

Watery Sauces Oldies and Boldies

Newsletter No 57 November 2008

Newsletter of the Water Resource Retirees Association

Not a Tangled Web We Weave

Members recently received a circular from the Committee concerning the possible establishment of a WRRRA website and seeking advice on what members would like to see provided.

This elicited a very enthusiastic response from new member Jonathon Henry who was bursting with ideas and concluded with the welcome words "You can count on me to assist with the establishment and development of the web site." His suggestions, which are summarised here, included a number of examples and anecdotes which warrant wider distribution. His contribution is worthy of the Committee's (and your) consideration.

From the Editor's Chair

Many moons ago, ABC TV ran a serial All the Rivers Run written by Nancy Cato and starring Sigrid Thornton and John Waters. I remember one episode when John and Siggy sailed their paddle steamer up the Darling River despite a drought reducing the streamflow. Inevitably they got stuck there for months. Eventually they got the word that it was pouring rain in Queensland, but none of the water was coming down into NSW. The southern paranoia about Queensland pinching all the water that belonged down south was evident then and is even more so today – which is why the Commonwealth has felt the need to take over the Murray-Darling! Warren Hutton is probably not the only one who has been personally attacked at a social gathering in a southern state for our collective sins of larceny. But, just maybe, the woes of the basin are not the fault of our Sovereign State – see page10 for an alternative view that suggests that in at least one area, Queensland has done the right thing!. Best wishes to all our members for the festive season. Until next time, au reservoir.
Ian Pullar Editor

Newsletter - past and future editions.

Histories. The Peoples' History *Watery Sauces* with hyperlinks between sections, augmented by further future contributions from members. A scanned version of Joe Powell's *Plains of Promise, Rivers of Destiny*.

Aquarius - PDFs of the old editions (pre1980).

Membership Lists with names and addresses (both snail mail and email)

Stud Books - staff lists from bygone days.

Member contributions e.g. travel experiences, achievements, activities of other groups and memories of the "good old days" (extracted by a Watery Sauces Web Site Press Gang). I suggest that historical material be limited to times prior to when strategic planning started and strategic progress stopped.

Then and Now Photographs. Photographs could be presented as small thumbnails that can be clicked to reveal the full size version.

Retirement Cards. Those that can be exhumed could be published on the web site e.g. Vizer received a "Craptic Crossword" to commemorate his retirement. This was in recognition of his habit of doing the *Courier Mail* crossword while on the toilet; Bill Day received a classic photo of himself and Dick Hurn beside a campfire at night out west. Dick is saying: "Yes Bill, we really do need a strategic plan."

Little Red Book of Sayings e.g. After Commissioner Frank had dropped one of his many clangers, Bernie Credlin wrote a note to Bill Sharp. It said: "I think we should start a book called *The Thoughts of Chairman Frank* - it need not be large."; I once told Jack Curry, as he prepared to go to the bar for a round of drinks, that it was someone else's turn. Jack retorted: "What the ** hell does it matter whose shout it is as long as everyone gets a beer?"

Technical innovations e.g. Keith Nutt's pressurised outlet conduit at Maroon Dam; design of Callide Dam gates by Russ McConnell using data from Coolmunda Dam gates on strain gauges designed and manufactured by Russ; SMS monitoring of gauging stations by Warren (Curly) Shallcross; irrigation demand prediction by Walter (Hmmm) Boughton; inverse problem solver for groundwater flow models by JLH; Ross River Dam seepage monitoring by Russ McConnell using sensors and loggers of his own design and construction; generalised multi storage modelling program by Neal Ashkanasy.

List Server. A list server is software that relays emails among members of special interest groups. When one member writes to the list, the server forwards the email to the other members. Possible special interests include: superannuation; tax strategies; motor cars; boutique brewing; wine; travel.

Editorial Policy. You will need to set up a committee to establish and implement a policy on material that can be published, perhaps subject to prior modification. This task should not be left to the sole discretion of the web master who could then be subject to vilification by irate contributors.

Out and About

WRRRA welcomes two new members – Noel Dowling and Jonathan Henry. Noel served much of his career as an engineer in Planning while Jon worked in both Groundwater and Surface Water engaged in hydrologic studies before leaving to join TAFE sphere. He has now entered into retirement where a major activity is beer brewing. His wife Karla continues to work for NRW.

The grapevine tells me that Perry Molloy has embraced early retirement as a result of property developers developing an interest in his property. Malcolm Cremer has also chosen to venture into retirement despite the economic downturn. Peter Gilbey has put in his notice to commence pre-retirement leave from 19 December. Best of luck to all who are commencing the next phase of their lives.

Moving in the other direction is Terry Loos who, after stints at EPA and AWA, has returned to NRW where he is working three days a week in Greg Claydon's area. Welcome back, Terry!

Isn't it fascinating how our members pursue a wide range of interests in retirement? – and some of them even tell me about them! I am a theatre addict (see page 3) while others travel, fish, play golf, bowls, the Stock Exchange or just around.

Col Cooney and John Connolly sing with the Brisbane River City Barbershop Chorus and, along with another 35 or so chorus members, will be travelling to Honolulu in late October to compete in the Pan Pacific Harmony Singing Convention. The Clippers will be competing against another 15 Barbershop Choruses from Japan, Hawaii, Alaska, Canada, Pacific Coast States of the USA, New Zealand and other Australian States, with the ultimate aim of becoming the Pan Pacific Champions. While the competition will be intense, the River City Clippers are pulling out all stops to achieve creditable results in this international competition. Following the Convention, John and Col, with their wives Laurel and Pat, and other chorus members will be embarking on a cruise around the Hawaiian Islands. The Clippers members will join an augmented chorus that will entertain the 2000 or so fellow passengers on the cruise.

Lee Rogers is a Bridge addict but occasionally he manages to tear himself away to venture overseas. His recent wonderful trip with Denise to the Greek Islands and Turkey was most unfortunately brought to a premature end when Denise's mother became very ill and they hastened home. Our sincere condolences to the Rogers family on the passing of Denise's mother.

Bevan and Wendy Faulkner have been travelling to the USA, no doubt with considerable enjoyment. I am expecting a full report on their return.

I'm also hoping to have a report on the Back to Coolmunda reunion organised in August by the locals who benefited from the dam. WRRRA was contacted and asked to provide contact details for former staff, but at this stage we don't know who attended.

Do you know of a free newspaper *The Senior* which is available from numerous outlets including council offices, doctors surgeries etc.? Apart from running stories on the exploits of the wiser members of our community, it offers advice on numerous topics including health, travel, finance. It also provides contact telephone numbers and addresses for lots more.

Peter Gilbey spoke to Tim Smith when in Townsville several months ago and he was looking quite fit and relaxed. He has been working for Cairns Regional Council in the water planning area for the last few years and still looks after River Trust matters which has always been one of his abiding passions. Tim moved back to Cairns several years ago after several years of consulting after leaving the Department – he worked for a time on the Charleville Flood levees and also consulted for the Northern River Improvement Trust.

I've met Cec and Carolyn Maddox several times recently (Cec has retired from SunWater but Carolyn, who was Terry Hogan's PA, still works for NRW at Woolloongabba). They were recently awarded an award by the Ipswich City Council for their environmental work on their property at Ripley.

Did you happen to catch Madonna King's recent feature on ABC 612, shedding light on our legal system? If so, you would have heard the learned counsel of Associate Professor Geraldine Mackenzie, Head of the School of Law at QUT. Geraldine is the wife of former planning engineer Keith Mackenzie who has now been flying for QANTAS for many years since leaving the Commission.

Our secretary received an email from Peter Kilford Knowlton, the son of Frank (Kil) Kilford Knowlton. The father had passed away in April 2007 at the age of 92. Kil was a mechanic working on the equipment during the entire construction of Tinaroo Dam and the irrigation network on the Atherton Tableland. Peter was born the second youngest of six children while the family was living in the 'prefabs' at Walkamin and grew up hearing many stories of the good times and bad living and working conditions through those years. But his father always emphasised the mateship between workers and families he met and worked with..

I regret to inform members of the death of **Lawrie Kruger** in June. Lawrie worked on numerous construction sites where he was highly regarded.

In July, **Vince Lynch** passed away. Vince served in the workshop/mechanical area particularly on the Mareeba project where he worked for many years.

Our condolences to their families.

WRRRA Activities

Bowling Along

The Aspley Bowls Club very kindly made their excellent facilities available to us for our Annual Bowls Day which was held on Friday 8 August. Added to that, the weather was absolutely perfect for bowling – clear skies and a gentle cool breeze.

Unfortunately, not a large number of us were feeling fit enough or competitive enough to try our hand on the greens. Sixteen players including three ladies tried our luck at fours with first timers, Geoff Eades and Bill Meredith, managing biases and the other technical demands of bowling as if they were experienced players.

Don Beattie and I found ourselves up against the very experienced Allen Seabrook who was teamed with the ever steady Eric Davis. Don and I found it almost impossible to score end after end. On the rare occasions when we had “shot” bowls, Allen or Eric regularly came in with a winning shot on their last bowl. When the “mercy” rule was invoked, our score was 1 with our opponents’ score approaching 20. The other rinks were far more competitive.

As lunch time approached, a dozen more members arrived to watch the sport and to enjoy lunch with the players who by this time were both thirsty and hungry. And enjoy lunch we did – all prepared by Norm and Lindsay White.

A very pleasant day indeed and many thanks to Norm and Lindsay for all their efforts.

Lee Rogers

City Cat Cruising

The City Cats have clearly been a great development for Brisbane judging by the number of people using them and on a perfect Brisbane Spring day, it’s not hard to appreciate why.

For our outing on 21 October, I boarded the *Tugulawah* at Guyatt Park which is not too far from where Denise and I live in St Lucia and travelled down river through the city area all the way to Bretts Wharf down at Hamilton. There is a great deal to see along the river, the bridges, high rise buildings in the city, beautiful homes and green parks with the Jacarandas so prominent at this time of the year.

On the return journey, other members boarded at various stops as we travelled back upstream to the University of Queensland where John and Laurel Connolly boarded, having come across the new Eleanor Schonell Bridge by bus from Mt Gravatt.

Back down the river to Southbank where Ross Stewart led us off to Ahmets Turkish restaurant which was an excellent choice for a relaxing tasty lunch and lots of chat. Great to have new member Jon Henry with us as well as Jack O’Shea and his wife Patrea who have recently moved to Brisbane after having lived in Toowoomba for many years. Others who attended were Shirley & Doug Quinn, Ross Stewart, Heather Clarke, Bevan & Wendy Faulkner, Eric & Jan Davis and John & Laurel Connolly.

For me, back to Guyatt Park on a City Cat still using my seniors daily ticket which cost all of \$2.90 – fantastic value. Should do this trip again.

Thanks to Vice President Heather Clarke for organising the event.

Lee Rogers

Playing Around

This was not a normal start to a Sunday. We left Brisbane at 10:15 to be in time for a smorgasbord of short plays interspersed with lunch at the Incinerator Theatre, Ipswich. The plays were all written by our newsletter editor Ian Pullar who, with wife Helen, also acted in and directed many of them.

We have been going to the historic Incinerator (designed by Burley Griffin and opened as a theatre in 1969) almost on a yearly basis since the early 1980s. In the eighties and nineties it was for theatre restaurant evenings in mid-winter. After a warming hot toddy we would sit at long tables set side-on to the stage where we would eat and be entertained by one of Ian’s plays.

Times have changed. The Incinerator now has a splendid courtyard and toilets that no longer have to be accessed via the stage. In keeping with these changes Ipswich Little Theatre now hosts visiting tour groups providing refreshments and one or more short plays. The plays we saw on Sunday were a selection from that repertoire. As you can imagine, senior citizens predominate most tour groups so the plays feature a good share of the eccentricities of grumpy old men (and women).

The format was entrée followed by five plays then main course followed by another three plays. I enjoyed them all. They were witty, relevant, and seemed a perfect way to enjoy a wonderful winter’s day in Ipswich. Two plays in particular appealed to me.

If you ever wondered what happened to Prince Charming and Cinderella in middle age then *Happily Ever After* gives an insight. Bored Cindy has to deal with a dotty Chalmers who is given to talking to the cabbages and complaining about modern architecture. Chazza himself would be amused.

The other play, *Killing Time*, is a return to the whodunit, one of Ian’s favourite genres. Clever barrister Patrick Hoolihan is confronted by an ex-con, Kilpatrick, who plans to shoot him in revenge for getting him convicted. Or so it seems. There is a nice twist at the end as Hoolihan talks himself out of trouble.

This was a day to enjoy and catch up with old friends. If you are looking for a lazy but entertaining day, this fits the bill. We will certainly be returning next year.

Geoff Eades



*Jan Davis, Petrea and John O’Shea at
Ahmet’s Restaurant on Southbank*

There is three errors in this sentence. What are they?

If you can’t work it out, see page 10.

Travelling Round

As promised in the last Newsletter, here are some fascinating travel notes from Hein and Francoise Van der Heide. Although they date from some time ago, they are still evocative. But no doubt by now our travellers are much farther from home – maybe even closer! – Ed.

May 2008. Earlier this month we set off with our caravan on our trip around Australia. Our tentative plan is to be “home for Christmas”, therefore we will be on the road for more than 7 months. Getting out of Qld is even taking its time. Almost every town along the way has some interesting sights and fascinating history.

After going up the range to Toowoomba, we stopped over in Dalby, Miles and went to the artesian spa and local show at Mitchell. On to Charleville where we inspected the new levee bank, a break for coffee at Augathella and then rest beside a waterhole on the Barcoo River at Tambo. At Blackall we looked over the historical wool scour and at Barcaldine the obligatory Australian Workers Heritage Centre. Then a side trip to Aramac (of Harry Redford fame – where he stole 1500 head of cattle and drove them down the channel country to Adelaide). Then westerly to Muttaborra (of Muttaborrasaurus fame, with a full size replica in the local park).

The real reason for going all this way was to get to the Geographical Centre of Qld (as any decent surveyor would). This is located 17 km NW of the town of Muttaborra, but it is located on private property. However after a quick bit of research and a phone call I got permission to gain access to the site. Then with my trusty GPS Navigation Unit we duly arrived at the spot to find the site marked with a lump of timber and a length of pipe as a pole. This was duly photographed and recorded.



Hein at the Geographical Centre

We have now moved on to Longreach, where today we went to the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame.

Already we are saying that 7 months is not long enough and that we will have to go around a second time !

June 2008. Continuing our journey from my last email – at Longreach we went to the Stockman's Hall of Fame and the QANTAS Founders Museum (both were well worth the 4 hrs and 3 hrs we spent looking at only a selection of the items that were on display). On to Winton where we saw the Waltzing Matilda Centre (another great display covering the period when AB (Banjo) Patterson penned the words of *Waltzing Matilda*). For something completely different we drove 100 km south to Lark Quarry, where some 3,000 footprints of stampeding dinosaurs were uncovered – they date back to 95 million years ago. Our next stop was at Kynuna, where we went to the Combo Waterhole. This is where the jolly swagman is reputed to have jumped into the billabong – another interesting site. On our way to Cloncurry, we stopped briefly in McKinlay to look at the Walkabout Creek Hotel (of Crocodile Dundee fame).

In Cloncurry we went into the John Flynn Museum – the birthplace of the Flying Doctor. Then on to Mt Isa, where we did the obligatory MIM Tour, as well as the Outback at Isa Centre and the Riversleigh Fossil Display.

After a stop over at Camooweal, we will cross over the border into NT and onto the ‘Never Never’ country.

Hein and Francoise Van der Heide

Travellers' Tales

From the Great Ocean Road, Victoria

Some years ago, London Bridge on the Great Ocean Road suddenly collapsed, leaving a husband and wife stranded on the island that remained but was cut off from the mainland. Amid a great deal of publicity, a helicopter was brought in to rescue the couple. Unfortunately, they were not married to each other – nor to any one else before too long.

From the Tower of London

Probably the most gruesome execution carried out on Tower Green was that of James Stewart, Duke of Monmouth, the eldest illegitimate son of Charles II. Monmouth had tried to depose his uncle James II and was convicted of treason and condemned in 1685. He begged the executioner not to mangle him and bribed him heavily. Then he knelt down. But the first blow merely gashed him. Thoroughly unnerved, the headsman took four more strokes but failed to kill him. At last, he severed the duke's head with a knife.

From London

This tale was told to me by David Gaff, erstwhile VE consultant. - Ed.

Every day, for more than a hundred years, a soldier was dispatched to stand sentry duty beside a park bench in a London park from where he had a clear view of a certain balcony in Buckingham Palace. Concerned at the escalating costs, the authorities who reviewed the situation decided it would be much cheaper to install closed circuit television. But someone wondered what was so significant about this particular balcony and delved more deeply. It emerged that one day (more than a hundred years ago) the park bench was to be repainted and a soldier had been deputed to stand guard to ensure no damage ensued to the bench or anyone sitting. The order had never been rescinded!

Correspondence

I had another delightful letter from member Andy Winkler which I am only too happy to share with members. If anyone can answer Andy's questions, I would be only too happy to pass the answers on. - Ed.

Dear Ian

I think it was in the March issue of our Newsletter that I read in the Morwood Memoirs the name of Merek Koteck. He was the Engineer at the time I worked in St George for the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission on the first project, namely the weir and the bridge over the Balonne River.

Bernie Credlin came to take over the second stage of the project. The staff had their office and living quarters on the left side of the bridge while the workers barracks were on the right hand side of the bridge.

Charly, the timekeeper and paymaster was a jovial, happy-go-lucky person. He had been an officer in the Czech army. In the camp there was also a Hungarian army officer and it so happened that Charly and Dr Zöldi were fighting on opposite sides in the same border skirmish between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. They argued amicably over who won the battle, but Merek told them, "No one won. You both lost. The Russians occupied 80 % of both our countries."

Eighty percent of the workers were migrants, mostly from eastern Europe. I was the only German and the only one who spoke English reasonably well – a sort of High School English. Thinking back on those bygone days, there was a wartime mentality on both sides. A lot of migrants had been German collaborators, but of course they all said they had fled the Russians. They all became good Australian citizens, free from the brain-washing of their past.

It was Merek who recommended me to Head Office. To my knowledge I was the only one who got a transfer to another project. I could choose Mareeba or Marian and I chose Marian. I wonder what happened to Merek. He didn't attend the St George reunion. Does any member know anything of Merek or Charly?

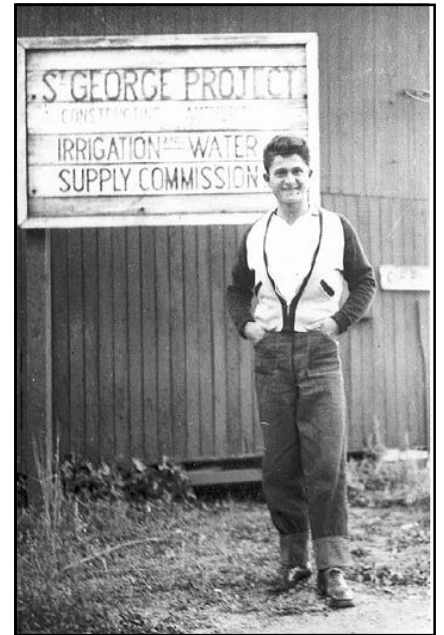
Interesting articles again in the latest Newsletter about the travels of members and, of course, the big tour you and your wife Helen made. We are never too old to expand the grey matter in our brains. Reading and travelling are the best ways to enrich ourselves. We in Australia live in the Lucky Country. Resourcewise, we are the richest country in the world. I hope we produce leaders that manage the wealth to the benefit of all Australians.

A while ago I read the project update of Queensland Water Infrastructure Pty Ltd. Most interesting. It is all positive conclusions. What is the opinion of our members on the Traveston Dam project? Up our way, most people seem to be against it. In the report of QWI, I can only see benefit if it goes ahead. A lot of research has gone into the feasibility of this project. Like all new projects, it has its pros and cons.

Keep up the good work. I hope I can make it to our Christmas luncheon.

Regards to all our members

Andy Winkler



Andy at St George in 1952.

SEQ Developments

The last piece of pipe on the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project was laid on 21 October. Premier Anna Bligh marked the milestone by signing the last piece of pipe on the 208km Western Corridor project at Gibson Island before it was lowered into the ground. The pipe was the last to be laid by the State Government in the total of 390km first stage of the Water Grid, which was delivered on time and on budget.

At full production next January the project will supply up to 125ML of water a day, enough for about 700,000 people under Target 170.

The Western Corridor Recycled Water Project used about 30,000 pipes and 10,000 fittings, carried on some 11,000 truckloads. Around 4000 water grid workers collectively clocked up more than 12 million hours.

The taste of our water is about to change when the new water grid comes on line in southeast Queensland next month, scientists say. But the good news is that most people may not detect any difference as it will happen over several months, and by this time next year, tap water across the region is likely to taste the same. When the new grid is fully operating, most household taps will yield a cocktail of dam water, recycled water and desalinated — with fluoridation of our water also to begin next year. It could take up to six months after the first supplies of "different" water are pumped into the system for it to make its way through the dams, filtration and reservoirs to households. A subtle taste difference is likely, but may well be attributed to seasonal factors as much as the water mix.

Any changes you notice in taste will be purely aesthetic in nature and will not reflect a compromise in the standard of your tap water.

Memories of Jim Ole

Roy McArthur found a copy of the following memorandum among his treasured Commission archives and forwarded it to me , suggesting I might like to publish it. What a helpful suggestion! - Ed.

From: District Engineer
St. George. 23/7/73.

To: Exec. Eng. M. O'Chert
Mechanical Branch.

PHOTOGRAPHY- BEARDMORE DAM ETC.

I refer to your several requests for urgent completion of the assignment to capture on film breathtaking views of Beardmore Dam, and I now report on Episodes 2 and 3 of the saga. As you will recall, Episode 1 was declared a failure and having examined prints forwarded to you, I am in agreement that this attempt must be written off.

Episode 2.

Attempts to undertake the aerial mission early last week had to be abandoned due to unfavourable weather conditions. On Thursday clear sky allowed a close study to be made of the traverse of the sun and the light and shade effects on the dam. A decision was then made to commence aerial photography at 8.30 am on Friday when the dam's downstream face was least shadowed. Arrangements were made with Mr Clifford Parsons , leading and only charter service and crop dusting operator based at St George and Mr George Thomas, semi-professional photographer.

Friday dawned overcast and the mission had to be abandoned.

At mid-day Mr Thomas phoned me and in excited tone advised me that conditions had developed which would allow shadeless photos to be taken, i.e. cloudy bright.

Unfortunately Mr Parsons and plane were not then available

Immediate decisions were made to grasp the opportunity offered by the light conditions and despite the pressure of work – pay day and report Friday- Mr Thomas and myself sped to Beardmore Dam. Having once failed I felt that I could not delegate this task to a lesser employee.

Photographs in black and white and colour were taken from both banks. From this episode the following have been forwarded to you.

[a] 1-12 exposure b&w film

[b] 1-12 exposure colour film

[c] 1-12 exposure b&w negatives, proof sheet and 3 – 10" x 8" photographs.

The latter work [c] was undertaken by Mr Thomas of his own accord to restore his confidence, as his proficiency after Episode 1 had been indirectly questioned. The result from [a] and [c] should be similar, and [c] should be returned here when you have obtained satisfactory results.

Episode 3.

After consultation with Mr Parsons and Mr Thomas it was arranged to undertake the aerial work on Saturday at 2 pm, instead of the early predetermined time of 8.30 am.

Every conceivable idea and innovation was implemented in the preparations to ensure a successful mission. Mr Parsons removed the door from the high wing Cessna 172, Mr Thomas donned a bearskin flying suit and made many adjustments to the harness and seating to ensure ideal sightings for his cluster of photographic equipment.

At 2.05 pm the aerodrome departed the aerodrome. I declined to accompany the party due to previous uncomfortable experiences in light aircraft on inspection work.

Some 40 minutes later the mission returned.

Mr Thomas stepped or staggered from the aeroplane. The front of the bear skin flying suit was a red mess and my immediate thought was that a wedge tailed eagle had been drawn in through the open sided plane and had savaged Mr Thomas with beak and talons.

When recovered from initial shock and having steadied Mr Thomas I determined that Mr Thomas had been ill and the dramatic colour effect had resulted from a salad lunch with a more than normal helping of beetroot. The inside of the plane, upholstery, seat covering, instruments, in fact every exposed surface had various morsels pressurised into fabrics, linings etc. by the 70-80 knot slipstream. Of this event I report no more except to say Mr Parsons was not pleased and over an hour later, having removed seats and other fittings from his plane, was still cleaning crevices in the plane with a screwdriver.

The output from the mission before the catastrophe caused early termination was not good and is contained on one black and white film and one colour film, partly exposed, also forwarded to you. Photographs of the Irrigation Area were not taken, and I fear the results will be disappointing.

Unless a photographer from elsewhere, with experience in aerial work and capable of enduring the rigours of Mr Parsons' flying can be engaged I consider further attempts at aerial photography should be abandoned.

Unfortunately there is virtually no activity at present in the irrigation area. The cotton and soya bean harvest is completed, the ginnery has finished ginning and we have drained virtually all of our channels. Perhaps you could have photographs in Commission somewhere, either of St George or elsewhere which could be used as I am sure no one would pick the difference.

Mr Thomas advised me that the colour in the proofs returned is far from good and that his processors at Woolloongabba specialise in Ektacolor which was used this time for the aerial work only.

I am loath to concede that a seemingly simple assignment such as requested is beyond my resources. However I await your valued comments on the results of Episodes 2 and 3, and assure you of my utmost cooperation to bring this saga to a rapid and successful conclusion.

Regards

Jim Ole

Even in his last years, Grandad had a mind like a steel trap,
only one that had been left out so long, it had rusted shut.

Climate Change

In developing its regional water supply strategies, NRW has commissioned the Queensland Climate Change Centre of Excellence to provide information on the potential impact of climate change. A very abbreviated version of some of the findings are presented here for the interest of members. – Ed.

Climate change has emerged as a critical issue in water resource management. While Queensland's water resources have always been highly vulnerable to natural climate variability, the risk is expected to increase in the future in many parts of the state. Climate change is expected to significantly impact upon water security because of projected increases in extreme weather events such as drought and flood, as well as a distinct drying trend overall.

Queensland is particularly vulnerable to climate change, because it has one of the most variable climates in the world. Projections show that Queensland's climate is likely to become warmer and drier with higher variability and more extreme events.

Observational data records indicate that climate change is already having a significant impact on the climate of the Wide Bay-Burnett region, for example. While the climate did not change substantially in the first half of the last century, significant trends have emerged during the 1950-2007 period when annual mean temperatures increased by about 1.4°C which is greater than the Australian average increase of 0.8°C. Over the same period, maximum temperatures have increased by 1.5°C and minimum temperatures increased by 1.2°C.

There have been significant trends in rainfall over the latter half of the past century: generally wetter conditions over the north-west region of Australia and a drying trend in the south-east. The WBB region exhibits a very strong negative rainfall trend relative to the rest of Queensland as average annual rainfall shows a reduction of 5-10% per decade, whilst the whole of Queensland experienced 1-5% decrease (ranging from -15% to +5% for northern regions). There has also been a 3% increase in pan evaporation per decade from 1950 to 2007.

Training and Development Project

NRW is implementing a training and development program suited to Government water practitioners. Starting at the introductory level, these packages seek to capture the skills, knowledge and experience of older staff and pass these on to less experienced staff.

Seven themes are currently being developed. They are:

- Water Management
- Water Resource Planning
- Groundwater Resource Assessment & Management
- Surface Water Assessment & Management
- Water Data & Information Systems
- Riverine Processes & Management
- Water Supply & Use

Thirteen training workshops have been held to date (7 in 2007/2008) with 213 learning participants attending so far. Three Business Induction Workshops have been held in 2007/2008, with 61 participants attending in total.

Climate change is expected to have a more significant effect on climatic extremes than on average conditions. The effect of even relatively minor changes in extreme events can have a significant impact on ecosystems, agricultural production and water supply and demand.

Rainfall in the north-eastern parts of Australia is strongly influenced by the El Nino Southern Oscillation phenomenon (ENSO). This is measured by the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI). Currently the impact of climate change on the behaviour of the ENSO is the subject of intensive research.

Over the past few decades, knowledge of climate change has improved and a clearer understanding of the impact of human activities on our climate system is beginning to emerge. The available scientific evidence indicates that warming of the climate system is unequivocal and most of the observed increase in global average temperature since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in concentration of anthropogenic greenhouse gases.

Climate change projections:

The results of a series of 11 General Circulation Models (GCM) were used to produce a range of possible projections. The climate projections are summarised as follows:

By 2030, temperature will have increased by +0.6°C to +1.4°C with little variation across the seasons; rainfall will have decreased by around 3% and evaporation increased by 3%. By 2050, temperatures will be up by around 1.7°C, rainfall down 5-6% and evaporation up 6%.

Higher temperatures are expected to result in greater use of airconditioners and swimming pools, with increases in water use.

In the agricultural sector, increased temperatures and more CO₂ should increase crop yields but this will be offset by declines in rainfall and increases in evapotranspiration.

The decrease in rainfall is expected to reduce yields from storages even though there will be bigger flood events.

Overall, it is expected that by 2050 there will be a 7.5% increase in urban/industrial demand and a 10% increase in rural demand. Yields from dams are expected to decline by around 15%.

While the program is in its infancy, initial feedback is that it is being well received.

Capacity and capability will be further enhanced through the development of additional training at the intermediate and advanced levels to assist with gaps generated by staff retirement. Training programs will also continue to be reviewed to align them with anticipated future skills needs. As training is only part of the solution to increasing staff capability, the Department also plans to increase its emphasis on coaching and mentoring skill development. NRW believes the training packages being developed are portable to other similar State jurisdictions.

In recognition of the need for further skills development in the water industry at large, NRW is contributing to scholarships for a number of universities including Griffith University who have developed a new Bachelor of Science (Water Resources) course to commence in 2008.

- information provided by Peter Gilbey

HEALTH *and beauty*

Water Porky

The belief that we need eight glasses of water a day to stay healthy is a myth, researchers say. There is no solid evidence that drinking plenty of pure water is good for the skin, wards off weight gain or helps rid the body of toxins. Instead, most of us get all the fluids we need to avoid dehydration from food and other drinks including tea and coffee.

The idea that those who fail to drink enough water suffer health problems became widespread in the 1990s. Rather than just drink when they are thirsty, many now feel the need to keep a water bottle with them all day long. Yet, according to scientists from the University of Pennsylvania, there is no evidence of any such benefits.

The scientists reviewed every published clinical study into the subject and concluded that while athletes and those in hot, dry climates have an increased need for water, average, healthy individuals have no such need. No study indicated any real need to drink the recommended eight glasses a day.

- from the *Courier-Mail* 4 April 2008.

Taps for the unwary

The bottled water industry took off in about 1990 and is now worth \$60billion a year in global sales “an unparalleled social phenomenon, one of the greatest marketing coups of the 20th and 21st centuries”.

There are many strong reasons to deplore the craze for bottled water, especially of the still variety. For a start, it’s ludicrously overpriced. Tap water is anywhere between 240 to 10,000 times cheaper, depending on where you live. In restaurants, the situation is even worse: waiters push bottled water hard because it usually has the highest mark-up of any item on the menu.

Yet most people can’t tell the difference between bottled and tap water. In blind taste tests, tap often rates more highly. Furthermore, it’s largely a myth that bottled water is healthier. Many brands of bottled water are no more than filtered tap water. And in most Western countries tap water must – and usually does – meet stringent public safety standards. Then there are the environmental issues, hugely important in view of global warming. The production of bottled water spawns billions of tonnes of plastic, most of it never recycled, and is extremely energy-intensive. And, most damningly, it wastes water. Bottle-making machines are cooled by water, and huge quantities of it are lost in the filtering process.

But a backlash may have started with, at long last, some resistance to what is little better than a confidence trick.

Twenty Reasons I Owe My Mother

- 1. My mother taught me RELIGION.
‘You’d better pray that will come out of the carpet.’
- 2. My mother taught me about TIME TRAVEL.
‘If you don’t straighten up, I’m going to knock you into the middle of next week!’
- 3 My mother taught me LOGIC.
‘ Because I said so, that’s why.’
- 4. My mother taught me FORESIGHT.
‘Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you’re in an accident.’
- 5. My mother taught me IRONY
‘Keep crying, and I’ll give you something to cry about.’
- 6. My mother taught me about the science of OSMOSIS.
‘Shut your mouth and eat your dinner.’
- 7. My mother taught me about CONTORTIONISM.
‘Will you look at that dirt on the back of your neck!’
- 8. My mother taught me about STAMINA.
‘You’ll sit there until all that spinach is gone.’
- 9. My mother taught me about WEATHER.
‘This room of yours looks as if a cyclone went through it.’
- 10. My mother taught me about BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION.
‘Stop acting like your father!’
- 11. My mother taught me about ANTICIPATION.
‘Just wait until we get home.’
- 12. My mother taught me about RECEIVING .
‘You are going to get it when you get home!’
- 13. My mother taught me MEDICAL SCIENCE.
‘If you don’t stop crossing your eyes, they are going to freeze that way.’
- 14. My mother taught me ESP.
‘Put your jumper on; don’t you think I know when you are cold?’
- 15. My mother taught me HUMOUR.
‘When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don’t come running to me.’
- 16. My mother taught me HOW TO BECOME AN ADULT .
‘If you don’t eat your vegetables, you’ll never grow up.’
- 17. My mother taught me GENETICS.
‘You’re just like your father.’
- 18. My mother taught me about my ROOTS.
‘Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a tent?’
- 19. My mother taught me WISDOM.
‘When you get to be my age, you’ll understand.’
- 20. And my favourite: My mother taught me about JUSTICE
‘One day you’ll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you.’

Exercise those Brain Cells

Supply the missing members of the following series:

- a. OTTFSSSE??
- b. GSOGQLL???
- c. 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 20 22 24 31 100 ? 10,000
1,111,111,111, 111,111



Solution to last edition’s puzzle

775
33
2325
2325
25575

A Sign of the Times



from near Stanthorpe

How Come – ?

Leap years were, of course, introduced as a (partial) correction of the fact that years are not exactly 365 days long. But the extra day – 29 February – every fourth year was not counted for legal purposes, but ‘leapt over’. Hence any year with a 29 February was named a Leap Year. (Those fortunate enough to be born on such a day do not age as fast as the rest of us – like Frederic in *Pirates of Penzance*.)

The custom of allowing women to propose in Leap Years was also a partial correction for the unjust system that was inclined to leave women – especially at times when there was a surplus of women – ‘on the shelf’. But how did this custom arise?

It is alleged – but unproven – that in 1288 Queen Margaret of Scotland decreed that in Leap Years a woman could propose and a man could only refuse her if he was already engaged, on pain of a £100 fine. Men conceded the privilege, but stipulated that the women indicate their intention by wearing a red petticoat, thus giving bachelors the chance to escape.

Celibacy among nuns and priests was not always the rule and certainly not at the time of St Patrick, although he himself had taken such vows. An outrageous myth claims that one day St Patrick was approached by a tearful St Bridget whose nuns were in revolt because women were barred from proposing. St Patrick sympathised with the nuns, but total equality was out of the question. As a compromise, he suggested that women be allowed to propose during one full year every seven years. Knowing men’s weaknesses, Bridget threw her arms around Patrick and pleaded, “Make it a year in four!”

The future saint enjoyed the embrace and promised that for another of those ‘squeezes’, he would accede to her request. Moreover, he undertook to make it the longest year – Leap Year. Bridget immediately proposed to Patrick, but, remembering his vow of celibacy, he declined. Then, to soften the blow, he gave her a kiss and a silken gown.

From this legend came the custom, observed until recent years, of acknowledging the right of a rejected woman to a compensation of a new dress of pure silk.

Circle

The man who works will have the wealth to keep his sanity and health; and then, with any luck, he may be fit to work another day.

IgNobel Awards

The winners of this year’s IgNobel Awards given by the *Annals of Improbable Research* magazine have recently been announced. These are presented for oddball scientific achievements, as is fairly obvious from the following list:

NUTRITION: For demonstrating that food tastes better if it sounds better.

PEACE: To citizens of Switzerland for adopting the legal principle that plants have dignity.

ARCHAEOLOGY: For showing armadillos can scramble the contents of an archaeological dig.

BIOLOGY: For discovering that fleas that live on a dog can jump higher than fleas that live on a cat.

MEDICINE: For demonstrating that expensive fake medicine is more effective than cheap fake medicine.

COGNITIVE SCIENCE: For discovering that slime moulds can solve puzzles.

ECONOMICS: For discovering that exotic dancers earn more when at peak fertility.

PHYSICS: For proving that heaps of string or hair will inevitably tangle.

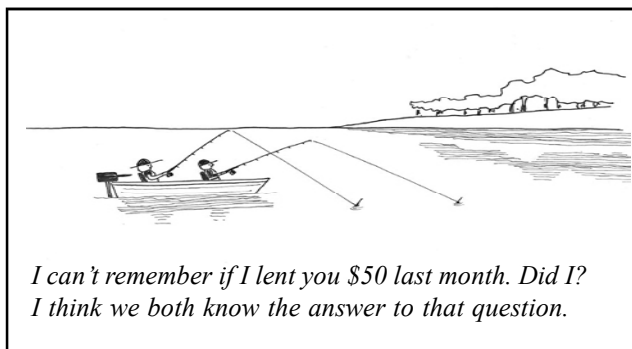
CHEMISTRY: Shared by two teams: one for discovering that Coca Cola (particularly Diet Coke) is an effective spermicide; and the other for proving it is not. [*The mind boggles over the methodology* - Ed.]

LITERATURE: David Sims for his study *You Bastard: A Narrative Exploration of the Experience of Indignation within Organizations*.

No Vacancy

The mayor of a French village has banned his constituents from dying because the cemetery is full. The village’s 260 residents have been told that if they have not already booked a plot, they are “forbidden from dying in the parish”. What punishment they face if they pass away in defiance of the edict is unclear – a fate worse than death perhaps?

- *Sunday Mail* 9 March 2008



*I can't remember if I lent you \$50 last month. Did I?
I think we both know the answer to that question.*

Don't criticise your wife's faults.
Those may be the slight imperfections that prevented her from getting a better husband

Book Club

Geraldine Brooks is an Australian author and multiple winner of Pulitzer Prizes. Her *People of the Book*, published this year is a tour de force.

The central character is an Australian book conservator, Hannah Heath, who is called upon to investigate and start work on restoring a rare Haggadah – a Jewish prayer book – found in war-torn Sarajevo. Her trip threatens to rock her orderly life and the present story is beautifully realised as it explores her relationship with her pragmatic, practical, doctor mother and a number of colleagues who specialise in book conservation and detection.

However, this is only part of Brooks' tale. Skilfully, she reconstructs the past to enlighten the reader about the history of the Haggadah from its original C15th creation, through a chequered history right up to our time. The book operates at so many levels and sheds light on a number of historical situations including the Spanish Inquisition and ongoing anti-semitic activities.

The amount of research required to produce such a book is mind-boggling, yet Brooks handles the whole thing with consummate skill. Thoroughly recommended.

Another book very recently published and also with a historical flavour is *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer. This is a first novel by a 70-year-old former American librarian who died this year before seeing her book in print.

The story is set in immediate-Post-World-War-II Britain when, out of the blue, writer Juliet Ashton receives a letter from an inhabitant of Guernsey who has come across one of her books. Thus begins a correspondence which widens to include many of the inhabitants of the island who endured occupation and privation by German troops during the war.

The entire book is told as a series of letters, each of which gives an insight into the character and experiences of a multitude of people. The title comes from the fact that a group of inhabitants, who were subjected to strict curfews and proscriptions on meetings by their occupiers, invented the lie that they constituted a literary society who also made do with the very limited food resources available.

The book is poignant, amusing, educative and, above all, highly entertaining. We all loved it.

Ian Pullar

Drought trigger clear as day

WHEN I was a kid we never had drought after drought.

Then we started with daylight saving. We started with a little bit, but now we have six months of the year daylight saving.

It has just become too much for the environment to cope with.

It is so logical, for six months of the year we have an extra hour each day of that hot afternoon sun.

I read somewhere that scientific studies had shown there is a lot less moisture in the atmosphere which means we get less rain.

I believe this one hour extra sun is slowly evaporating all the moisture out of everything.

Why can't the Government get the CSIRO to do studies on this, or better still, get rid of daylight savings.

They may have to do something before it is too late.

– CHRIS HILL

Albury

from the Border Mail 01-10-2008

So it isn't Queensland's fault! (p.1)

Credits

My thanks are once again due to Helen; to my proof-reader daughter Jean Yates; to Graham Bauer who printed this; to the contributors; to Natasha Carson and Rebecca Wall who made it available to departmental staff; and to Harvey Yates for his cartoons.

One (anonymous) member commented on the current economic meltdown, "It's worse than a divorce. I've only got half my former worth and I've still got my wife!"



I went to a reincarnation meeting last weekend. I had the time of my lives.

In the sentence on page 3, the verb should be plural "are"; "errors" is the correct spelling; there were two, not three errors.

Office Bearers

President	Lee Rogers	61 Upland Rd ST LUCIA 4067	3371 3200	rlrogers@gmail.com
Past Pres	Eric Davis	19 Morland Street MT GRAVATT 4122	3349 6638	etjd@bigpond.net.au
Vice Pres	Heather Clarke	60 Davidson St NEWMARKET 4051	3356 2802	hcla5409@bigpond.net.au
Secretary	John Connolly	28 O'Grady St UPPER MT GRAVATT 4122	3349 5480	jonnolli@optusnet.com.au
Treasurer	Bevan Faulkner	21 Honeysuckle Way CALAMVALE 4116	3273 2809	bevwendy@tpg.com.au
Executive	Peter Bevin	11 Bentley Court JOYNER 4500	3882 3446	pbevin@tpg.com.au
	Geoff Eades	6 Gleason Street MCDOWALL 4053	3353 0629	geades@ozemail.com.au
Auditor	Ray Sutherland			
Editor	Ian Pullar	21 Lansdowne Way CHUWAR 4306	3281 4437	hpullar@bigpond.net.au