WATERY SAUCES OLDIES AND BOLDIES
FOOTBALL SEASON EDITION
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NEWSLETTER NO. 9

Thanks again to Leanne White for another Newsletter format. Thanks also to those country folk who sent material for publication.

If the Newsletter is to have wide appeal it must include items about people and events in the country.

REST IN PEACE

A former Commissioner **Frank Learmonth** passed away on the 8th November, 1992, aged 78.

Frank was born in Barmedman, New South Wales in 1914, where his father was school teaching. Most of his secondary education was at Parramatta and then Newcastle High Schools. In his final year he was Dux of Newcastle High, and excelled in Rugby League Football.

He graduated from Sydney University in 1937 with both a Science and a Civil Engineering degree, and had distinguished himself on the Rugby Union field.

After graduation he worked with the New South Wales Department of Main Roads till 1940, being held in a "reserved occupation" in the early part of World War II.

Frank and Edith had been married in Sydney in 1939. From 1941 to 1946 he served with the Royal Australian Engineers, rising to the rank of Lieutenant and saw extensive service in New Guinea and Bouganville.

With the war over he returned to New South Wales Main Roads, and after serving in a number of centres, then joined the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission on dam construction for five years.

Frank joined the Queensland Irrigation and Water Supply Commission in 1954 as the Engineer in Charge of the construction of Tinaroo Falls Dam. After timely completion of this project within estimated cost, and with few accidents or industrial problems, he was appointed Chief Construction Engineer and was responsible for the building of many of Queensland's Water Supply projects.

In July 1974 he was appointed Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply a position he held until his retirement in December 1976.

• Despatched 12/3/93 Coarioo

Throughout his career, Mr Learmonth made an invaluable contribution to Queensland's rural industries through his expertise in the construction and management of water resource projects and wider water supply issues. Also Frank was always conscious of the needs and welfare of his overall workforce.

During his retirement Frank pursued with gusto his great sporting love, the game of lawn bowls. At Enoggera Bowls Club he was President soon after he retired, and about that time was the club singles champion, along with several other team championships. He never missed an opportunity in trying to convince other Commission personnel to take up the game.

Frank is survived by Mrs Learmonth, daughter Judith and sons Gregory, Malcolm and Stewart, also eleven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

From Stan Ross

Mike McEniery died on 3rd December after a long illness. He was only 56. The large number of present and past Commission staff at his Requiem Mass testified to the respect in which he was held.

Born in Brisbane on 20th February 1936, Mike was educated at parish schools, Gregory Terrace and the University of Queensland where he graduated Bachelor of Science with Geology as a major subject in 1959.

Mike was appointed to the staff in 1960 as an Assistant Hydrologist. Subsequent appointments included Research Hydrologist, Senior Hydrologist and Executive Officer (Hydrology). Apart from a short period in New South Wales in 1966/67 all of Mike's service was in Queensland and included periods in Bundaberg (twice), Biloela and Rockhampton. He took voluntary early retirement on 20th September 1991.

His knowledge of the State's groundwater resources was comprehensive yet practical and was recognised by his membership of a groundwater mapping sub-committee of the Australian Water Resources Council. He also lectured on groundwater hydrology at the (old) Technical Correspondence College.

Mike was quick to recognise the changes occurring in his profession and he pushed hard for computer based systems to record groundwater data and to make it quickly available to those needing it.

One of Mike's bigger contributions to the groundwater scene was his selection and training of Hydrology cadets and his support for the Post Graduate Diploma in Hydrogeology at the (then) QUT. He arranged for his staff to use Commission projects for their studies and supervised their thesis. Mike did not subscribe to the convention of the day that cadets and hydrologists should be male and if the best applicant was female she was recommended for appointment.

Mike set very high standards for himself and expected the same from others. The writer has clear memories of Mike complaining to a high level that the apparent absence of punitive action against a staff member who had grossly and improperly misused his position was having severe effects on staff morale and was undermining the authority of those supervisors who were attempting to do their jobs responsibly.

Mike was devoted to his wife Roslyn whom he helped through many years of serious illness. During this period and during his own illness Mike accepted his lot without complaint.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Roslyn, Adrian, Christopher and Carmel.

Edward Colin Llewellyn AAUQ 1923 - 1992 Illness in the form of several strokes incapacitated Col in November 1988. After four years in Canossa Hospital he passed away in November 1992.

Col retired in July 1983. He was an inaugural member of the R.O.A. and was Honorary Treasuer at the time of his illness.

Col grew up in Cooroy. He attended the Nambour State High School and was Captain of the Open Football team.

At the age of 18 Col joined the Royal Australian Navy. He served on a number of ships, H.M.A.S. Napier, was chosen to command British occupation forces. As part of his Captain's bodyguard, Col was one of the first group of allied servicemen to land in Japan.

Following demobilisation Col rejoined the Department of Public Instruction. He was promoted to the I.W.S.C. in 1952 and held a number of senior positions including: Senior Clerk Expenditure, Senior Works Accountant, Fairbairn Dam and Administration Officer. He relieved as Secretary on many occasions and for a period was Secretary of the Border Rivers Commission.

As a young family man, Col, through evening classes obtained the qualification of Association Accountancy of the University of Queensland.

In retirement Col indulged in the hobby of growing Tillandsia. He made several trips to United States of America to add to his collection. So keen was he, he also toured South America to see them growing in their natural habitat.

As one who worked closely with Col for some 20 years, Col Taggart acknowledged Col's greatest attributes were his constant desire to do his best and his loyalty to all with whom he worked.

Our sympathy goes to his widow Daphne and daughter Susan and family.

Thanks Col

Henry James (Harry) McKean passed away suddenly at his home at Bargara Beach, Bundaberg on the 6th October 1992 at the age of 77 years.

"Harry" as he was known to most people was preparing his boat and fishing gear for one of his many fishing trips when he suffered a heart attack.

"Harry" was born in Blackall in 1915 and as a child went to school at Blackall and Many Peaks. During this time he travelled with his father who had a horse team, building the railway line around the Murgon-Monto-Eidsvold areas. He left home at the age of 15 years on his bicycle, to look for work around the Burnett Region.

He met Phyllis Glover whom he later married in 1944 in Bundaberg and they settled in Bargara in 1950. Phyllis died in December 1992.

"Harry" owned a cane farm in the Rosedale area for some time, he was also a cane and timber cutter. At one time he donated his time to provide timber for the original Pioneer Home in Bundaberg (Lithgow House). He also worked in Iron and Steel Works, and as a carpenter in other areas of Australia, including the Snowy Mountain Authority. He joined the Water Resources at the start on the Bundaberg Irrigation Area and was known as a good honest hard worker.

Thanks Roy Maxted

REGIONAL NEWS

Mareeba

The Mareeba Christmas Party at the Homestead Restaurant in Tolga, was a great success and it was nice to have a social get-together in such pleasant surroundings. The next function is planned for mid-year, more details in the next newsletter.

Len and Kay Ritchings have had Mareeba visitors in their new abode at Scarness, including Bruno and Elizabeth Schumann and Norrie and Dorren Buttenshaw, who also called in to see Kev Oswin, now at Hervey Bay. He will be remembered by many IWS "oldies".

Norm Pollard visited his daughter Joan and family in Townsville for Christmas, and Jack and Marcia Pont spend quite a lot of their time at Wonga Beach. Keith and Sheila Turner are off to Tasmania in February, making the most of the break when their Mareeba Trainland is closed. It was shown on Travelcade just before Christmas, and created quite a lot of interest.

An interesting engagement notice in the local paper joined two Water Resources families. John and Sharon Dixon's daughter Julie is engaged to Darryl, eldest son of Len Ritchings.

Thanks Keith Turner

Rockhampton

Tony Bucknell is recuperating after cataract operations.

Brian O'Callaghan is in the take away food business specialising in breakfasts.

Denis Palmer has a fruit and vegetable delivery run complete with catchy tune - far superior to Mr Whippy's.

John himself is busy supervising sub-divisional work and part time lecturing at the University.

Thanks John Moreton

REFLECTIONS ON A RAILROAD OR BIZET AND BALLAST

"Clickety-Clack along the track Clickety-Clack, Clickety-Clack. It only takes a half a day to be a thousand miles away..." so runs a lively little tune from "Carmen Jones"..... the modern U.S. negro-based version of Bizet's opera "Carmen". (You'll recall "the Torreador's Song").

Well, we visited Longreach last year and we were delighted with the absence of the "Clickety-Clack" on the Brisbane/Rockhampton leg of the trip. Some may, with nostalgia, regret the change and the loss of the heaving, thumping and creaking of the old wooden carriages. But the comparative silence of the electrically driven train is truly a pleasure! How was it achieved? The rails are produced in maximum lengths and are welded together. The question arises as to how buckling of the rail is averted, when they expand due to the sun's heat, if no expansion gaps are provided?

The answer is in the laying of the rails while they are heated up to 40°C. They are very securely anchored at that temperature, so that, when the rail becomes hotter than 40°C, it has not as great a distance to expand as it would if it were laid secured at average ambient temperature. And when the temperature rises even further, the expansion is "locked in", in the form of compression stress, by the "ballast configuration". This means that the sleepers are so tightly locked into place in every direction by a huge ballast load, mechanically compacted, that there is no direction for the rail to buckle. So it simply sits there under compression.

In two ways, the ability of continuous rail has proved that it can withstand buckling. In the Northern Territory a rail reached 70° Celcius and did not buckle. And that is a lotta Celcius! And no derailment has so far been caused by buckling, on a welded line"

Then there are the concrete sleepers. One would imagine the rail-bed noise would be far greater than it was with hardwood sleepers. However, massive resilient pads separate the steel from the concrete and in conjunction with the continuous rail have resulted in an almost silent railroad. Further advantages are that concrete sleepers do not require the destruction of beautiful hardwood trees and they are safe from boring insects, fires and rotting. Though all the improvements I have described are expensive, this is largely offset by the lowering of maintenance on rolling stock and on the railbed, while the reduction of noise has increased passenger utilisation.

Well, I was going to write about our trip to Longreach's Stockman's Hall of Fame, and the Russian Crown Jewellery Exhibition and the South Bank, and Whales, and the Model Trains Exhibition - but there is a limit on space in the newsletter. Next issue, perhaps..... No, we did not get to the Olympics!

Morris S. Ochert

REMINISCENCES

Some of our older members will remember **Noel Eden**. I caught up with Noel recently and extracted some information from him which I hope you find as interesting as I did.

Noel is now 86, keeps good health and lives in the James Ommaney Lodge at Mt Ommaney. He still travels extensively. Noel graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering, Civil in 1930 from the University of Queensland.

After a period of job seeking and school teaching he became articled to Government Staff - Surveyor Eric Mellor (later Surveyor-General) designing tobacco farms for closer settlement at Mareeba and then Laura. When the tobacco market collapsed he moved to survey work in rainforest out from Mackay. This was followed by change of scenery to Quilpie, Eromanga, Thargomindah etc establishing the precise latitude and longitude of features for subsequent use in the State's survey maps. He became an Authorised Surveyor in 1933.

The Story Bridge was then on the drawing board and Noel began work under Dr Bradfield and (Sir) James Holt first on engineering design work and later, because of his surveying qualifications, on the resumption of land for the bridge, approaches etc.

Noel was then offered a position with the Irrigation Commission. To quote Noel "The Irrigation Commission had fallen on evil days and was being resuscitated". Initially paid as a temporary assistant draftsman he later became District Engineer at St George where he remained until 1948 before moving to Head Office in the Artesian and Stock Water Supplies Branch.

Later following a successful and much publicised appeal against the appointment of two executive engineers, Noel was appointed District Engineer, Mareeba and Project Engineer in charge of channel construction on the Mareeba Dimbulah scheme. He spent only a few weeks there before being appointed Senior Engineer, Rivers and Streams Branch in Brisbane. Later he also had responsibility for the Artesian and Stock Water Board.

In 1955 Noel was appointed Director of Water Resources of the Northern Territory based in Darwin. The Water Resources Branch operated in accordance with an ordinance similar to the Water Acts of the eastern states. Initially it was a "one man show". When he left 11 years later the Department had the second largest staff complement and budget in the Territory. Second only to the Native Welfare Branch.

The creation of the Water Resources Branch was triggered by the private rice growing project at Humpty Doo. Assessment of surface and groundwater was greatly expanded with the injection of funds under the Commonwealth Water Resources Assessment program. The Branch also became responsible for water supplies for Northern Territory towns and some aboriginal communities.

For six months of his time in the Northern Territory, Noel acted as Administrator of the Territory with responsibilities somewhat similar to those of State Governors. During this period he was host to visiting dignitaries especially during cold southern weather.

After retirement from the Commonwealth in 1966 Noel returned for a further 5 years to the Irrigation Commission in Brisbane on special duties for the then Commissioner. These included a review of the operation of the Great Artesian Basin, electronic data processing of water data and the groundwater resources of the Bundaberg area.

HENRY HANNAM

The following letter was received by Stan Ross after he had contacted Mrs Hannam following Henry's death.

Dear Stan,

I sincerely hope you will keep me in touch with the association happenings.

I always felt I was part of Henry's work in the I.W.S.C. oh such happy memories. Felt we all were very close for such a workforce.

So many still keep together and what a great group came to pay their respect to Henry. The church was packed and the singing loud and clear. I held my head high and felt very proud that Henry had not been forgotten.

Felt it quite an Honour when Mareeba Shire Council named "The Henry Hannam Drive" after him.

Henry loved the north and certainly knew a lot about it.

He worked hard and long, did not have the opportunities to attend University, did it all the hard way.

We were married 57 years so we did a lot together, but the years at Mareeba with the I.W.S.C. were a great challenge.

So many came to see the scheme, so many came to work on it. We all worked together and we all still pull together. What a great lot of workers.

Thank you Stan and all the members, certainly is a great lift to me and the family to know how much Henry was able to give to the Commisison over those years.

Gratefully yours,

Lottie Hannam

This letter typifies the esprit-de-corps which existed in those days in the Commisison, not only at Mareeba but right throughout the State.

RECUPERATION

Old habits die hard. After years of work in the old Rivers and Streams Branch fixing up ailing watercourses, **Stan James** had his own stream improvement program successfully undertaken in the Holy Spirit hospital in February. Stan is now ready again for the golf course.

Joy Beattie has recently returned home after eight weeks in Holy Spirit and Royal Brisbane Hospitals. Joy is looking forward to regaining her strength and playing a more active role in the growing up of her twenty eight month old triplet granddaughters.

RELAXATION

Grahame and Joyce Bertram are visiting the United Kingdom to see their son. No doubt Grahame will do a quick study of the UK electrical system to determine its applicability to Queensland, Logan in particular! electrical

Norm and Lindsay White leave in late March for the "land of the free" including Annaheim, to renew acquaintances with Mickey, Minnie and Donald and to be photographed in front of the Rin Tin Tin Memorial. Visits to famous golf courses are also on the itinerary - and speaking of golf here are some quotations from the great Mexican golfer Lee Trevino:

"My family was so poor, they couldn't afford any kids. The lady next door had me".

"There are no rich Mexicans. They make money - then call themselves Spanish".

When I turn 50, I'm just going home with my money, have it stacked in bales, and just sit there and grin".

"When Chi-Chi Rodriguez and I first hit the tour, our caddie suggested we might use a "sand wedge". I replied, "Sure. I'll have a ham-on-rye".

"They say I'm famous for my delicate iron shots - and, sure, when I hit them right they land just so, like a butterfly with sore feet". From "The Spectator"

ROSS REPORT

Since the October Newsletter, the Executive met briefly at the Christmas Lunch on 26th November, and again before the lunchtime social gathering at Mineral House on the 10th February.

The attendance of sixty-nine members, partners and friends at the Christmas lunch was the largest ever for this function. The opportunity was taken to announce an executive decision to recognise Noel Ullman's valuable service to the Association throughout its existance, with a Life Membership. Noel was the inaugural President in 1985, and has been secretary every year since, except this year, but he is still on the executive committee. Thanks from us all for the great work Noel. An appropriate memento will be presented to him at the April A.G.M.

Eighteen applications for membership were accepted at the February meeting, and these members should have received notification to that effect.

Joan and I expect to be in the Mareeba area for a few days near the end of this month. We will try to contact some of our Association members.

From Stan Ross

Don't forget the Annual General Meeting on 15th April 1993.

Bernie Credlin
EDITOR