



WATERY SAUCES OLDIES AND BOLDIES

Newsletter No 99

August 2022

NEWSLETTER OF THE WATER RESOURCES RETIREES ASSOCIATION

A Change at the Top

As foreshadowed, the Annual General Meeting of WRRRA was duly held on Thursday, 23 June 2022 in the Community Meeting Room – Brisbane Square Library. Unfortunately the attendance was disappointing, with barely enough members to make a quorum. This may well be attributable at least in part to the continuation of the COVID pandemic. There were a number of apologies including one from President Daryl Brigden who was recovering from major surgery.

After the usual reports were delivered, elections were held for the Committee. Daryl was keen to stand down and Chris Robson (current Vice President) was elected unopposed as the incoming President, making Daryl Past President. Greg Claydon was elected Vice President. Peter McMahon (Secretary), Gary Corbett (Treasurer), Bruce Pearce (Executive Member), Ian Pullar (Editor) and Jon Henry (Webmaster) will all continue in those positions. The vacant position of the second Executive Member was not filled at the meeting, but the incoming Committee undertook to recruit a new member.

These results meant that Peter Gilbey has retired from the Committee after six years of service. A vote of appreciation for his contribution was carried. A similar vote of thanks to Daryl Brigden was also carried with best wishes for a speedy recovery.

From the Editor's Chair

Although the Community at large is trying as far as possible to act as if there is no Covid-19 pandemic, it still continues to dominate our lives. Try as WRRRA might to revert to a "new normal" our plans are all too often thrown into chaos. We have not managed to have a traditional luncheon now for quite some time but we do plan to have a gala event to mark our major milestone. Make sure you put the date – 19 October – in your diary and then join lots of former colleagues at the Ship Inn in the celebrations. We look forward to seeing a good roll up – in defiance of Mr Covid!

Until next time, au reservoir.

Ian Pullar, Editor

The main business of the AGM was a discussion on the nature of the celebrations that were being organised to mark the 100th Anniversary in 2022 of passage of the Irrigation Act of 1922. These have been covered in detail in Special Edition Newsletter 98.

Following the AGM, a brief recruitment process resulted in Rob Ayre taking up the vacant position on the Executive. We welcome Rob, who has now attended his first Committee meeting. A biographical note on Rob can be found on page 2.

Marking a Milestone, 100 Years On

By the time this Newsletter is published, the first of the celebrations will be in the past. This will be held in Mareeba on 22 August with

all the others to follow in October. Newsletter 98 has details of dates and locations and invitations will be issued.

The next Newsletter which is scheduled for November/December will carry reports on the festivities.



New Members

WRRRA welcomes new member **Paul "Marto" Martin**. He joined in 1969, retired firstly in 2017, then returned to write a review of the water monitoring network, finally retiring in August 2018. He started as a hydrographer and became Manager (Water Services) in 2002, being responsible for the monitoring, licensing and water planning functions, including serving as Regional Manager (Water) South Region until retirement. Based primarily in Brisbane, he had stints in Mt Isa, Toowoomba and Bundaberg.

We also welcome **Ernest "Bluey" Hellmuth** who worked for IWSC at Fairbairn Dam in 1970/71 as a draftsman and soil tester. He subsequently worked as a surveyor for a number of firms including AL Hamblin, Thiess, John Holland and DM Mearns on Commission projects including Glenlyon, Splityard Creek, Kinchant and Lake Clarendon dams and Bowen River and Mirani weirs.

Technical Seminar: Reflections on the 2011 and 2022 Flood Events and Future Risks

On 25 May, around 20 members attended a wonderful technical seminar at the Resources Centre at Boggo Road where they were fascinated by an address by Robert Ayre and John Ruffini. A further 30 members were able to tune in remotely to the session thanks to the wonders of modern technology. The speakers were introduced by Chris Robson, Vice President of WRRRA in the following terms.

Today the Association is pleased that we are able to finally have a presentation by two water engineers well known to you all, Robert Ayre and John Ruffini, on their reflections on the January 2011 flood event that severely impacted south-east Queensland.

There were four flood operations engineers on duty during the 2011 event, Robert, John, Terry Malone and John Tibaldi. Robert was the senior flood operations engineer and John the relief senior flood operations engineer. Terry Malone, another one of the four, is here with us today also. John Tibaldi has continued to work for Seqwater.

Their experience with this event did not end with the actual flood event in January 2011. This was followed by a Floods Commission of Inquiry, three subject to referral to the Crime and Misconduct Commission, an independent review by the US Bureau of Reclamation and the US Corp of Engineers, all in 2011 and 2012, and a common law class action for damages on behalf of class members who suffered loss or damage from floodwaters. The class action legal action came to an end last month when the High Court of Australia refused the plaintiff's application to appeal an earlier court decision that found in favour of the 2011 flood operation.

With the legal action now at an end, John and Robert are able to speak about their thoughts on this experience, for the first time publicly.

They will reflect on their experiences and learnings, not only from the technical aspects but also having regard to the institutional, legal and cultural aspects. They will also make some observations on the February 2022 flood event and how it compared to the 2011 event.

Robert Ayre was the headworks design manager employed by Sunwater at the time of the January 2011 flood event. He also had the role of senior flood operations engineer, and was responsible for directing the flood management of the Seqwater flood mitigation dams (Somerset Dam, Wivenhoe Dam and North Pine Dam) in the flood operations centre. In addition, he was the senior flood operations engineer for Ross River Dam owned by Townsville city council and Scrivener Dam owned by the National Capital Authority in the ACT. Robert was part of the team (along with Peter Allen, John Ruffini and Warren Shallcross)

who developed the real time flood model that was used as the basis of decision making for operating the dams, which was implemented in the mid-1990s and he contributed to the revision of various versions of the flood mitigation manuals for the dams. Robert left Sunwater and joined Aurecon in October 2011 and retired in 2021.

John Ruffini is currently: Director, Water Planning and Coastal Sciences, Qld Department of Environment and Sciences and was Senior flood operations engineer - Wivenhoe and Somerset dams (1996- 2011).

Since 1988 John's day job has been all things hydrologic for the State of Queensland.

He was the relief senior flood operations engineer during the January 2011 flood event, working as the relief to Robert for directing the flood management of the Seqwater flood mitigation dams in the flood operations centre. John was also part of the team who developed the original real time flood model and the subsequent revisions.

This presentation was well received by those who attended and there have been many requests for this to be available to those who weren't able to be there.

Webmaster Jon Henry has arranged for Members to be able to view the Ruffini-Ayre presentation. A link direct to the page is available on the website.

The link is [Reflections on the 2011 and 2022 Flood Events and Future Risks](#)

Future Activities

At its July meeting, the Committee discussed future activities of the Association. Most of 2022 will be taken up by celebrations of the 100 Milestone. The following tentative program was formulated for at least part of 2023 (dates and details to be advised)

Early February – Technical Session at the EcoSciences Centre by John Ruffini *Assessing Water Allocations and Planning for Dams in a Changing Climate.*

27 April – AGM at the Brisbane City Council Library rooms.

July – Luncheon and interpretative tour of the Burley Griffin Incinerator Theatre, home of Ipswich Little Theatre.

August – Social Golf at Keperra Golf Club

September – Possible two day road trip to the Granite Belt – old mass gravity concrete arch dam, Emu Swamp project, Glenlyon Dam, wineries etc.

Vale George Anton Beran 18-09-1929 – 26-03-2020

George Anton Beran was born in Germany. At a young age (12 or 14) he was conscripted into the Hitler Youth, given a wooden gun and trained to become a soldier. Fortunately the war ended before he graduated to real weapons. It is believed that he trained as a Surveyor in Germany before emigrating to Australia.

George joined the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and commenced work as a Temporary Assistant Hydrographer along with Karol Netzel, Wally Baturo and Stefan Granat. Although he was based in Brisbane, most of his early work involved long field trips. One of his longer trips involved measuring floods in the Diamantina River. He also was involved in construction of float well recording stations on the Border Rivers and Western Downs where he endured bitterly cold winters. His long field trips to the west gave him the opportunity to socialise with the locals at weekends, although he sometimes copped abuse because of his German nationality. George walked into either the Birdsville or Windorah pub in the early 1980s and some locals remembered him from the early days.

The majority of George's working life, however, was centred on Rockhampton, where his exploits as a hydrographic team leader were legendary.

"He was a tough old boss for sure but an absolute gentleman. George expected a lot from his crew but if any manager tried to interfere with his boys he would tell them to go and get stuffed. George would brow beat you all day in the field to get something done the way he wanted but was the first to shout you a beer at the pub at the end of the day...after he had knocked down the usual sarsparilla as his first hit.

Stories abound about George. Like the time he used the young Cadet Hydrographer's sleeping bag to put under the truck wheels to get them out of a bog. Or the time the locals at Stonehenge pub brought a horse around with a bag on its head, put a very young George on its back, took the bag off and all hell broke loose.

The flood gauging camps on Fitzroy River at The Gap are almost legendary. George didn't actively participate in the flood gauging, he was there as camp organiser and head chef. George would get up early and take over cooking duties then complain for the rest of the day that nobody helped him. The problem was he wouldn't let anybody near the stove. His team certainly ate well at those camps, even to the extent of George making rabbit soup from one they had managed to shoot. George really enjoyed getting out in the bush, and it was even better if camping was involved. If the team were camped near a decent waterhole then that was even better as George would bring his net to catch a feed of fish.

In his own stoic ways George was very neat and tidy in his appearance – neat clothing at all times, hair always done and with ample amounts of after shave etc. His standard was long black pants, white shirt and dark tie. He very rarely wavered from this. One of his favourite sayings was "blinkin' hell" which got a regular airing. Another favourite expression was "Oh Golly!" "Oh golly, I didn't know that." Or "Oh golly, what great weather."

George retired as Supervising Hydrographer in May 1988. He moved with his wife Merle to Bundaberg from where they regularly attended WRRRA luncheons for many years.

Unfortunately, his health deteriorated as he aged. For Merle, George's passing was a relief in the end as he had dementia and didn't even recognise her. George had moved from Bundaberg into an aged people's home at Zilzie, on the Capricorn Coast, and later Merle moved to Rockhampton after visiting George every weekend proved too difficult. George had two sons before he and Merle got together, but unfortunately one of them has also passed away. George is survived by Merle, her two children, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Compiled from notes supplied by Paul Keleher, Rod Dew, Ray Maynard, Neale Searle, Nigel Kelly and Ian Wallace



Hydrographers at Raglan Creek 1973

Left to right, starting in the back row:
Ron McMahon (Engineer) Bob Bird, Peter Kelly,
Ian Wallace, Dave Amos, Don Ferrier, John Driver,
Harry Stark, Len Ezzy, Keith Smythe, Darryl
Griffiths, Ron McPhee, Rod Dew, Jan Smith
(typist), George Beran.

Vale Cyril John McDonald (Don) Best

Paul Best has advised that his Dad, Don Best, died on 24 May at the age of 91.

· He was a long-term member of the Water Resources Retirees Association and worked as a Civil Engineer for the Water Resources Commission between 1956 and 1962.

During his time at the Commission, he worked on the development of Tinaroo Dam and had significant involvement in the Mareeba Dimbulah Irrigation scheme before moving to Papua New Guinea where he became Assistant Director of the Department of Public Works and served for a time as acting Director.

After a number of years in Jakarta, working for the World Bank, and then a couple of years with Cameron McNamara as their head of South East Asia activities, he returned to the water business in the 1980s, establishing a consultancy that supported irrigators in southern and western Queensland, and which he loved unreservedly.

He continued in this capacity until he was 80 when illness intervened.

Members may recall Don's account of part of his career in editions 69, 71 and 72 of this Newsletter.

Regretfully, we also record the passing of:

Jill Riley, wife of Max Riley. Max was Works Supervisor on many of our Construction Projects over the years. Jill was one of the ladies who made living in Construction Camps more tolerable for the families of the residents in these camps. They may not have received deserved recognition but their support was very much appreciated.

Ken Wright was a draftsman in Local Government Department which was incorporated into the Water Resources Commission in 1987. Ken passed away in April after battling cancer for many years. Late last December he had a fall which fractured a vertebrae in his spine. He was bed ridden and in great pain since then.

Vale John Francis (Jack) Pont 19-07-1929 – 10-07-2022

Late of Mareeba and Caloundra, Jack passed away peacefully, at OzCare Port Douglas, aged 92 years. A memorial service was held in Mareeba. Jack was predeceased by his wife Marcia (2009). Loved father, father-in-law, grandfather and great grandfather of John, Marg, Russel and Lorraine and their families.

The following tribute was supplied by Bob McDonald.

I knew Jack Pont in Mareeba through my father Ted when I was still in primary school and even attended his wedding to Marc. Marc's father had a newsagency in Mareeba so everybody knew them.

After service in construction offices in the MDIA including the white timber office in Byrnes Street where he met Marc, Jack eventually became the Accountant in the new Mareeba IWS office in Constance Street after Bill Brannelly left, reporting directly to Mr Hannam. Jack was highly respected in the administrative area and no one ever complained about him.

I spent seven years in two stints in that office while Jack was there. And we saw them off and on when we visited Mareeba. We visited Jack and Marc in Caloundra in retirement and then again after Marc passed. Jack had a big job looking after Marc in later life as she was incapacitated. So, I've seen a bit of him over the years as have many others. In his vicinity, if you couldn't see him, you could always hear him. Vale, Jack.

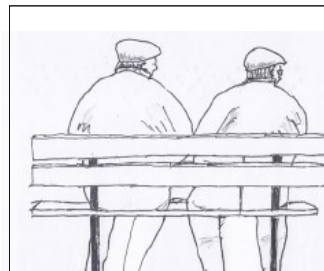


Jack on one of his regular Caloundra walks.

Members may recall the 1991 publication of *Plains of Promise, Rivers of Destiny* by JM Powell which was a history of water resources development in Queensland commissioned by the (then) Queensland Water Resources Commission within DPI. We have recently been informed of the death of Joe Powell aged in his late 80s.

Answers to Terry's Trivia (page 11)

1. Only Indonesia..
2. (ii) earwax.
3. (iii) 14 hrs.
4. (v) 90%
5. (iii) sarong.
6. (i) Frederick.
7. (iv) 4000.
8. (iii) Plato.
9. (iv) Padua
10. (i) Universal Serial Bus.
11. (i) endless.
12. (iv) California.



At my age, if I were to wake up dead, I wouldn't lose too much sleep.

Thanks to Alan Seabrook

Vale Peter Hugh Allen 22-12-1953 – 07-07-2022

Peter was awarded a Scholarship in 1971 to study Civil Engineering at the University of Queensland. He graduated in 1975 with First Class Honours and the University Medal and joined IWSC in Head Office. After the usual five years of rotation through general design and construction activities, he chose to concentrate his career in Civil Engineering Design and joined the Civil Design Group based in Brisbane.

Between 1980 and 1986 in his role as Civil Engineer Division 1 within the design group, Peter's inherent skills were demonstrated on challenging projects such as the detailed design for the Wivenhoe Dam radial gates and bulkhead gate, major design elements of Burdekin Falls Dam including the high pressure radial gates and potential thermal cracking problems.

During this time, Peter continued with his studies and gained a Master of Engineering Science from UQ in 1985. Appointed Executive Engineer II in 1986, he progressed in the following 12 years to Senior Engineer. Some of the major projects he was involved with included: the design of all major structures for Peter Faust Dam; the design of Kroombit Dam; Dam Safety Review of Awoonga Dam; structural adequacy of aspects of Julius and Koombooloomba dams; convening the Brisbane Valley ALERT Working Group on behalf of the Technical Advisory Committee to the South East Queensland Water Board; management and supervision of the Brisbane Valley and Pine River Valley Flood Studies to the commissioning phase of the real time flood warning model; Senior Duty Engineer with overall responsibility for Flood Operations of Somerset Dam, Wivenhoe Dam and North Pine Dam; and presenting lectures at QUT on the use of finite element in Seepage and Fluid Mechanics.

In 1998 Peter became Principal Engineer, Dam Safety in the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. In this role he was responsible for the development of strategies, policy and guidelines to foster best practice for the construction and ongoing operation and maintenance of large water supply and flood mitigation dams in Queensland. Some activities associated with this role were; updating Guidelines for Dam Safety Management of Dams; decommissioning of Oaky Creek Dam; Dam Safety Reviews on a number of dams in Queensland; participation on the State Counter Disaster Coordination Group; serving as the Departmental Representative on the Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD) while at the same time being an active member on the ANCOLD Committee preparing the Guidelines on Risk Assessment for Dams.

In 2000 Peter assumed the role of Director Dam Safety (Water Supply) giving him responsibility for the management of the regulation of safety of Queensland dams. Peter admirably filled this role until retiring in 2017. A few of the major projects in which Peter was involved were: upgrade of Lake Manchester; lowering of Ross River Dam spillway and subsequent installation of radial gates; development and implementation of Acceptable Flood Capacity Guideline for Queensland's dams; an Auxiliary Spillway at Wivenhoe Dam; Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry and implementation of its recommendations; and remediation of Paradise Dam post 2013 flood damage.

Peter was heavily involved in ANCOLD, being an organisational representative up to 2017. He was also Secretary of ANCOLD in 2005-2006, Convener for the 2000 Conference in Cairns, a Working Group Member or Technical Reviewer for many ANCOLD Technical Guidelines and regularly authored papers for the annual conference.

Peter "transitioned to retirement" in 2018 by developing training material to pass on some of his knowledge to aspiring engineers and was always willing to share his knowledge of dams and provide advice on technical issues even after retirement. Peter was a natural mentor and leader to both colleagues and external clients.

During his engineering career, Peter gained the respect and admiration of all who met him being held in highest esteem by his peers. His colleagues and contacts when asked what words best describe Peter responded "Dam Safety Engineering Legend; High Integrity; Gentleman; Humble; Teacher and Mentor; Compassionate; Kind; Calm and Steady; Decisive; Inspirational".

Peter was dedicated to dam safety and on many occasions refused much more lucrative offers from private companies. Peter was the main driver behind transforming dam safety management in Queensland with standards established under his leadership ensuring Queensland dams have been brought up to international standards.

During his career Peter faced personal health challenges and for an extended period of time was dependent on peritoneal dialysis prior to his transplant, a challenge that Peter in his usual manner accepted and took in his stride. He set an example for all while soldiering on under very difficult circumstances. It has been said that Peter was like a steam locomotive powering on through adversity.

Peter is survived by his wife Susanne, his family Jayne and Allan, Laura and Mitch, Richard and Andrea and five grandchildren.

The Allen Family have lost a loving and loyal husband, father and grandfather Queensland has lost an exceptional Dams Engineer. The world has lost a true Gentleman.

This tribute was prepared by Daryl Brigden, Peter's long-term colleague and friend.

Sugar is Sweet

Bob McDonald

"Sugar is sweet " was the title of a set of notes in the last newsletter, and included health warnings. This article reminded me of a predicament that I found myself in as a teenager.

Most say watermelon is sweet, but it's not to me. As a sergeant in No6 platoon in our high school cadet unit, I was sent to Sellheim army camp for ten days to learn first aid. On return to school, I taught resuscitation and other aspects of first aid for two years.

So I had a good grasp of what was required to be done in late 1963 when Jim, a 25yo farm labourer and recent immigrant from Greece, jumped into the East Barron Main Channel balancing storage after gorging himself with water melon before lunch on a hot day picking tobacco. He actually drowned in front of my school mate and me and we were none the wiser. We thought he was just playing around and holding his breath under water. The water was deep but clear and when he didn't surface, we looked down and could see him kneeling on the bottom. My mate went down and lifted him up to the surface by the hair where he floated face down. When we rolled him over, he was not breathing and his face and chest were as blue as a 'Jackie Howe' singlet.

Panic. Pushed him to the water's edge and with four other men pulled him to the top of the bank. The clock was ticking. Now who was going to take responsibility for this disastrous situation? Surely one of the men would step up. No, they were petrified at the sight of an unconscious, unresponsive blue man on the ground. I said "Quick, you've got to resuscitate him". No. I don't think they even understood the word. To them, Jim was as good as dead.

I said "You have got to blow in his mouth". Yeah, one started to blow from about two feet away. Then the realisa-

tion came over me that this situation is now on my shoulders alone and if this teenager doesn't do something very quickly, Jim certainly will not stand up again. An unshaven face with blue swollen lips is something very unappealing to be close to.

Instinctively, I opened the lower jaw, tilted the head back, closed the nose and after a few attempts to blow some air into his lungs, I realised his throat was blocked. The training manual says quickly get hold of the hips to lift and shake and try to dislodge the blockage. You can guess what the blockage was and while watermelon might be nice going down, it's gross when it comes back up.

Clean up the mess a bit and back to the blowing which was now working. Eventually he started breathing by himself and then jumped to his feet waving his arms around probably thinking he was still in difficulties in the water. Major disaster averted. We didn't have time to take a pulse and no CPR was carried out. I now wonder if Jim's heart did ever stop.

One of the men had been sent to call the ambulance and the arrival of a speeding Standard Vanguard Estate wagon, masquerading as an ambulance, with its one light flashing was a sight to be seen.

Message to parents/grandparents. Learn resuscitation. Supervise youngsters in the pool by being in the water facing them, not from inside the house. Professionals say that swimming right after you've had something to eat isn't dangerous at all and that it is only a myth. However, they are referring to the diversion of blood flow to the stomach for digestion, decreasing flow to the muscles and result in some cramping.

But do realise that people can drown right in front of you if they choke on recently consumed food regurgitated into the throat, as Jim did in front of us. You have to believe that for the past 60 years I have totally rejected eating that red smelly stuff.

Abandoned in Cloncurry

Ian Pullar

I had thought I might be a bit short of copy for this edition, but it was never my intention to get some this way. And 'thanks' to Bob McDonald for suggesting the headline. – Ed.

Helen and I had booked to take a fifteen day *Fun Over Fifties* tour to North Queensland, via Longreach, Cloncurry, Normanton, Karumba, Cobbold Gorge, Atherton and Cairns. It was wonderful – a forty seat coach with only thirteen passengers, including one couple who were our friends. Good visits, all at a leisurely pace. On the night of Day 6, Saturday, Helen was feeling tired and so ate little. Next day she skipped the mine tour at Mt Isa. By the time I got back, she tested positive for COVID.

The tour had to go on without us and we had to go into isolation. The Gidgee Motor Inn had a vacancy for only one more night. *Fun Over Fifties* booked us into a motel till the following Monday. It had no restaurant. Fortunately, the manager also managed another motel, one with

meals and was able, through a cancellation, to fit us in. An obliging taxi driver relocated us, by seating us, masked, at the back of his maxi taxi.

Inevitably, three days after Helen's, my RAT also came up positive. After a couple of days of our hoping, the manager again juggled his bookings which would allow us to stay till Day 7 of my isolation. It was a very basic 5m x 5m room in which we were confined, feeling unwell and bored. *Fun Over Fifties* did not seem to be getting on with getting us from Cloncurry to Mt Isa and then onto a plane.

Son-in-law Nick said there was no way we should be flying and he would come and get us. Surely this was too much to ask of him. By way of background, Nick is an exploration geologist, used to roughing it and driving long distances. He insisted he would come and get us. A slight complication – he and Margaret were both in Victoria. No worries – they were due to fly home on Saturday. He would set off on Sunday and pick us up from our motel at 8 am on Monday. We accepted and out of consideration for the motel manager, cancelled bookings after Monday.

BUT. Margaret and Nick's Saturday flight out of Avalon was delayed and then diverted to Sydney where they were told there would be no flights to Queensland before Monday. So Nick hired a car and drove to Ipswich, arriving home at 2 am. After a few hours sleep, he returned the hire car to Brisbane airport and collected his car which had been parked there. The day before son Cameron had been dispatched to Straddie to collect the Pajero. Nick packed the Pajero with swag and camping equipment and set out at around 1:30 pm to drive to Cloncurry, having informed us that the pick up time would be a little later – around midday. He had a couple of hours kip on the road and arrived at our motel at EXACTLY noon.

On the road again, we overnighted in Longreach where Nick did a couple of hours work before sleeping. We then set off early on the Tuesday. Nick cooked us breakfast in a rest area. We stopped for fuel, for coffee and for

lunch, but Nick drove on, delivering us to our home at 8:30 pm. He was home by 9 pm. In the time from when he had left Sydney airport on Saturday and got home on Tuesday, he had driven around 4500 km – enough to have got to Perth.

On Wednesday, the day we had thought we might have flown from Mt Isa, I tested positive to COVID again. We almost certainly would not have been allowed to fly (even if we had been able to get from Cloncurry to Mt Isa and book a flight). We would have outstayed our welcome at the motel. But thanks to Nick we were home (even if not well). The mind boggles at what life could have been like. How could anyone not believe in SAINT NICK?

Footnote: Our friends reported that the rest of the tour had been wonderful and no one else got sick on the section we had specially wanted to do. I don't expect we'll be venturing far from home any time soon.

A Passion for Water – Some Reflections

Greg Claydon

When water is your passion, water is life. You understand and appreciate that water is world-wide (in varying amounts and conditions) and it is worldly. Furthermore, water is personal.

In the last several decades, and foreseeably in the next, challenges remain of falling rains on various parts of our thirsty country with a growing and restless population. Devastating droughts, massive fish kills, coral reef decline, deadly bushfires and frightening floods have drawn local, national and international attention on how we manage our catchments, rivers, wetlands, floodplains, aquifers, lagoons, water supplies, industries and communities.

We have made some positive strides forward and we have learned some difficult lessons – every drop counts, every drip has an impact.

There have been some important and useful developments in technology to help us reduce, reuse, recover, recycle and rethink water and things associated with it. But there is more to do, including in water and sewage treatment and recovery, water use efficiency, remote sensing, big data management, water modelling, dealing with uncertainty and achieving benefits from virtual reality and automation. Science, engineering and technology still have a great part to play in water and infrastructure planning and management. We need the corresponding people and the skills now and in the future to drive the solutions and the innovations to meet the challenges before us.

But we need good communicators too to help people to better understand and appreciate the value of water and the importance of good water and infrastructure planning and management – and to influence decisions about them. Views are still evolving about sustainability, liveability and culture. After the last nine years of my involvement with the Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities, we better understand our growing cities as catchments. They provide opportunities for stormwater use, water recycling, and Managed Aquifer Recharge in suitable

locations, mitigating urban heat and improving water quality and amenity. There are benefits in planning for and having blue and green corridors (and not just transport corridors) for improved ecological, economic and public health and mental well-being.

Hearing Indigenous voices about water is still in its infancy. More needs to be done to incorporate Indigenous social, spiritual and customary knowledge, values and objectives into water planning and management in culturally appropriate ways. This will expand our views about diversity and connectivity.

Because diversity is not only important in our water supply sources, our workplaces and the disciplines within them, and connectivity is not only important when we think about and address climate, water, energy, food and fibre production, and population growth challenges.

There is a growing need to increase trust and confidence for communities and industries to plan, build for and to function under a future with less rainfall overall, more variable rainfed water availability, hotter temperatures and rising sea levels. Yet the need remains to use water sustainably and productively, to build reliance and to embed liveability. Communities continue to demand solutions that are ecologically sustainable, economically viable, socially and culturally acceptable, though their views on each of them may be very different and decisions contested.

It is a never-ending task to grow public awareness and understanding of the importance of water for cultural, environmental, social and economic well-being. There is always a new generation emerging. This task, together with that of making informed and judicious investments in water planning and management, new and improved water infrastructure, and research and innovation, means there is ongoing relevance and importance for those of us with a passion for water, not only for the past decades, but also for the next decade and beyond.

Thanks, Greg, for this thought provoking contribution
– Ed.

Thirty Years a Water Boy

Part 3

Jon Chapman

Incidentally, Peter Thompson left in 2000 on a redundancy. Peter had guided me in the early stages of the separation from Water Commercial. He would be missed for that steadying hand.

By mid-2001 the edict had changed from “get it done somehow ASAP” to a direction to not make the solution “quick and dirty” (from Dudley) as pressure built from Finance and Audit who were quickly realising the size of the black hole DNR had inherited.

The issue of invoices was only possible where the water charges were very straight forward and contained no hidden gems. Areas like the Riverside Pipeline, the Artesian Bore Trusts, the Dumaesq River Irrigation Project, and the mighty Bowen backlog were challenges yet to be tackled. Also, challenging were areas that allowed Temporary Transfers, Carry Overs, Forward Draws, Dewatering, and Groundwater Substitution.

In 2002 there was a never-ending cycle of meetings with Legal Services, the Regions, Sun Water (Metering Contractor), the WERD Project, the Metering Project, Finance and Audit, DRIP Billing Project, Compliance, and the QTC Metering Model team.

The web of water sharing rules, a certain lack of policy direction, constant pressure of change and the unearthing of skeletons from the past was unnerving for Legal, Finance, Audit and now Compliance was entering the fray.

New issues quickly arose around property sales and the impacts on water bills, water harvesting records (particularly at STG and Cubbie), groundwater substitution and compliance for excess use and metering breaches.

In April we issued invoices for 1995 to 1999 for the Bowen backlog (agreed to by the brass), but no sooner were they out there than a Ministerial direction came to withdraw them and issue four separate invoices six months apart. By then some clients had paid and others had not; the mess just got bigger. John Keating had come across from Water Commercial and was tasked with the Bowen monster. Hardest he ever worked as a CPA in his life I reckon. Graeme Milligan had replaced Lee Rogers and he too was under the pump.

As a bonus, the issue of invoices and the resulting Ministerial, while a proper shemozzle, forced us to look harder and boy, did that dig up the cemetery.

In August 2002, I had a breakdown. I just couldn't cope any longer, worn out from stress and over work. I was diagnosed with anxiety and depression. This would now follow me until I resigned (and still does to some extent).

In 2003, it was agreed we were no longer an Interim solution, but still we were not truly THE SOLUTION. The original IWUBS was decommissioned, and a newer version released. We encountered yet more new challenges like linked works (multiple pumps/bores linked to one meter), seasonal assignment of an allocation (was that OK?), the Yambocully Water Board, and the Condamine's infamous Groundwater in Lieu rule (beasts with their own rules).

Meetings were again fast and furious – The Metering Project under Russell Cuerel, Nigel Jeffares and Stewart Wade was growing rapidly with a business case to fund the Statewide metering being investigated by the Queensland Treasury Corporation. Compliance, Internal Audit, Finance continued to have itchy feet and the WERD Project was ramping up to cope with water use, billing, and metering. I had a foot in every camp!

By 2004, we were now getting bills out on a regular basis. We had much of the data on a webpage and we had dedicated regional contacts who performed the duties required to make it all happen. It took nearly four years to gain acceptance that water use billing and metering were major roles for the new Department.

Generally, staff turnover was high as new projects stole my experienced staff. The demands from Finance and Audit to keep the bills going out and the revenue coming in made it a high-pressure workplace.

The Bowen dilemma rolled on as we reissued the 95 to 99 invoices as four instalments and then moved onto 2000, 2001 etc.

Meetings continued as usual but suddenly Compliance had momentum. The Compliance team introduced terms like: Condition Compliance, Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs), the Penalty Infringement Group (PIG) and the issues around infringement notices became real. The Department had imported a few ex-coppers and the importance of enforcing the rules was given greater priority.

Legal Services started on Water Regulation Amendments, and via the State Purchasing Policy the various metering contracts were put in the spotlight.

The WMS (Water Management System) commenced the process of replacing the WERD system.

The Metering Project installed their first telemetry fitted meters on the Weir River. ROP Implementation meetings started as we tried to understand what each ROP required from a Metering perspective. The Fitzroy was first. I worked with Gary Burgess on this process.

In 2005, the processes around debtor follow up grew as the number of outstanding debts mounted. Cubbie and some other St George water harvesters were in the news refusing to pay their bills. Interest was accruing in the \$100s per day on some invoices!! External Audit started to show some interest.

Thirty Years a Water Boy *continued*

The Metering Project was in full swing as well and I had to advise on all the system requirements. Issues included Site Assessments, Manifolded Meters, Meter Process Workflow, Asset Management, Asset Maintenance costs, Shared Meters, Metering Notices & the Dual-Purpose Meters Protocol. The use of Data Loggers to read meters was being investigated.

WMS demanded more time from me and got it!! I had to go through every facet of the billing and metering process (again) with a new team. Stand up meetings & WIKI were new buzz terms. Sessions were held regularly, and they were about audit requirements, water account design, conjunction history, data conversion, water use order, tariff structures and calculation algorithms, business events like water harvesting, advance draw, groundwater substitution, groundwater in lieu, announced allocations and EOFY transactions, Quality Assurance, general ledger Interfaces, metering, asset management, the billing cycle, Product IDs and interest on overdue debts. User acceptance testing became a regular task. The big push to release the system was on by years end yet the system was far from ready to GO!!

The other regular meetings occurred with Legal Services about Water Charges (Part A & B), Work Practices for every process were being developed (5 years late!)

Compliance issues around excess use, overdue accounts and condition infringement grew. I co-authored a Late Payment Paper with Greg Sullivan (who would end up a senior executive in the NSW government) and the idea of using PINs for water use infringements was couched.

We even had a bomb scare in George Street in November.

During 2006, RM Billing continued under pressure from Finance and Audit. Tony Schmid took full responsibility for this project as the WMS Project became my No 1 priority. The push to Go Live was incredibly stressful. As the year ended the Project Team leadership dissolved, and WMS Phase 1 fizzled out.

The Metering Project kept growing and was being integrated into WMS. The move to data loggers was on in earnest. The Meter Implementation Team (MIT) was established and the team itself multiplied in numbers with a full regional contingent.

Legal Services were still developing new Water Charges and Regulations. Drought Declarations, Minimum Charges, Pensioner Discounts, Water Sharing Rules, and metering were in focus. Mary Chapman and Bernadette Zerba were key operatives. Personally, my sick leave days were growing as I was again very tired and stressed.

August 2006 - April 2009-- (Department of Environment and Resource Management) (Senior Project Officer)

Secondment to WMS project

By 2007, WMS Phase 2 was building momentum as I started a process of enlightening a new team of business analysts, developers, testers, and a new round of regional involvement. Phase 2 was a web-based solution, so workflow was the “new world”. Another new buzz term was “gap analysis” as we found the holes in Phase 1. A prototype and proof of concept model were developed. The Gantt Chart when rolled out was longer than the hallways in Mineral House. Online forms had to be developed, and online systems required business rules, icons, etc.

This new world development was challenging to some senior managers and the skills and knowledge gaps caused by the 1990 redundancies was now very evident; we had a clear divide between the older heads (me included) and a bunch of new kids on the block. The battle to cope with the new technology was going to test us all.

In 2008, WMS Phase 2 was in full swing.

The new “buzz” was “Triage” where we reassessed priorities nearly every other day, putting a new slant on getting the best bang for your buck. Other terms of renown were “Clocks”, “Wizards”, “JIRA”, “Common Behavior”, and everything that comes with an online web-based system.

Again, my health was under severe strain. I was being worn down wearing too many hats and having too many masters.

During 2009, WMS Phase 2 release date drew closer. The process was now about testing and training, again I was neck deep in both. WMS was released in April, but it was far from the complete package. Development, testing etc. went on until years end. From February 17 to March 20, I led the training team for WMS, with over 70 staff in eight two-day sessions.

To be continued



St Barnabas Bulletin Board
For Sale:
Parasols for ladies with light frames and transparent covering.

HEALTH *and beauty*

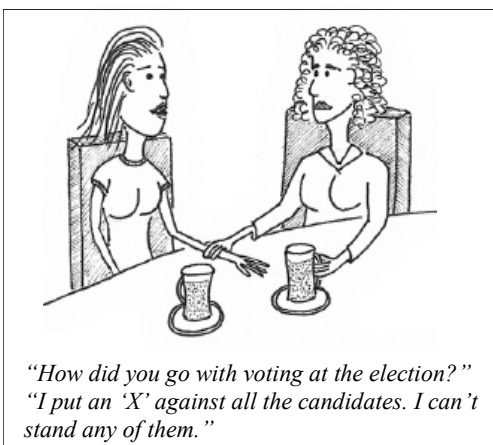
All Angles are COVID

This pandemic continues to wreak havoc and is clearly not going away. And the rules continue to change as new variants occur: masks, no masks, and again masks recommended for those of us of more mature years. I don't know about you, I find masks uncomfortable and they fog up your glasses.

But as with all things, changes wreak other changes. In numerous places, restaurants are modifying their menus, not just to takeaways. There are reports that leading Italian restaurants in New York and other major cities (as well as in Italy) have banished garlic from their menus.

At Nello in Manhattan, the owner said, "I made the decision to get rid of it altogether and my customers thanked me. Imagine eating a meal with garlic and then putting your mask on. You're breathing your own bad breath."

The question now is, what should garlic growers be diversifying into?



Exercise those Brain Cells

Q. 1. In the farmer's barn his three cats catch three mice in three minutes. How many cats does the farmer need to catch 100 mice in 100 minutes?

Q 2. If it takes a 120 piece orchestra 40 minutes to play Beethoven's 9th symphony, how long will it take a 60 piece orchestra to play the same piece?



Jean-Honoré Fragonard
(1732-1806)

The Swing

"With all these skirts and petticoats, no one's going to see my knickers!"

What is Happening to England?

This morning I read in the *Telegraph* of a parent's concern when their 13 year old girl decided she was a boy. The school she attended immediately "socially transitioned" her, changing her name and pronouns without reference to the child's parents. When they asked why this had happened they were told that if a child announced one morning that they were a banana and that would help them have a safer Tuesday then the school would accept it.

Can you imagine the confusion if the whole class got in on the act and changed their identity daily? "Banana" might want to be "Meat Pie" on Thursday and "Sherry Trifle" on Thursday and back to being a girl on Friday. Multiply this by 20 or 30 and the teacher couldn't possibly have time to teach anything but what to call each other for the day!

Madness!

And that on top of the idiocy of the NHS blood donations people elsewhere in England where a 67 year old man turned up to donate blood (something he had been doing for 40 years). Before they would take his donation he was asked a few questions to make sure he was a suitable donor. When they asked him was he pregnant he refused to answer the question and was sent away.

I mean how idiotic can it get? Blind Freddie could have seen he was post-menopausal!!

Mike Marley

Answer to last Issue's Teaser

A. 164.

The first 100 pages account for 189 numbers (pages 1-9 have 9 numbers and pages 10 to 99 have 180). As there are 237 numbers to go out of a total of 615, she must have got through (615 - 237) 378 numbers of which 189 were on the first 100 pages. The remaining 189 numbers (378 - 189) took 63 pages (at 3 per page). So her homework was on page 163 and the next page is numbered 164.

More Mondegreens

We definitely have a need for subtitles when we watch TV programmes from Britbox. When we revert to live television without turning them off, we continue to be amused by the extraordinary mishearings. Here are some genuine samples. From the context, you can probably guess when they occurred – Ed.

- ...to aid our here rows (heroes), the army.
 - Will Liz Mill (Lismore) survive?
 - Students will pervert (revert) to on-line learning
 - There were kay otic scenes at the Polish border
 - The mare of Mariupol
 - Hannah Clarke had to tow the line
 - Almond milk is the main agreement of my coffee
 - ...had to air on the side of caution
 - Call (cool) southerly winds
 - There are contracts we have to wonder (honour)
 - The beautiful piercings (precincts) of Key (Quay) Street
 - Winds will bring a birth (burst) of showers
 - A trough starting to peek in SE Queensland
 - A mullty million dollar investment
 - Investigation into the bundled (bungled) Robo scheme
 - The 958 year old was rescued
 - Hearing birth (here in Perth) .. will folly (fully) explain
 - They were joined by these women (Baz Luhrmann)
 - War in the you crane
 - The Maroons team making their final repressions today
 - The Maroons are facing an enormous channel (challenge) ..
 - Will I have to shave my hair or diet maroon?.
 - .. foot mats impregnated with Rick (citric) acid
 - There are at least six sips at sea out there
 - Archie Roach was taken from his parents as a tiled
 - ... she had an heir of privilege ...
 - ... interest rate rise to reign in inflation.
- and my very favourite*
- This is the frontest piece of the book

An In-tents Feeling

First married, their weekend intents
were camping and getting less tense.
Now a warm bed contents
so they make no pretence:
their love of a camp is past tents.

A Sign of the Times

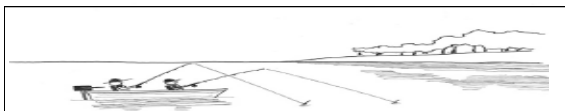
Outside a doctor's surgery

Specialist in women and other diseases.

Terry's Trivia (selected from previous editions of the Newsletter in the expectation that members will have forgotten the answers.)

Answers on page 4.

1. How many countries does the equator pass through in South East Asia?
2. When people are frightened, their ears produce what? (i) hair (ii) earwax (iii) vibrations (iv) red blood cells (v) wiggles.
3. What is the approximate flying time by Airbus 380 from Brisbane to Dubai? (i) 10 hours (ii) 12 hours (iii) 14 hours (iv) 16 hours (v) 18 hours.
4. How much of a cabbage is water? (i) 50% (ii) 60% (iii) 70% (iv) 80% (v) 90%.
5. What Malay word for a garment was first recorded in English in 1834? (i) saree (ii) turban (iii) sarong (iv) banian (v) batik.
6. Clive Palmer's middle name is? (i) Frederick (ii) Arthur (iii) Winston (iv) Terence.
7. Approximately how many people have stood on the top of Mt Everest? (i) 200 (ii) 500 (iii) 2000 (iv) 4000.
8. Who said, "It's a wise man who invented beer?" (i) Ernest Hemingway (ii) Marcel Proust (iii) Plato (iv) Fidel Castro (v) Henry VIII.
9. The oldest botanical gardens still in existence in the world are in? (i) Lyon (ii) Salzburg (iii) Vienna (iv) Padua (v) Brno.
10. USB stands for? (i) Universal Serial Bus (ii) University of San Bernardino (iii) Utility System Broadband (iv) Usain Bolt (v) Unilateral Speed bar.
11. A Sisyphean Task is one that is? (i) endless (ii) only for deities (iii) easy (iv) uplifting (v) well paid.
12. Fortune Cookies were invented in: (i) China (ii) Hong Kong (iii) Taiwan (iv) California (v) France.



"My wife says she loves sleeping under the stars – as long as there are at least four of them."

Book Club

In what is now a regular service, I am now passing on recommendations of enjoyable books by readers other than me. More contributions are welcome. – just title, author and a brief comment will suffice – Ed.

(From Michael Marley) Tim Bouverie. *Appeasing Hitler; Chamberlain, Churchill and the Road to War*. Drawing on previously unseen sources, it sweeps from the advent of Hitler in 1933 to the beaches of Dunkirk and presents an unforgettable portrait of the ministers, aristocrats and amateur diplomats whose actions and inaction had devastating consequences.

(From Lee Rogers) Peter Ackroyd. *Venice: Pure City*. Anyone who has been to Venice will wonder how this unique city came to be. Ackroyd describes how the first refugees in the lagoon arrived in the 4th century and how the city grew to be a great mercantile state and trading enterprise – before the tourists arrived. Fascinating.

(From Chris Robson) Douglas Stuart. *Shuggie Bain*. Set in and around Glasgow in the 1980s, the book traces the childhood to teens of a boy living in poverty and with drug and alcohol fuelled parents, covering the social divisions, cruelties and occasional happiness. The lead character is not a boomer boy type, more a soft artistic boy struggling to retain and develop his identity. I think the book is close to being autobiographical as the author was born and raised in Glasgow, graduated from the Royal College of Art before a career in design in New York. It won the 2020 Booker Prize.



*"I've done the calculations. We could retire at 58 and continue to live in the same style as we do now."
"Could we really?"
"Provided we die at 65."
Thanks to Garry Grant*

Light Perpetual by Francis Spufford describes life in post-war England through the eyes of five different people – two women and three men. Their only link is that they all died in the 1944 V-2 attack that destroyed the New Cross Rd branch of Woolworths in London, killing 168 citizens, fifteen of whom were aged eleven or younger.

Spufford invents a life for five of these young victims, revisiting each one at various intervals in their life on the same day. It is reminiscent of the series *7 Up* that followed the life of several children across a span of years. While the book has a British slant, it is appealing to Baby Boomers as the depiction of different social and cultural episodes over the last seventy years resonates readily with senior readers.

Judy Ferrier

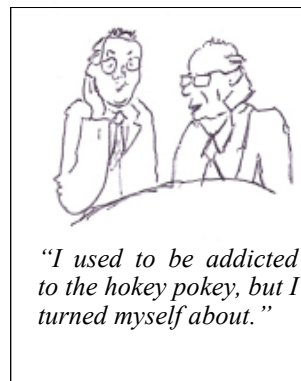
Alexandra Horowitz has written an intriguing book, *On Looking: A Walker's Guide to the Art of Observation*. She is a resident of New York and a frequent walker in her own precinct. But she became aware that different people see different things. So she arranged to walk with others who would see things differently.

Her nineteen month old son had the perception of novelty at a low level. A geologist saw fossils and antiquity in the buildings and curbs. An illustrator saw artistic objects. A sign maker saw not just the words, but the shape of the letters. An insect expert saw bugs in crevices and holes. A naturalist saw the habitat of raccoons, rats and other critters while another companion saw bird life. A musician heard sounds and tones that she had never considered and a dog found smells fascinating. Her lively prose is illustrated by "Despite my never once attempting to communicate with others by peeing on the street, I picked (the dog's) aesthetic preference for streets with a lively set of street furniture, trees and other curbside paraphernalia." A good read.

Ian Pullar

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"I used to be addicted to the hokey pokey, but I turned myself about."