



## AWA News

Welcome to the Spring 2015 edition of the AWA South Australia Branch newsletter. A lot has happened since the last newsletter including the election of a new branch committee and a number of technical tours and events. We have the SA Annual Awards Gala Dinner coming up on 20 November, and this promises to be a truly great event. We hope to see you all there.

In this issue we report on the new AWA SA Branch Committee including an up close and personal insight into three of our committee members. We also take a look at two recent technical tours, Water Proofing the West and the Water and Beer event at the W heatsheaf Hotel.

We also pay tribute to one of South Australia's all time, great water industry leaders and engineers, Don Alexander, who passed away on 3 September 2015.

## Diary

### SA Branch Calendar

Spring 2015

*Please check our website for updates and to register for events, and look out for emails sent to our Branch members.*

#### Friday 20 Nov

SA Annual Awards Gala Dinner  
National Wine Centre 7pm

#### Thursday 10 Dec

Sustainability in the Willunga Basin Region  
SA Water Learning Centre 5.30 – 8.00pm



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or to our Branch Manager  
Contact details...as above

## New SA Branch Committee

In August 2015 a new SA Branch committee was elected. There are 20 members of the committee, five of whom are new. The committee represents a diverse range of water professionals, including engineers, scientists, environmentalists and natural resource managers from water utilities, engineering and technology consultancies and state government agencies. This committee represents the diversity of the AWA membership and brings together a wealth of representative water industry experience.

Leading the committee is John Ringham who has been re-elected as Branch President, Ben Parcel, elected Vice President and Deputy Chair, and Victor Cantone, elected Deputy Vice President and Deputy Chair. Other committee members include: Glenn Sorensen, Niki Robinson, Mark Gobbie, Tanja Stefanovic, Sami Abou-Hamdan, Lionel Ho, Katharine Ward, Martin Bowens, Elsie Mann, Alex Donald, Eddie Pearson, Carmen Wentrock, Damien Egan, Robran Cock, Ben McDonald, Trevor Pillar and Kerrie Akkermans.

The committee would like to extend its thanks to those who have recently stepped down, for their commitment and hard work over the last two years. In particular, thank you to John Sparrow, for all his efforts and dedication in preparing this newsletter.

Alex Donald and Katharine Ward are the new editors of Waterworks SA, and are eager to hear ideas for input into future issues.



*The recently elected AWA SA Branch Committee, including some members from the National AWA Board and AWA Chief Executive Jonathon McKeown*

## Waterproofing the West Technical Tour

On Thursday, 24 September we were treated to a behind the scenes tour of some key *Waterproofing the West* sites. *Waterproofing the West* was a major initiative of the City of Charles Sturt in response to the challenges of water scarcity during drought periods and of local flooding during wet periods.

These kinds of extreme weather conditions were contextualised by the introductory talk from Darren Ray, Senior Climatologist, Bureau of Meteorology. Darren gave an extremely informative presentation about El Nino and the climate 'tug of war' that we are presently in.

With predictions of more variability in seasonal rainfall and warmer temperatures, projects like *Waterproofing the West* are an integral part of ensuring the sustainable use of our water resources.

*Waterproofing the West* is capable of capturing and treating 2.4 GL of water, storing it in underground aquifers, then extracting and distributing it through 36 kms of mains to council reserves, schools and 3rd pipe systems in new residential developments like St Clair, which is nearly complete.

Visiting Old Port Road, Cooke Reserve and St Clair, we saw everything from wetlands to injection pumps, storage tanks and SCADA control systems. The hard infrastructure components of the system have been made with small footprints and to blend in with the green infrastructure.

Council was candid about saying that they are still 'testing' and finding issues as they go. This is with regard to system operation but also adapting to being a water retailer.

AWA's tech tours are designed for small groups so that all participants can really get involved and ask as many questions as they can think of. This tour was no exception, and thanks must go to Shannon Watkins from the City of Charles Sturt who fielded all of the questions very knowledgeably.



The group gathers to hear about water proofing the west



Stormwater wetland used to treat storm water



Recycle water infrastructure

## Water and Beer at the W heatsheaf

On Wednesday 4 November, AWA members gathered at the W heatsheaf for an information-packed technical session focused on the relationship between water and beer. The presentation was made by Wheaty Brewing Corps team member, Laura Mirsch. Laura has extensive experience in brewing, distilling and wine making and a Masters in Sustainable Food Systems where her research focused on the history of beer, wine, and spirits. She drew upon all of this experience in the presentation, from the overview of the key steps in the brewing process, to discussion of the influence of water quality on different beer styles.

As well as perhaps the most obvious issue of the presence of chlorine in tap water, attendees learned about the influence of alkalinity, hardness and pH on different parts of the brewing process – particularly how they affect enzymes and proteins in the mashing and lautering phases, as well as how they can impact the hop-addition phase. Throughout the discussion attendees had the opportunity to taste four different beer styles, the majority brewed by Wheaty Brewing Corps using Adelaide tap water. We learned about beer styles from around the world and the influence of local water sources to their specific characteristics. Laura even managed to weave in discussion of water footprints, as well as touching on the issues of the various waste streams and how these are handled at the brewery.

With the Wheaty Brewing Corps operating on a small scale it is not economically efficient for them to source their own water or engage in advanced treatment. Laura explained how important water quality is to their selection of beers to brew, and the adjustments they are able to make based on their understanding of the water quality on any particular day. We finished the session by tasting two glasses of water – one straight out of the tap and another which had been passed through a carbon filter – our group of water professionals were quick to identify which was which!

Although the event officially finished at 8 pm, many attendees lingered afterwards to catch up with friends and engage in networking. It was a most enjoyable evening, thanks to everyone who helped to make it a success.

The technical program committee is always keen to hear suggestions for activities or topics that our members would like to see in the program. If you have a suggestion, please write to [sbranch@awa.asn.au](mailto:sbranch@awa.asn.au).



Government  
of South Australia



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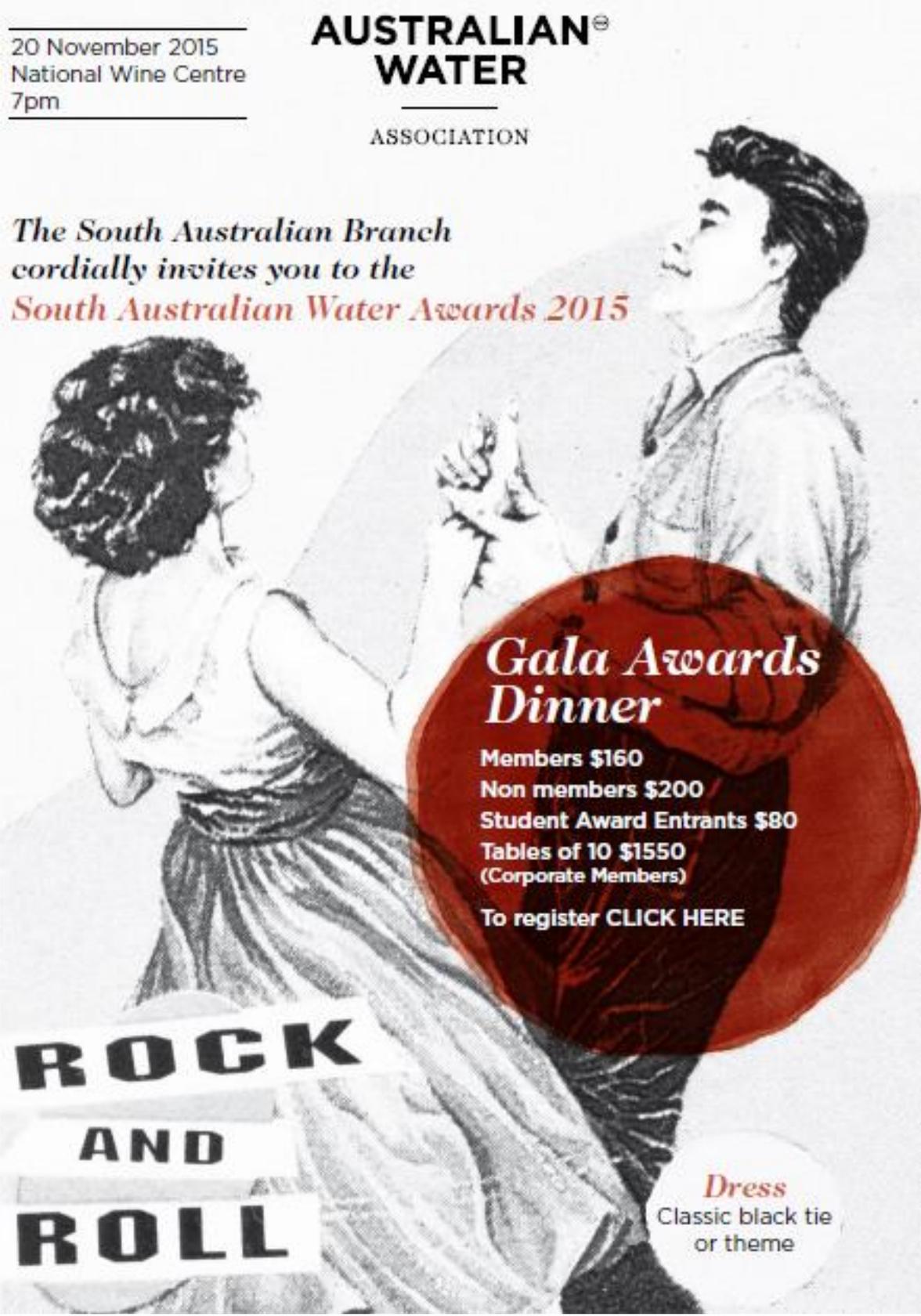
20 November 2015  
National Wine Centre  
7pm

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**AUSTRALIAN<sup>®</sup>  
WATER**

ASSOCIATION

*The South Australian Branch  
cordially invites you to the  
South Australian Water Awards 2015*



*Gala Awards  
Dinner*

Members \$160

Non members \$200

Student Award Entrants \$80

Tables of 10 \$1550

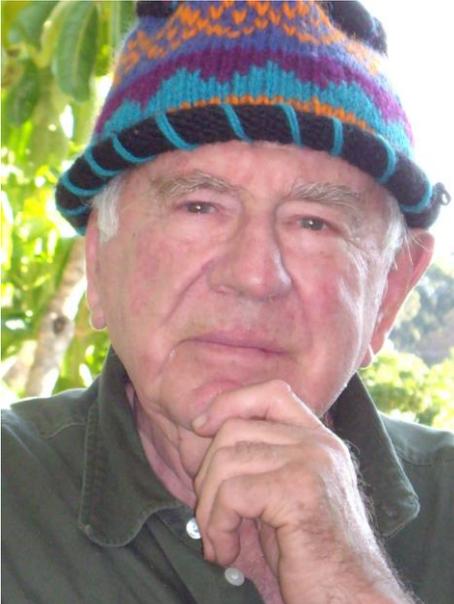
(Corporate Members)

To register [CLICK HERE](#)

**ROCK  
AND  
ROLL**

*Dress*  
Classic black tie  
or theme

## In memory of Don Alexander



Don Alexander was born at home in Tusmore in 1927. The family moved to Henley Beach in the 1930s during the Great Depression. He attended Henley Beach Primary School, Woodville District High School and then the University of Adelaide where he studied part time and worked as a cadet, graduating with a Bachelor of Engineering in 1951. On graduation he joined the Engineering and Water Supply (E&WS) and spent two years on the design of the Mannum-Adelaide Pipeline. He then worked in country South Australia, constructing water supply systems, roads and bridges. Don moved to the Sewerage Branch at Thebarton and worked on sewerage construction, then as Supervising Engineer-Metropolitan, in charge of construction, operations and maintenance.

Don's career spanned the most intensive period of infrastructure development and reconstruction in the State's history.

Don rose to the position of Engineer for Sewerage in 1975. In the late 1970's it was recognised that the role of the E&WS was changing from major construction to water resource management and maintenance and operation of water and sewerage systems.

In 1978-79 Don worked with a small team to carry out a major re-organisation of the department to meet these new roles. He was promoted Deputy Director General in 1979. In 1985, seeking a change and new challenges, he was appointed Director of the Lands Department and led major legislative and organisational changes.

He returned to the E&WS in 1987 as Director General and Engineer in Chief. One of Don's concerns during this period was the future of water resources as the State's population was growing and the demands of industry increasing. Don realised that the Department had to continue to increase its involvement in water resources management. Of concern was the reliability of the River Murray as a long term water resource for the State, so he placed high priority on his role as a Murray Darling Basin Commissioner.

During this period, Don produced many papers and reports on where the water industry was heading in SA and indeed in Australia. Of the many papers produced by the E&WS team at this time, Don was particularly proud of a report entitled *21 Options for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. A wide range of options were explored and costed including towing icebergs from Antarctica! Desalination was identified as the best option and is now part of Adelaide's water supply. He retired in 1990 and served as the Presiding Member of the SA Water Resources Council until 1993.

Don was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in the General Division for service to engineering, particularly the water supply sector in South Australia. He was a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia with well over 50 years of membership. He was honoured to receive an Award from the Australian Water Association for service to the Australian water industry.

Don was a man of great integrity, wisdom and vision. He was forthright in his views and manner of delivery but was a mentor to many. His career encompassed a great time for engineers. In his retirement he used to say how fortunate he was to be associated with such a great team of people.

Don married Daryle in 1959, and she supported him throughout his career. Daryle passed away in 1995, but they were able to fit in a lot of travel early in his retirement. Don had an active retirement, travelling the world as well as serving as company monitor for the Australian Shareholders Association, Art Gallery volunteer and he worked on many committees, including Mitcham-Brownhill Probus Club. Don passed away on 3 September 2015 in the company of his family and cat at ViTa, Daws Park.

## Meet the AWA SA Committee



***Kerrie Akkermans***

**Qualifications:**

Bachelor of Communications  
Licensed Land Agent  
Accredited mediator  
Diploma of Management

**Current employer and position:** AWA, SA  
State Manager and National Member Strategist

**Do you have children?**

2 girls, Victoria and Georgina, both at Uni.

**What can't you do without?** Chocolate

**What did you want to be when you grew up?**

A TV presenter/ Journalist

**What is your dream job?**

Professional speaker on the world circuit

**Dogs or cats?** Silky Terrier named Fudge  
Birman Cat named Tim Tam

**Career path?**

Continuing a career in the water industry

**How do you maintain balance between your work and personal life?** Keeping fit and spending time with my girls.

**Rugby, AFL or soccer?** AFL - Crows

**What would your dream holiday be?**

European tour for 6 months

**Hobbies past or present?** I'm in a book club

**What's in your music player currently?**

Smooth FM big hits

**What is your favourite film?**

The Avengers series

**Who do you admire?** Louise Hay – author, publisher and speaker

**If you could invite four people to dinner who would they be?** Hilary Clinton, Johnny Depp, Ita Buttrose and David Koch

**Do you have any other Volunteer roles?** I sit on two boards Kidsafe and Elder Mediation

**What's the most unusual thing that's happened to you at work?**

Having a snake dropped on the reception desk for the real estate agency I worked for by a tenant (apparently he didn't want it!)

**Describe a typical workday**

If there is an event on it's crazy, if not I am out talking about AWA

**What is the most important factor for success?** Strategy and passion

**What advice would you give to a young person just starting out in our industry?**

Network and find a mentor



## **Ben Parcell**

### **Qualifications:**

BEng Civil Engineering – University of Warwick.  
Chartered Water and Environmental Manager (CIWEM); Chartered Engineer (UK) and Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv)

### **Current employer and position:**

Allwater, M&E Maintenance Delivery Manager

### **Describe a typical work day:**

I spend a lot of time in meetings and out on sites with my teams. I look after five sites and have a desk in the city so I travel a lot

**Do you have children?** A four-year-old boy and a nearly six-year-old girl

### **What can't you do without?**

Good bread, cheese and wine!

**Dogs or Cats:** Dogs

### **What did you want to be when you grew up?**

Naval Architect - I wanted to design ships

**What is your dream job?** Restaurant Critic

### **What was a defining moment in your life?**

Leaving the UK to go travelling. It was a huge step but ultimately it led to where I am today with my family

**Rugby, AFL or soccer?** Rugby Union

### **If you could invite four people to dinner who would they be?**

Martin Johnson, George Gregan, Richie McCaw and Steven Moore

### **What would your dream holiday be?**

I would love to tour South America one day... but for now any chance we get to go away as a family is amazing

**Hobbies:** I play pennant squash every week which helps me unwind

**Career path?** I started work with Severn Trent Water when I left University. I spent two years in Asset Management effectively as a project sponsor before moving into wastewater operations

After a career break (my first visit to Australia) I got a role as a consultant to Welsh Water helping with their regulatory business plan. I then moved to a consulting engineer role and spent four years consulting to Severn Trent Water

I moved to Australia in 2009 and worked as a Process Engineer with KBR. When Allwater started in 2011 I took on the role of Engineering Manager. In 2014 we re-structured and I became the M&E Maintenance Delivery Manager

I have never really had a 'plan' and I have been very lucky to get some good and interesting jobs with some great people

### **What advice would you give to a young person just starting out in our industry?**

The water industry is very diverse. Be prepared to move around and try different areas. As an engineer, spending time in operations was incredibly valuable and it made me a better designer



## **Victor Cantone**

**Qualifications:** Bachelor of Engineering (Civil and Env), Bachelor of Science

**Current employer and position:** WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff. Section Executive, Water

**Do you have children?** I am blessed with two young children – Chiara and Matteo

**What can't you do without?** Family

**What did you want to be when you grew up?** Detective

**What was your first job?** Petrol Station attendant

**Rugby, AFL or soccer?** AFL Crows

**What would your dream holiday be?** A year-long round the world trip with the family

**What is your favourite film?** Shawshank Redemption

**What's in your music player currently?** The Wiggles – Chiara has control these days

### **How do you maintain balance between your work and personal life?**

By ensuring I get home in time to have dinner with the family and put the kids to bed

### **If you could invite four people to dinner who would they be?**

My four grandparents that have passed away so they could meet their great grandchildren and catch-up on all that has changed

### **Hobbies past or present?**

Cooking, Eating, Travelling, Gym

### **What was a defining moment in your life?**

Getting married and having each of my kids

**Career path:** I have been at PB since graduating 13 years ago and have always worked in Water

**Describe a typical workday:** My typical work day would include a minimum two meetings/trips to SA Water, a few hours of team management, some project/proposal work and at least 1 coffee

**What is the most important factor for success?** To be flexible and open minded

### **What are the important qualities required to be a good manager?**

To be good communicator, a motivator and to lead by example

**Career highlight:** Working with and managing the water team we have built at PB to deliver great client outcomes

### **What advice would you give to a young person just starting out in our industry?**

Put yourself out there to take on any good opportunity that is thrown your way