

WATERY SAUCES Oldies and Boldies

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NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

BERNIE CREDLIN MEMORIAL EDITION

Vale Bernie Credlin (23 March 1927 - 24 July 2003)

Bernie's eulogy was delivered by Col Hazel

I am Bernie's friend. I knew him for 38 years and worked closely with him for the first 22 of those. Bernie never refused any of my requests to open any Departmental, Inter-State and International conferences that I was convening. I feel privileged then to be asked to say a few words on this occasion to open what is in effect the last gathering to be convened by him.

We have come here today to celebrate the life of Bernard Luen Credlin; to bid him farewell; to recall some of the things that made him special to us and to thank God that he was a part of our lives.

We come also to share the grief of his family who knew him better than any of us and who brought so much joy into his life. We offer them our condolences.

Bernie was born on 23rd March 1927 in the Victorian country town of Wycheproof. He was the oldest of five boys and one girl. He is survived by his sister Elaine who is with us today and by his brothers Bill and Geoff who were unable to come.

His primary, secondary and tertiary education were all in Victoria and he qualified as a Civil Engineer in 1947.

At that time T.A.Lang, the Commissioner of the newly formed Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, initiated a lively recruitment campaign which picked up a good crop of young engineering graduates and experienced engineers from interstate as well as from Queensland. Bernie was one of these recruits and all of his professional employment was in Queensland. Other recruits who went on to occupy senior executive positions in the Commission included Don Beattie, Bill Sharp and John Morse.

Bernie first worked in the construction area both in Head Office and in the country. He was involved in the construction of many small weirs around the State and if we were ever driving near any of them he would detour and proudly show me some of his earlier work.

In 1953 he was sent to St George where for 11 years he distinguished himself as an excellent District Engineer and respected member of the local community.

While at St George he met and married a young nurse called Rosina Sherrin, affectionately known by all as Sherry.

They had two daughters, Elizabeth and Tricia. He also formed a strong friendship with a Boring Inspector called Dick Hurn and a Surveyor called George Toone who also became part of the family.

Dick believed in God and that God was supreme in all things. However, Mr Credlin was a close second. Dick thought the world of Bernie and the friendship was strong and lifelong.

George spent most Christmases with the family as well as sharing special occasions such as birthdays and weddings.

Both of these very dear friends predeceased Bernie.

Bernie developed a second passion while at St George; a love of country Queensland and the people who lived there. This passion stayed with him to the end of his life.

Bernie always had a sense of devilment but also a sense of fair play. He told me many stories of his St George days but I will relate only one. He had a policeman friend named Andy who, because he was invariably quite busy on weekends, often had a couple of days off mid week.

Under new management

This edition of the Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Bernie Credlin. Whilst Bernie was formerly a valuable and valued officer of the Water Resources Commission, we are particularly recognising his contribution to the Retirees Association. Not only did he edit 34 issues of the Newsletter over 10 years, he was generous to the Association with his wisdom, humour and friendship. Personally, I was extremely grateful to Bernie for the role he played as Chairman of the Steering Committee for the People's History project. You will be sadly missed, old friend.

Not long before he died, Bernie did me the honour of asking if I would take on the editorship. I am happy to do this, though I would obviously have preferred different circumstances for the change. I am very aware, and members have gone out of their way to advise me, that Bernie's will be a difficult act to follow. Nevertheless, like our contemporary sporting 'heroes', I am prepared to 'give it my best shot'. But I cannot do it alone. Please keep me informed of any news items that could be of interest to our members. And please let me know if there are any particular features that you think should be included – or excluded!

Ian Pullar, Editor

Occasionally Bernie would take him with him if he were going on a field trip. On one such occasion the trip involved an overnight stay. While they were driving on the first day an insect flew in through the car window and stung Bernie near his eye and the eye swelled up. It was still swollen when Bernie next came into his office and he noticed his staff smirking and giggling. He didn't know what was up until he finally found out from his typiste. Andy had come in earlier and told everyone that Bernie had received the black eye as a result of being hit by a drunk in the hotel as Bernie went to assist a person who was being molested. However, Andy asked that they not mention the injury to Bernie as he would be extremely embarrassed at not being able to defend himself. At lunch as Bernie was walking down the road he came across Andy's wife. "That was wonderful luck that Andy had yesterday," said Bernie. "What was that?" she asked. "Didn't he tell you that he won £100 on the races?" "No he did not," she said "but I will make sure that he gives me half."

Bernie was also a fine judge of people and occasions. While he was at St George Fred Haigh was Commissioner. Fred was an excellent Engineer but a very hard taskmaster. He used to visit St George on a regular basis and since he was Commissioner he felt it was his duty to find areas for improvement. If the visit continued for an extended time without him being able to find anything wrong he used to get very irritable. Bernie told me that he overcame this problem by making sure that there was something obviously wrong at the beginning of the visit. Fred would find this and relax and they both enjoyed the rest of the visit.

There is a saying that if you want to teach Johnny Latin it is more important to know Johnny than to know Latin.

Fred thought the world of Bernie and in 1965 brought him to Head Office to take up the position of Executive Engineer Groundwater. I'm sure that Bernie regarded this as a demotion as he was being taken away from his beloved western area.

We young engineers in the Groundwater area didn't know much about this irrigation fellow from St. George so we sneaked around to where was sitting to get a look at him. Unfortunately we didn't get a good look because as you know Bernie was vertically challenged and was hidden behind his desk. However, as we worked with him over the next couple of decades he grew in stature in our eyes and might as well have been ten feet tall.

At this time the Australian Water Resources Council was formed and one of its first tasks was to report on the Water Resources of Australia. One of the findings of this report was the glaring deficiency of groundwater education in our tertiary institutions. Bernie was a member of the first Groundwater Committee of the AWRC and was proactive in setting up an Education Sub-Committee and the establishment of Groundwater Schools to educate our Engineering practitioners and Hydrologists. These schools are still being held and are a valuable resource for the water industry.

Bernie was tireless and meticulous in his pursuit of excellence in everything that he did. He did not seek recognition for his own efforts but rather identified and encouraged those younger officers in all fields who were doing their best to serve the people of Australia in the development and management of our

water resource. At the same time he abhorred laziness and actively pursued and tried to root out those who abused the system and who, by association, gave others a bad name.

When I was District Engineer at Longreach Bernie was one of the very few senior officers who used to make the effort to visit the area. He was invariably accompanied by Garnie Johnson. They used to come every year to see how we were going and to offer encouragement. Their visit was greatly appreciated.

Bernie progressed through the Commission as Chief Investigation Engineer, Assistant Commissioner and was Deputy Commissioner at the time of his retirement.

However, before his retirement he and Don Beattie saw the need for and helped to establish the Water Resources Retired Officers Association. When he retired Bernie devoted himself to this endeavour as well and was a wonderful editor of the Association's newsletter up until just a few weeks ago when he resigned because he was sick.

He was a great historian. The newsletters were always extremely interesting because of the historical content, the information about members' health and activities and the many humorous anecdotes which he researched and included.

Bernie was a very compassionate man. He told me once "Col, if I am ever out of town or even out of the country and any of the Commission staff dies or is seriously ill I want you to let me know immediately no matter where I am." I did this and he always contacted the family immediately. If any retired staff members were in hospital, Bernie would go to visit them and he would go during his lunch break.

If I were away on a field trip for an extended period he would check to see that my wife and family were well. I know that he would do this for other officers as well.

With this care for people it is no wonder that in his retirement he involved himself in TAD (Technical Aid for the Disabled).

And yet with all this passion for his work and his fellow human beings, his greatest love was for his family. In recent years his grandchildren have added a new dimension to his capacity to love.

He loved to work with his hands and made many wonderful things, but I think his proudest achievement was building a beautiful laminated wooden rocking horse for his grandchildren.

Bernie had a major operation ten years ago and he believed that he should have died then. If he had he would never have met his grandchildren, Alexander, Sam and Nicholas, or they him. He told me that he regarded every day in the last ten years as a bonus and he lived his life accordingly.

Sherry, Elizabeth, Tricia, Wally and kids you have been blessed in having Bernie in your lives and I for one thank you for allowing him to be part of ours.

We will miss him, but most importantly we will remember him. He has helped shape our world for the better. What he has done in his life will outlive him.

Colin Hazel

Donation to Cancer Fund

The Executive of the Association spent some time in discussing suitable ways of recognising Bernie's contribution. It was agreed that a donation of \$250 be made to the Queensland Cancer Fund in Bernie's name.

The Good Old Days at St George

The February 2003 Newsletter reported on the reunion at St George and mentioned an address by Bernie Credlin. The following is a more complete version of his text, evocative of Bernie's interests and abilities.

When I drove into St George on 17th November 1953 my first reaction was to turn around and go back. I spent a lot of spare time in the next few months applying for jobs in the South and other parts of Queensland. By the time replies and offers of work began arriving I had started to enjoy St George and its people.

Before talking about the characters that built and managed Jack Taylor Weir, Beardmore Dam and the Irrigation Area, perhaps I could say a few words about an earlier group of people. These people made an equally large contribution to the prosperity of the St George district over more than half a century before the weir was built. There were certainly some characters among them.

I speak of those fellows from the old Irrigation Department and from private industry who put down the excavated tanks on Stock Routes, drilled artesian bores and surveyed bore drains that watered a parched land extending from the Dividing Range to the South Australian Border and from New South Wales to the Tropic of Capricorn. People like Alec Creed (drilling contractor), the Coonans, and later the Kellys, the Wilsons, the Bunyans and Bob Kings should be remembered.

In the 1890s Rigby surveyed 12 districts looking for potential irrigation areas. One of these was the Balonne/ Condamine Rivers from below St George to above Warwick. He suggested diverting water from the river to billabongs and lagoons as offstream storages as we now see at Buckinbah and Moolabah. In those days long before the railway to Dirranbandi, Rigby also commented on the possibility of a series of weirs and locks on the river between St George and Chinchilla so that barges could carry wool and other produce from St George and district to the railhead at Chinchilla. That prediction certainly did not eventuate but his foresight on the St George irrigation area became a reality 60 odd years later.

In the early 1900s B E Shaw refined Rigby's St George suggestions and one of his weir sites became Jack Taylor Weir. Shaw was also active in selecting storage sites and likely irrigation areas in other parts of the State.

Charlie Oglivie was an institution in the Department from 1913 until his retirement in the late 1940s. A lot of his work was in the Southwest. Much of our understanding of the Artesian Basin is due to the efforts of Charlie and his friend Professor Whitehouse. Charlie and his lateral thinking habits were a problem for his bosses in Brisbane, but their criticisms usually went right over his head.

On one occasion he was collecting data on the western side of Cooper Creek when it flooded and he could not get back to his District Office. So he drove the car to Adelaide, put it on a ship and freighted it back to Brisbane. His superiors were apoplectic.

A fair bit of Charlie's work was done from a bicycle so he travelled light. Apart from a bit of measuring gear, he usually carried a loaf of bread, a tin of jam and piano music. Charlie was a gifted pianist and was always welcome at homesteads where he entertained his hosts until late in the night.

Another District Engineer here was George Brown. George did an outstanding job establishing a very large number of Bore Water Trusts and in managing the underground water resources of this part of Queensland. He was highly regarded nationally for his knowledge of the Artesian Basin.

Noel Eden was DE from the mid-1930s to the late 1940s. Noel was also an authority on water resources. After a shift to Brisbane, he moved to Darwin as head of the Territory's water department and at times acted as Territory Administrator, equivalent to a State Governor.

During part of Noel's time in St George clothes, petrol, tobacco etc were rationed or in short supply due to the War. Mrs Eden was a chemist and the mother of a young child. She was much aware of the need for hygiene in the handling of foods. She was appalled one morning to find a cigarette butt in the milk billy. She was waiting next morning to confront Reg Tucker, the milkman. "Mr Tucker, I found a cigarette butt in the milk yesterday." Reg's answer was, "Dearie, dearie me Missus, and tobacco so hard to get and all."

No account of Irrigation people at St George would be complete without stories about Wally Stevenson. Wally was a driller and moved to the Department in 1917. He became a Boring Inspector in 1925 and later a Supervisor. Wally was a mine of information on drilling and handling people. He was able to pass these qualities on to others. It is probably no coincidence that two of his District Engineers, Beattie and Eden, went on to head up Departments, and two more, Sharp and myself, reached the second top level.

During World War I before joining the Department Wally had the pub at Dunkeld south of Mitchell. He was called on to subdue a foreign customer of enemy origin who ran amok as a consequence of bullying by the locals. It was all Wally could do to overpower the customer and during the altercation his trousers became badly torn. Just when Wally finally had his opponent on the ground, the foreigner made a last ditch attempt to grab Wally's private parts. An onlooker raced in and sought to protect the parts by cupping his hands around them. "I'll look after these Wally," he said, "and you get on with the job." Wally lost concentration, the foreigner got to his feet and they started all over again.

Another story about Wally concerns the funeral of Ted Stubbs and a visit to the District Office by a particularly officious Public Service Inspector. Ted was a friend of Wally's and Patron of the St George Cricket Club. I was Secretary of the Club and was instructed to represent it at the funeral. Wally also wanted to go. The Public Service man was most upset because his inspection was being delayed. Ultimately we got away from the office and under Wally's guidance headed for the Presbyterian Church. We joined many cars outside the Church and were surprised when a radiant Patsy Crothers emerged from the Church on the arm of her new husband. A wedding, not a funeral.

Wally then thought that maybe Ted was an Anglican so we sped to that Church only to find the cortege had long gone. So back to the office. "How did the funeral go?" asked the Inspector aggressively. We told him we missed it. "Oh dear I am sorry. It was all my fault", he admitted. His whole tone changed and he could not be more cooperative. We got our best report ever. Wally had suggested we tell him what really happened, but we decided to let sleeping dogs lie.

Wally was also a Councillor of the Balonne Shire. He just stood for election and got in. He didn't tell Brisbane and when they found out they were most upset. Wally still served out his term and did a good job but the rules were changed for many years after.

Another first class Boring Inspector was Harry Plint. Harry had his own boring plant before the War and after lengthy service overseas during which he contracted serious and permanent illness, he joined the Department. Harry didn't say much but when he did, everyone knew exactly what he meant. Harry was also a great worker for the town and his efforts include a big contribution to founding and building the Memorial Club.

Dick Hurn is another who will be remembered by many as hard working and tremendously loyal to the Department and to his friends. Dick came from Stonehenge and did not have the benefit of much education. He had the Sisters at the Barcaldine Convent teach him to type because he had never been taught to write properly. Stories about Dick would fill a book. He was a contract drover at one time moving cattle from Brunette Downs in the Territory to rail-heads at Dirranbandi or Walgett. Some of these took nearly a year in the saddle. Dick was also a very resourceful bloke. When driving he was very much aware that his employees might get toothache when they got near towns thus getting a day or two on the grog. So he carried dental forceps and if one of the men got a toothache they got a stiff drink of rum and Dick removed the fang. He certainly cut down on toothache. He told me he later threw the forceps into an outback cattle dip because he didn't want them to fall into *unauthorised* hands.

The workforce on the weir and the irrigation area had its fair share of characters and good blokes. It is unfair to single out names but

people like Jim Cannell and Don Spence spring to mind for their work for the Area and for Scouting and for the Memorial Club, Stefan Poplawski, George Blackmore and Paddy Smiley are remembered for their work and for their humour. Stefan is alleged to have asked, "Did you oil the boxing gear, Georgie?" which was translated to mean "Did you put oil in the gearbox of the truck?" before going bush for a week. Kevin Dohle and Charlie Kotyza also come easily to mind. They were good people.

Ossie Petrie also earns a mention. Ossie had a prodigious memory and sold spare parts at Active Service Motors. He came to us after he was sacked, possibly due to the then close proximity of the Commercial Hotel. He never forgave the garage boss. Later the boss left and became Night Manager of a hotel at Caloundra. Ossie used his limited holiday pay to spend Christmas at the hotel. He made the manager's life miserable, climbing stairs delivering room service throughout the night until the money ran out.

During more than 10 years here I met some wonderful characters and St George became my home town. When Sherry, Elizabeth and I left here at the end of March 1964 we all had moist eyes. Well along the Moonie Highway the moisture in my eyes was replaced with anger as we got a puncture. The entire contents of the rear of the station wagon had to be unloaded in rain to get at the spare tyre and pet cat Paddy escaped into the bush. We were then even more sorry to have left St George.

I would like to compliment the organisers of this weekend, particularly Meegan. The huge amount of interest raised throughout Queensland and even in Darwin, is itself a tribute to her efforts.

It's good to be back.

Bernie Credlin February 2003

Top News

As with most of the state, the Far North is still dry. Here in downtown Mareeba, we have had one millimetre of rain in the last 113 days, (and well below average for a long time before that), and although we are promised some soon, nobody is reaching for his broolly. Mareeba and Atherton have bearable restrictions on hosing etc., but the pump inlet for Yungaburra which pumps directly from Lake Tinaroo, requires extending as never before. (Tinaroo is currently about 30% and dropping fast. This is the lowest any of us can remember, after the initial fill.)

The last auction sale of the last crop of tobacco to be grown in the Mareeba area, commenced in early October. Some 116 growers remained to the end, and tobacco was still probably the most valuable crop in the district. Tinaroo, originally built primarily for tobacco, has irrigated many crops during the last fifty years, and while others may have used more water, none would have been anywhere near as valuable. Sugar, mangoes, avocados and in the last few years, bananas, are possibly the major crops nowadays, but every other week there seems to be a new one. One recently noted is the growing of eucalyptus trees to feed the koalas on show for tourists around Cairns and Port Douglas.

It is with regret that we have to note the recent passing of Col Lewis, who, although he did not live up this way in recent times, was an ex-officio local, and had travelled North several times in the last few years to coincide with our get-togethers. Earlier we lost Norm Pollard, well known throughout the Commission as the patriarch

of the widespread Pollard clan. We miss them both and offer their families all our best.

News has also come through of the passing on the Sunshine Coast of Johnny Nicholls, one time District Clerk of St George and before that Works Clerk (Paymaster) at Tinaroo. He has been long since gone from the Commission, but would be remembered by quite a few, especially the old Tinaroo-ites.

First murmurings have been heard of "when is the Mareeba Christmas Do?" Nothing arranged yet, but probably very late in November.

— **from Jack Pont, Mareeba correspondent**

I'm looking for correspondents from other regions, too. Any volunteers? Ed

English as it is writ

Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at an Elingsh uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the lttteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer is at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae we do not raed ervey lteter by it slef but the wrod as a wlohe.

ceehiro

Utterly amazing! Ed.

The worm has turned

Col Hazel retired in 1995 after working for 35 years in water resources assessment. He is now applying the knowledge gained in the areas of groundwater and water quality as he works with worms, nature's soil conditioners. He is quite enthusiastic about his new venture. "Worms get bad press," says Col, "but in fact they are very clean creatures and are an essential part of our environment. Aristotle referred to them as "the intestines of the earth" and the Chinese word for worm means 'earth magic'."

Col and his son Jim own and operate Wynnum Worm Farms in Brisbane. They

sell compost worms, bait worms and small household worm farms. However, their main business is the manufacture and sale of "Healthy Grow" liquid vermicast, a liquid fertiliser which they make from the worm castings. At present they are capable of making 25,000 litres per week. "Healthy Grow" is full of microbes, which improve the health of both the soil and plant naturally. It literally puts life back into the soil. It can be used safely as a soil drench and as a foliar spray on any plant. It was "Healthy Grow" that helped the grass recover at the Gabba after the Olympics.

It is used by most bowling greenkeepers in Brisbane and by an increasing number of bowling clubs, golf clubs, sporting grounds, vineyards and broadacre farms throughout Australia. Those using "Healthy Grow" find that they are getting healthier and better structured soil, healthier crops, better yields and fewer diseases. In addition their fertiliser, fungicide and insecticide costs are plummeting. Col sees a very bright future for the product as people are moving away from the use of harmful chemicals. For more information visit Col's website www.wynnumwormfarms.com.au

I became aware some time ago, that Col Hazel had worms (but didn't use Combantrin). I'm sure lots of other retirees are pursuing activities which would be of great interest to members of the Association. Please let me know of any of which you are aware. Ed

Were they, like Drake, busy with their bowels?

Another very successful Bowls Day was held on 8th August 2003 at the Aspley Memorial Bowls Club with some 42 members, partners and friends enjoying the facilities and hospitality of the Club.

The weather started out to be mainly fine and warm, and the green was running at a fair pace which certainly made it interesting for the 'once a year bowlers', who all seemed to enjoy themselves.

The format for the day was as in previous years, starting with morning tea and selection of bowls and playing partners. The morning game commenced around 10.00 a.m., followed by lunch then an afternoon game, which was unfortunately curtailed by heavy rain. This was then followed by drinks, nibbles and presentation of prizes.

Both the morning and afternoon games were played as triples, and this seemed to be a successful type of game for all concerned. A number of small prizes were presented to the various winners by draw of the cards so that all had a chance of collecting something.

This year a number of our usual players were absent for various reasons, but fortunately other new players turned up so that the total numbers playing were similar or slightly higher than in previous years.

A small group very ably conducted the day, and thanks must go to Norm and Lindsay and Joan and Shirley for all the hard work, and particularly for the excellent luncheon provided and served.

It is to be hoped that this event will continue to attract the numbers and to provide a venue for social interaction for years to come.

Carnival of Flowers

On 19th September, about 20 members and friends took the bus and the opportunity to enjoy the Carnival of Flowers. The bus contingent was joined in Toowoomba by the Kingstons (Bundaberg) and O'Sheas (Toowoomba). The Fosters (Warwick) apparently went missing in action.

The visitors were impressed by the sights and marvelled at the ability of gardeners to fill a 24 perch block so full of flowers and flowering shrubs that the house was virtually invisible. The native gardens at Laurel Bank Park were particularly impressive. 'A great day,' was the common view.

A Forceful Report

Thirty one members and friends enjoyed a pleasant day on the Brisbane River on 19th October on board the historic tug SS *Forceful*. The Queensland Maritime Museum Association operates and maintains the tug with a fully voluntary crew.

The ship was launched in Glasgow in 1925 and saw service in Brisbane from 1926 until it was retired in 1970. During the war, she was commissioned as *HMAS Forceful* in 1942. She spent most of her service stationed in Darwin. She towed lighters to Marauke in Dutch New Guinea and on occasions acted as a rescue vessel for returning bombers. She was decommissioned as a naval vessel in October 1943, and returned to her owners on the same day. In June 1971 she became a museum ship.

It was good to have Pauline Wright (Harry's widow) with us after recent surgery. Ross and Rhonda Gomersall added greatly to our numbers by bringing nine of their friends.

The twenty crew members hosted a passenger complement of 100, including serving a fine barbecue lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

We gained a preview of our next outing to inspect the Port of Brisbane on 18th February (see page 6). As we approached the mouth of the river, an oil tanker was due to turn out of its berth. Our vessel, being 37 metres in length (and thus greater than 35), was obliged to give way to the tanker in compliance with regulations.

Jim Uhlmann

On Drink Driving
It's a sobering thought
If you aren't and get caught.

Port of Brisbane Tour

A booking has been made for a guided tour of the Brisbane Port Facility on Wednesday 18th February 2004 starting at 10:00 am. A bus has been booked - costs and pick-up details will follow.

Just to whet your appetite: the Port of Brisbane Corporation is a Government Owned Corporation established in 1994, responsible for the operation and management of Australia's third busiest container port.

With total infrastructure investment of more than \$600 million over the past 25 years, this is a deep-water port providing container terminals and bulk cargo facilities for a diversified range of commodities, 30 berths and nearly 7,500 metres of quayline.

Tours begin with a guided tour of the extensive display area and conclude with a drive-through tour of the port. The tour will take about two hours. We are investigating the possibility of having lunch at the café on site.

In mid-August 2003, the Corporation began a \$90 million expansion of the Port of Brisbane. A 4.5km seawall will form the boundary of a 230ha reclamation site at Fisherman Islands. The site will be filled with material from maintenance dredging over the next 25 years.

Mark 18th February on your calendar and join us on this very interesting tour.

OK

Peter Thompson takes a keen interest in the origin of phrases and has promised to provide me with a selection of which he is aware for future editions of the Newsletter. In the meantime, he reported a discussion on ABC FM of the origin of the phrase 'OK' or 'Okay'. According to his source, the origin lies in the American habit of deliberately misspelling words (e.g. 'nite'), resulting in the use of 'orl korrek' for 'all correct'.

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary notes it as a nickname used by US President Martin van Buren (derived from his birthplace 'Old Kinderhook'), in his 1840 re-election campaign. In my childhood, I read (in a Boys magazine) a claim that it was derived from American Indian 'oke'.

Whatever its origin, it is clearly an Americanism, so we should all agree not to use it. OK?

What goes round ...

Now that *SunWater* is a commercial entity, it competes with the private sector to sell its services. As the result of a recent success story, it has now set up an office in Tatura in the Murray River Valley to provide expertise in Irrigation Engineering.

I'm sure the irony of this situation would appeal to the Victorians such as Stuart Murray, the founder of Irrigation Engineering in Australia and later exponents such as TA Lang and Fred Haigh who brought the science to Queensland.

A Timely Thought

Be sure you don't suffer emotional strain
By getting excited and vexed -
You're never on time for the previous train,
But well in advance of the next.

NRM News

As members will be aware, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines is responsible for the management of the water resources of the State. The Department of State Development is now the lead agent for water infrastructure development and for the facilitation of water infrastructure projects in Queensland.

NRM is currently heavily engaged in developing Water Resource Plans for priority catchments (and eventually the full State) that will define how much water can be made available for new users after allowing for the needs of the environment and existing users. In addition, the Department is developing Resource Operation Plans that prescribe how water can be taken. Water users, such as SunWater require a Resource Operation Licence which describes the conditions applying to their taking of water.

No doubt Members will be aware of the current agenda of governments at both Federal and State level to try to manage the water resources and environment better. Departmental activities are very much oriented towards addressing these issues.

SunWater Snippets

SunWater has recently upgraded the Mary River Barrage fishway and has commissioned an 18 month survey by experts from Queensland Fisheries Service (DPI) to evaluate its effectiveness. The study has shown that species of fish as small as 16 mm and as large as 1.2 m had travelled through the fishway. The vertical slot fish ladder has proved most effective. Gympie dairy farmer Les Kropp has reported catching a Mary River cod - the first he's seen or caught in the Mary in 21 years.

Callide Dam has recently undergone a refurbishment of the bulkhead gate in its low-level outlet tower for the first time since the dam was completed in 1965. Because of meticulous planning, the operation to overhaul the 2.5 tonne bulkhead went without a hitch.

In the Burnett area, Walla Weir was recently renamed the *Ned Churchward Weir* to honour a local identity. Ned was a founding member of the Bundaberg and District Irrigation Committee in 1957, and he chaired it from 1976 to 1992. Ned and his Committee worked tirelessly to improve water use in the area, successfully lobbying for the construction of the Bundaberg Irrigation Scheme of which the weir is a part. While the weir has a new name, the name Walla is preserved for the impounded lake to reflect the area's history and to recognise the site's traditional owners.

Still in the Burnett area, the Government has confirmed its commitment to the construction of the Burnett River Dam. Older members of the Association may recall that the original Bundaberg Irrigation scheme involved the construction of Monduran Dam (later renamed Fred Haigh Dam) on the Kolan River, barrages on the Kolan and Burnett Rivers and Kalliwa Dam on the Burnett. Subsequently, Burnett (later Ben Anderson) Barrage and Walla (Ned Churchward) Weir were built on the Burnett and Kolan Barrage and Bucca Weir were installed on the Kolan. Subsequent investigations favoured a site at Paradise over the one at Kalliwa site. In a change of role, SunWater, instead of being the constructing authority, is assisting the Government in selecting the preferred Alliance to undertake the construction.

Information on storage levels can be found at www.sunwater.com.au.

Peter Noonan has been confirmed as CEO. And Bob Geddes has retired!

Vale Leon Henry (1919 – 2003)

Many members will have known Leon Henry who was briefly an officer of the Water Resources Commission when DLG was incorporated into WRC and then reverted to a separate department. His passing is worthy of note.

Leon de Witt Henry was born in Nambour and educated in Queensland, with his secondary education being completed in Ipswich. He was fourth in the State in the Federal Public Service Examination at the age of 16. He became a teacher, but the call of engineering led him to become a draftsman and then engineer. He joined Main Roads Department. His career was interrupted by World War II in which he enlisted, serving in Borneo and rising to the rank of Lieutenant. After the war, he moved to the Department of Local Government.

He advanced to the position of Chief Sewerage Engineer before he took on the role of Director of Water Quality and developed and administered the Clean Waters Act. His final position in the Public Service was Assistant Director (Engineering and Technical Services).

On mandatory retirement from the public service at the age of 65, Leon, not content to fade away from engineering, joined Scott Furphy Consulting Engineers where he carried out essentially full time work until last year at the age of 83. Not content to leave engineering, Leon continued to serve on the Water Industry Training Association and the Queensland Utilities and Services Industry Training Advisory Board. A few days before his death, Leon was re-elected President of the Water Industry Training Association. His professional activities were rewarded with membership of the Order of Australia.

In further contributions to education and training, Leon has been a member of the Queensland Institute of Technology Civil Engineering Course Committee, the Board of Tertiary Studies Environmental Sub-Committee, and the Capricornia College of Advanced Education Water Resource Management Course Committee.

Leon received many honours in addition to his Membership of the Order of Australia. These include: Fellow of the Institution of Engineers; Life Member of the Australian Water and Waste Water Association; Member of the International Association of Water Quality; Honorary Member of the Institute of Municipal Engineering; Honorary Member of the Local Government Engineers Association of Queensland; Honorary Member of the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia; Distinguished Life Member of the Association of Professional Engineers.

His son, Jonathon, is a former employee of the Water Resources Commission. Jon's wife, Karla, is still with DNR&M. Leon is also survived by his wife Stella, the love of his life.

The Buffalo Theory

A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keep improving by the regular killing of the weakest members.

In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally it attacks the slowest and weakest cells first. In this way, consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells first, making the brain a more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers.

– supplied by **Bill Fossett of Mareeba.**

If other members have tips for promoting health and well-being, I would be more than happy to share them – Ed.

Queen of Sheba

The ABC recently screened a program on the legendary Queen of Sheba and her biblically recorded relationship with Solomon, King of the Israelites. Although she is recorded in the Bible, the Koran and Ethiopian religious writings, not much is known of her, not even her name.

The Kingdom of Sheba was located in modern Yemen, on the site of the present Sa'dah. Its Capital, Marib, was a most important city in the 10th Century BC. It held the world monopoly of Frankincense, used extensively in cremation services by Jewish and other religions. Most importantly, Marib had a dam, built in about 1500 BC, which harnessed the biannual flow of its river and permitted the irrigation of 24,000 acres – enough to support a population of 40 to 50,000. By comparison, the entire nation of Israel at the time of Solomon (10th Century BC) numbered only about 8000.

The Sabeen Kingdom declined when cremation was replaced by burial and the demand for Frankincense plummeted. But the final nail in Marib's coffin was the failure of its dam in the 6th Century AD. The city disappeared within about a year.

Signs of our times

To do is to be – Socrates

To be is to do – Plato

To be or not to be? – Shakespeare

Be do be do be do – Sinatra

Lincoln the present to the past

In June, we visited Lincoln Castle, originally built as an outer wall by the Normans with temporary buildings within the keep. Edward I had reached here on his expedition to hammer the Scots when his wife Eleanor of Castile died. Her body was taken in state by stages to London for burial. The first Eleanor Cross lies within the Castle. The last Cross marking the stages of progress of *La Cher Reine* lies just north of London – known today as Charing Cross.

The Castle was much later used as a prison during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Outside the walls is a house where the Public Executioner, William Marwood, used to stay when he visited the jail. He can be remembered from the phrase “Pa wouldn’t kill you, but Marwood.” Marwood was one of the first “scientific” hangmen who used a drop to break the neck of the criminal, causing a quick death. Previously condemned people were choked under their own weight – a slow, lingering, painful end.

It could be speeded up by someone grabbing the victim’s legs and adding his own weight – hence, according to our guide, the expression “hanger-on”. If that still didn’t hasten the process enough, someone else could be exhorted to “pull the other leg.” During World War I, an Australian serviceman was tried for some offence at Lincoln Jail. When asked did he have anything to say before sentence was passed, he asked to be given the same penalty as his grandfather had!

What women want

Channel 7’s *Sunrise* program reported in July the results of a survey of what women hope to achieve in the *Marriage Stakes*. Their ambitions were as follows:

1. To find a man who is helpful around the home – will cut the grass, put the bin out and cook the occasional meal.
2. To find a man who has a sense of humour and is fun to be with.
3. To find a man who has a big enough income to keep his wife in comfort.
4. To find a man who is good in bed.
5. To make sure these four men never meet.

Credits

My grateful thanks are due to all who contributed to this issue. I hope there will be lots more in the future. In particular, those who helped me (apart from those with a by-line) are:

Masthead:


Max Merrett

Desktop Publishing:

Helen Pullar

Printing:

Josie Alati



’Tis the season to be jolly

The Association’s Christmas Luncheon is to be held at COTAH on 19 November. Those intending to attend are asked to contact the Secretary, John Connolly, not later than **7 November**. This means an immediate response.

A bus trip to view the Christmas lights is to be held on 16 December.

Flyers for both events are included with this Newsletter.

The Executive would like to wish all our members the very best for a wonderful Christmas and a most fulfilling New Year.

Office Bearers

Current Office Bearers of the Association are given below for the information of anyone wanting to contact them.

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