickle (tick all) the boxes.
- With ex-cyclone Seth off the coast, it will be Wendy (windy) on the Gold Coast.
- There was a condom (column) of refugees from Myanmar.
- With the weather break, the teams may be ordered off for (off for the order of) a short time.
- .. some sons (the Thompsons) drove into the floodwaters ...
- There are 60,000 in the Army, half way then (half of them) in the Reserves.
- ... the Deutsche (Duchess) of Cornwall ...

Demoralising In Tent

We had hoped for some fine Autumn weather for our annual Easter vacation.

The first night we huddled together and got wet, to our great consternation.

The grandkids complained and went manic, we feared this an ominous portent.

There was really no reason to panic, 'twas a quick scudding shower and a poor tent.

I don't know how nomenclature is decided upon. In the verse above, each line finishes with what real poets call a feminine ending. And yet each line has a dangly bit at the end.

Terry's Trivia

Answers on page 7

1. Which country started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree? (i) England; (ii) Germany; (iii) Austria; (iv) France; (v) New Zealand; (vi) Fiji.
2. US Vice-President Kamala Harris went to Vietnam recently, but her flight was delayed for three hours while her office assessed the risk of what? (i) A Covid +ve passenger; (ii) A strange smell; (iii) The Havana syndrome; (iv) A bomb threat; (v) Donald Trump being on board.
3. Who has President Biden nominated as US Ambassador to Australia?: (i) Barack Obama; (ii) Caroline Kennedy; (iii) George Bush; (iv) Oprah Winfrey; (v) George Clooney; (vi) Hillary Clinton.
4. Churchill and Hitler had one thing in common. They: (i) were left-handed; (ii) were short-sighted; (iii) hated to hear people whistling; (iv) smoked cigars; (v) had the same middle name.
5. An extreme fear of injections or hypodermic needles is: (i) trypanophobia; (ii) agoraphobia; (iii) acrophobia; (iv) pteromerhanophobia; (v) entomophobia.
6. The world's oldest public city park 1847 (on which the design of Central Park, New York was based) is in: (i) Liverpool; (ii) Paris; (iii) London; (iv) Vienna; (v) Mumbai; (vi) Tokyo; (vii) Antwerp; (viii) Edinburgh.
7. BOM has forecast heatwaves to kick off summer, predicting that one Aussie town would become the hottest place in the world. Which state was it in?(i) Qld; (ii) NSW; (iii) SA; (iv) WA; (v) Tas.
8. Recently NASA launched a one-way mission to crash a spacecraft into an asteroid in an attempt to change its course. What's the acronym for the mission? (i) Punch; (ii) Dart; (iii) Bruce; (iv) Bang; (v) Trump.
9. Which horse won the Melbourne Cup in 2021?: (i) Makybe Diva; (ii) Spanish Mission; (iii) Verry Elleegant; (iv) Incentivise; (v) Fine Cotton.
10. Several batsmen have hit the first ball of their innings for six but only one has done this three times. Who?: (i) Don Bradman; (ii) Viv Richards; (iii) Ian Botham; (iv) Chris Gayle; (v) Muttiah Muralitharan; (vi) Majid Khan .



"I'm lucky if my wife speaks two words to me all day."

"I should be that lucky!"

Book Club

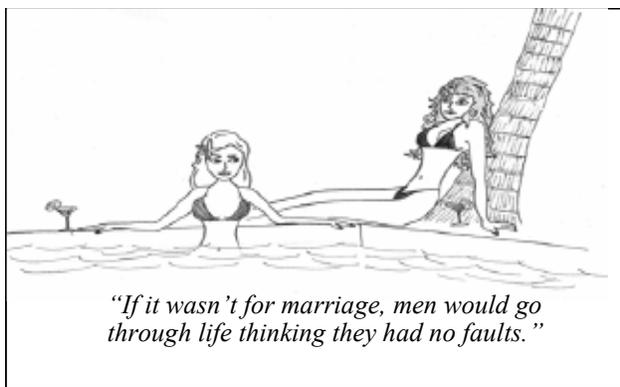
Members will no doubt be familiar with Lisa Millar who currently hosts *ABC News Morning* and from her regular reporting during the years when she was ABC Correspondent in USA and the UK. Here is the opportunity to get to know her much better by reading her highly entertaining book *Daring to Fly*.

Lisa was a Queensland country girl, born in Kilkivan. Her book opens, 'We spoke two languages in our family – English and aviation.' For Millar, flying was the most natural way to get around, until the incident in 1993 when, as an ABC reporter, she was on a six-seater charter plane and one motor died, coinciding with a drop in altitude that left her with a fear of flying. She also had a metaphorical fear of flying which led her to push herself to the limits during thirty years of journalism.

Lisa has certainly flown in her career and the book tells her story in an extremely enjoyable way even though events have been far from enjoyable for her at times.

This book was of particular interest to me. My daughter Margaret met her when they both attended UQ and they have maintained their friendship ever since. I was moved to get Lisa's email address from Margaret and send a congratulatory note which elicited a very warm reply.

Ian Pullar



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Starting from the last Newsletter, I am now passing on recommendations of enjoyable books by readers other than me. I am hoping for many more contributions as I know there are many genres in which I have no interest but many others do. Just title, author and a brief comment will suffice – Ed.

(From Gary Corbett) Bernard O'Reilly *Green Mountains*. An oldie but a goodie. An account of the finding of the Stinson crash and then the establishment of the resort known as O'Reillys.

(From Judy Ferrier) Heather Rose *Bruny*. Set on Bruny Island, the skills of the lead character are revealed in a gripping introduction and the plot twists and develops to ensure the reader's engagement. With a delightful Australian perspective, the book describes Tasmania as the wonderfully natural landscape it is.

(From Terry Loos) John Le Carre *Silverview* (published posthumously). Brilliant writing as usual and a little plot involving British spies in among the well-to-do, and centred on the Ipswich (Suffolk) area. So strong is his fan club, that a cynical bookseller at QBD suggested to me that it is likely they will 'discover' unfinished manuscripts by JLC and have them completed by others and released over the coming years.

Also Geoffrey Robertson's autobiography *Rather His Own Man*. Stories of his legal training in Sydney and then his career as an eminent barrister in London often defending the apparently indefensible, and several human rights cases around the world. Countless humorous anecdotes.

(From Michael Marley) Sonia Purnell *A Woman of No Importance*. The untold story of WW2's most dangerous spy. By 1942 Virginia Hall was the Gestapo's most urgent target, having infiltrated Vichy command, trained civilians in guerrilla warfare and sprung secret agents from Nazi prison camps. The first Allied woman to go under cover in France, her intelligence helped change the course of the war.

