

AquaAustralis

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The Hydrological Society of South Australia Inc., PO Box 6136, Halifax Street PO, Adelaide SA 5000
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Newsletter of the Hydrological Society of South Australia

Almost 25 years ago I joined the HSSA and took on a stint as Secretary. The 100 or so members back then were a group of young and old enthusiastic engineers, scientists, consultants, researchers and students very keen to keep abreast of water-related projects, investigations and issues. At the time serious questions abounded on the future salinity of the River Murray and whether water was limiting Adelaide's growth. There was a continual flow of water resources investigations, cutting edge research and development work and expanding surface and groundwater hydrological assessments.

At the time, much of the grunt for this work was driven from within the old Engineering and Water Supply Department (now SA Water). This effort was fed by a seemingly sensible and sound funding source ultimately linked to the beneficiaries - the State's reticulated water users. Back then the State's public and private water sectors and R&D programs could boast to be the best in Australia for that time. Interestingly many of the other agencies such as environment, primary industries and national parks were the poor cousins who had to scramble for funds through State and Federal budgets.

The introduction of the competition policy, the shedding of so-called community service obligations and a concentration on the basic water supply and sewage services saw the water resources planning and management sector join with the environmental and natural resources public sectors.

Aside from breaking the funding and pricing link between the water users and the water managers, the move into the natural resources area has been a welcome one. From my perspective there have been some real advances in the community participation and ownership in programs, especially through the Water Resources Act and the creation of catchment water management boards and specifically their levy-funded programs. These have, without a doubt, introduced greater accountability and responsiveness to programs - the only problems have been that some of the higher level State-wide initiatives and strategies have not had the same level of accountability or pragmatism to be delivered on the ground.

Catchment plans, water allocation plans and programs delivered at the coalface covering on-ground works, education and planning initiatives have worked well in South Australia. In fact the Wentworth Group's Paper commenting on the national issues associated with the Murray Darling, the drought and social and economic reforms in the natural resource management sector cites the SA catchment board model as a good one for the rest of Australia.

Of course the Government's commitment to improving the integration of natural resources management is driving new legislation. The prospect of taking the catchment water management model to broader, larger boards, effectively adding biodiversity, soils, coastal and land management to the plans and statutory responsibilities, seems challenging. There needs to be care not to spread the limited resources too thinly and under-invest in South Australia's water management programs. It's time to also consider options other than an expanded catchment environment levy from property owners and further explore the user pays aspects of a more definitive water resources management charge.

Alan Ockenden

South Australian Flood History Project

While many articles and papers document aspects of flooding in specific catchments in South Australia, the history of all floods in the State has not been brought together into one comprehensive document. The South Australian Flood Warning Consultative Committee (FWCC) has embarked on a project to research, write and publish a consolidated history of flooding in South Australia.

Planning of the South Australian Flood History project commenced early in 2002. The project is officially sponsored by the Bureau of Meteorology on behalf of the FWCC and jointly funded by some 14 supporting agencies with contributions from local and state government as well as a number of Catchment Water Management Boards and private consultants. The Hydrological Society is amongst those to provide financial support, and is represented on the project steering committee, formed early this year to direct the work of the project.

Mr David McCarthy, a volunteer with the Bureau of Meteorology, has taken on the role of project supervisor whilst the vast majority of the project work is to be carried out by "Work for the Dole Program" (WDP) participants. The first WDP participants have already been engaged, and a total of 43 people will be employed through this program during the course of the project. These participants will undertake all the research, recording of findings and the drafting and editing of the manuscript for the publication.

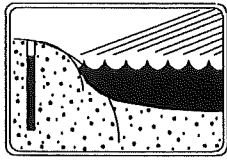
Preliminary research is already well under way. Letters have been sent to 153 pastoral lessees in S.A. seeking flood history about the locality in which the property is situated. These properties are mostly located in the outback. Letters have also gone out to a further 651 Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) volunteer rainfall observers asking them for any flood history they may have about the locality in which they operate. This information is being linked with the extensive rainfall data archive held with the Bureau of Meteorology to provide starting points for further research.

This expanded research effort will begin in earnest in June 2003 when WDP participants throughout the South Australian region begin working with local government officers and local librarian staff to find and collate historical data.

Information to be presented in the publication will include the date and a brief description of the flood event, sources of information, relevant quotes, Bureau of Meteorology data, social and environmental implications of the flood and a description of any mitigation works undertaken as a result of the event.

The project is expected to be completed in 2005. The WDP participants will conclude their work in December 2004 and the publishing of the manuscript by Bureau of Meteorology will follow.

If you have any information on flood events in South Australia which may be of value in the research of this project, please contact David McCarthy on 83662741 (Thursday / Friday only) or d.mccarthy@bom.gov.au.



**Hydrological Society of South Australia
presents**

AUSTRALIAN RAINFALL & RUNOFF 4th EDITION



LEARN ABOUT

- **The latest developments in the updating of Australian Rainfall & Runoff.**
- **Introduction of Practice Notes.**

COMMENT ON

- **Issues where you consider more guidance is necessary.**
- **Problems you encounter.**

Presentation by:

**Associate Professor James Ball, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering,
University of New South Wales and Technical Editor, 4th Edition, Australian Rainfall
and Runoff**

Venue:

**SARDI Plant Research Auditorium
Hartley Grove off Waite Rd, Urrbrae**

Wednesday 19th March

5:30 pm: Refreshments

6:30 pm: Presentation

Attendees are invited to join the Speaker & Hydsoc Committee for dinner afterwards. Numbers will be taken on the night.

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Subscriptions now due

Recently subscription notices were mailed to all current HydSoc members. Subscriptions are due and payable by March 31st. Please also take the time to ensure that we have your correct contact details. If you no longer wish to be a member of HydSoc you must let Bill Lipp know (contact details on back page).

Ian Laing Prize - 2002

The winner of the 2002 Ian Laing prize is Joe Laspina. Joe was a fourth year Civil Engineering student from the University of South Australia. His final year investigation involved the development of a Decision Support System for Implementation of Erosion Control Measures on Construction Sites. He is currently employed by the City of Onkaparinga and is further developing the work he commenced as a part of his final year project for implementation by the Council.

Joe will provide a short presentation of his work at the March Technical Meeting. More details of Joe's work will feature in a future edition of AquaAustralis.

Upcoming Seminars and Meetings

Dryland Salinity Seminar - Monday 14th July 2003

Details of the upcoming Dryland Salinity Seminar will be posted on the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) website as they become available. The IAH homepage has a bulletin board, from which there is a link to upcoming conferences. Please mark the 14th of July in your diary and keep watching your email and the website below for updates.

http://www.iah.internode.on.net/bulletin_board.html

19 March

Australian Rainfall and Runoff – James Ball
See overleaf

15 May

Water Futures - Michael Dunlop

For details of these and other upcoming technical meetings, please watch your email and mailbox for details closer to the actual dates. Should a date or venue need to be changed this is how we will let you know.

Other Important Dates

WORLD WATER DAY is just around the corner, **22 March**, in this the International Year of Freshwater
<http://www.waterday2003.org/>

Just a little further along, **05 June 2003**, is **WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY**, which has adopted the slogan:

WATER - TWO BILLION PEOPLE ARE DYING FOR IT!

<http://www.unep.org/wed/2003/>

International Encyclopaedia of Water

(Source: European Water Management News, 4 December 2002)

John Wiley & Sons Publishers seeks contributors to its forthcoming four volume International Encyclopaedia of Water which contains 14 categories of water related information which include: ground water hydrology, surface water hydrology, agricultural water, municipal water supply, domestic water supply, physics and chemistry of water, oceanography, meteorology, water quality control, waste water treatment, water resource development, water history and water law.

More than 1500 entries are described at the encyclopaedia's web site <http://www.wileywater.com>. Additional entries suggested by contributors are encouraged. Entries may be between 1000 and 4000 words not including illustrations. Contributors receive citation for their work at each entry as well as \$100 worth of technical books from the Wiley catalogue. No dates for contributions are mentioned on the website, the only timeframe given is that the Encyclopaedia will be published in 2004.

More information at <http://www.wileywater.com>

Member Contributions

If you have any news, notices of coming events, articles etc that you think other HydSoc members would like to know about, please send details to susan.lee@flinders.edu.au. All contributions will be considered and are warmly welcomed.

Committee contact details

The Executive Committee of the HydSoc are always interested in hearing from our members. If you have any ideas or suggestions for future meetings, newsletters or other activities you would like to see from the HydSoc, please contact us and let us know.

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