

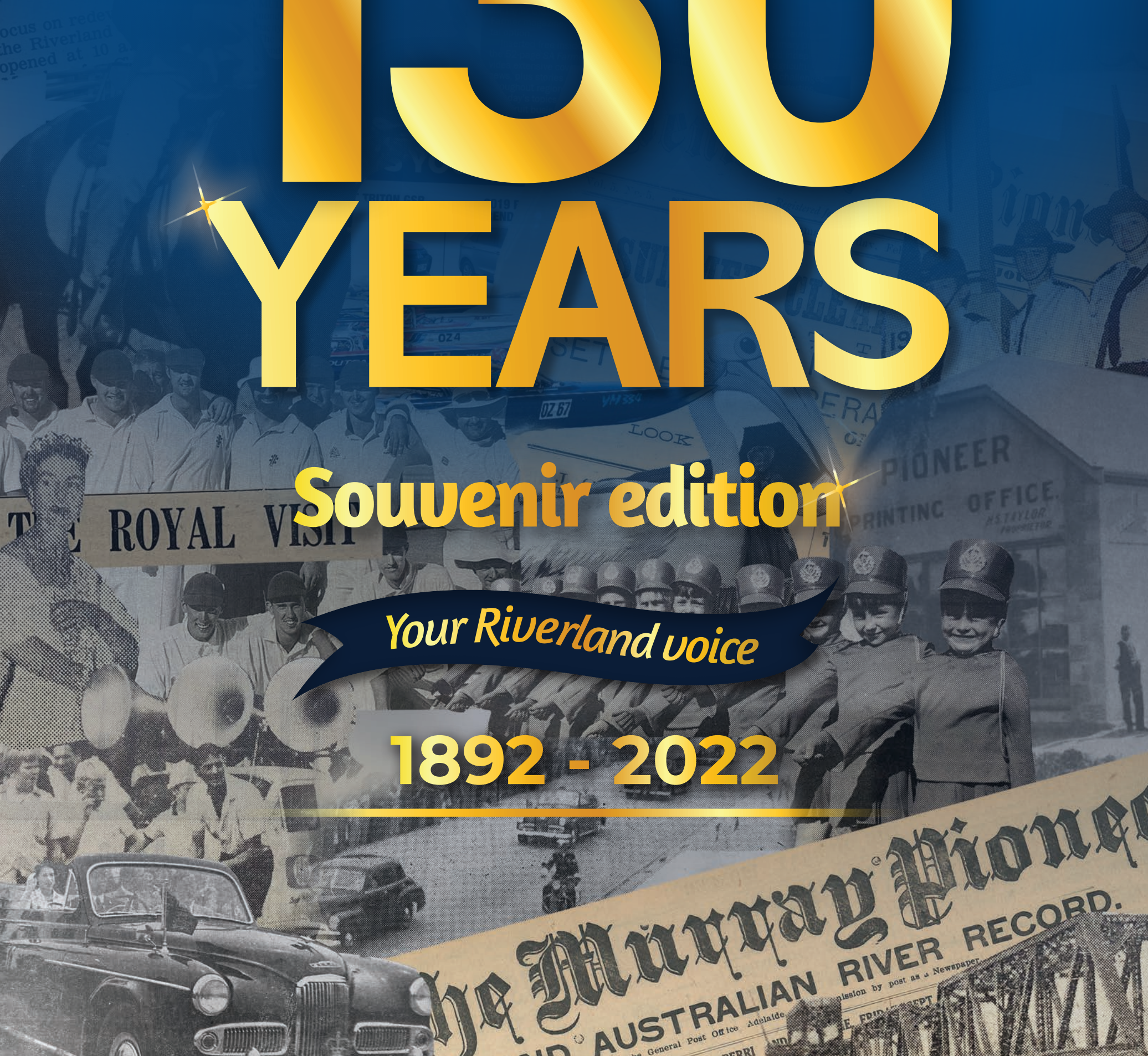
Murray Pioneer

130 YEARS

Souvenir edition

Your Riverland voice

1892 - 2022



Happy 130th Birthday from the team at Regional Media Connect

Regional Media Connect would like to congratulate The Murray Pioneer on 130 years of publication. What a wonderful milestone achievement.

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Pride in our achievements and in our community

Reading through this 130-souvenir edition makes me extremely proud of my family’s involvement in publishing The Murray Pioneer. Often referred to as the regions ‘first draft’ of its historical record, it has always been an honour and privilege for my family to have owned this newspaper.

The heritage is rich, the nostalgia runs deep and the history of this region is simply amazing. The adversity we’ve been challenged with is well reported and given what we’ve come through, I think we Riverlanders have a lot to be proud of.

As a young lad I was always drawn to the newspaper, mostly to read the sport as I loved the days of the huge rivalry between Renmark and Barmera back in the 80’s. Steve ‘Psycho’ Symonds, the Gills and Dean Dunhill versus Buff Tyrrell, the Vanderbiezens and Glen Millard to name a few.

My early memories of The Murray Pioneer office were always very positive and more than anything it was the personalities and general good humour banded around, intertwined with the hustle and bustle of a very busy, deadline driven workplace.

The aromas of ink from the presses and also molten lead from the furnaces used in the linotype machines mixed with the cigarette smoke and the click and clacker of those machines and then the rumble of the big Cossar press which would make the floor vibrate – all vivid memories that take me back to the romantic days of newspaper publishing. It was these aromas that would find their way into my fathers’ jumper and were so memorable to a child welcoming their father home from work.

Of course, today the process is much simpler with the use of desktop computers, a CTP – Computer to Plate processor in the middle and then the plates go straight onto the press. No fur-



naces, molten lead, cut and paste, dark rooms or thousands of metres of film etc.

Cut, copy and paste were once very real terms to a publisher where most people are familiar with them as drop-down options on their PC today.

As the years have progressed, what has become more important to me is the role we play in being a voice for the region to effect change where decision makers have ‘missed the mark’.

The reopening of Lake Bonney in Barmera and, pressuring state government to reverse the decision to close the Cadell ferry service and going back further, years of coverage about a proposed bridge at Berri spring to mind as examples.

The Lock family have played a big part in the history of this newspaper and I also make note of the company’s accountant for many years Ron Rosenberg who recently passed away at the age of 101,

There was also our long-standing editor (and next-door neighbour) of 18 years Peter Read who was so invested in the embrace of new technology to advance the business. There have been so many passionate staff who have

all played such an important role over the years some of whom are with us today. I could never have expanded this business without the likes of Barry Drogemuller, Sally Giles, Margaret Betts and Paul Mitchell to name a few.

Today I gain more satisfaction than ever in seeing younger staff develop and grow into brilliant contributors, passionate about their role at the Pioneer.

I’d like to think it’s more than just a job to most that pass through the Pioneers walls and in reading this souvenir edition I’m sure you’ll see that it has been for some at least.

Any newspaper is only as strong as the region it serves. I thank our readers, contributors and advertising clients on behalf of my family present and past for engaging with the Murray Pioneer for the last 130 years.

This souvenir edition has been compiled with the intention of showcasing the development and growth of the region along with the role of the local newspaper in capturing those events.

I trust you’ll enjoy this special edition and many more to come.

Ben Taylor
Managing director

A privilege and a responsibility

Choosing what to include in this special 130-year Murray Pioneer anniversary lift-out was much more difficult than we first imagined.

Sure, certain historical moments pick themselves. The end of World War II, the Royal visits, the ’56 flood, and Don Bradman’s local batting display were classic no-brainers.

But trying to cram something for everyone into 40 pages was an impossible task, because The Murray Pioneer means different things to different readers.

Some are drawn immediately to the front page and prominent news stories, eager to read about the important issues facing their region.

Others love the opinion pages, which have always carried letters to the editor, an editorial view, and – since being relocated in 2007 – the wonderful cartoons of Tony Hersey.

More recently, Text Line (previously called Text the Editor) has been a well-read addition, notwithstanding the extra challenges it has created, such as the requirement of heavy editing and poorly-received omissions, plus – a few years back now – negative feedback from a few disgruntled council representatives.

Community news continues to be a major part of The Pioneer’s fabric, via coverage of schools, local events, service clubs and the general activities that make the Riverland a great place to live.

We maintain focus on the region’s primary production, the mix of which has changed over the years, but remains crucial to the Riverland’s economic survival and success.

Front of mind is the importance of trying to report accurately and fairly – without fear or favour, as the cliché says – on local council matters, given they affect everyone, either directly or indirectly.

Of course, sport is another platform upon which The Pioneer’s readability has long been built,

and each week we devote a significant chunk of the paper’s space to Riverland sport.

All of which simply means we cannot hope to have all the bases covered in these 40 pages.

Fortunately, we were able to hear from some of the people who have helped make The Pioneer a respected Riverland institution for over a century – and they filled in some gaps.

For this publication, people like Chris Kenny, David Burtenshaw and Peter Read give an insight into their experience of working at The Murray Pioneer, recounting stories about the Riverland community and its people, and relating personal tales of life inside the Ral Ral Avenue office.

New journalists here are often told – and experienced ones reminded – they hold a position of privilege and responsibility, reporting on Riverland people and events, and helping share these stories across an entire region.

Any suggestion the oft-repeated, cynical line that “no one reads The Pioneer” holds any weight is rapidly extinguished the day a story containing a mistake or factual error hits the streets. If we’ve messed up, our readers let us know, as they should.

So, the current team members at The Pioneer – caretakers of a remarkable and enduring legacy – invite you to take a few minutes to look over this special publication.

Like all quality newspapers, it was put together in (much) less time than we would have liked, with fewer human resources than is ideal, and some rough edges to boot.

But we trust it provides a snapshot of life in the Riverland over the past 130 years, viewed through the prism of the region’s most trusted and committed news source.

Paul Mitchell
Editor
(2007-2019 and 2021-current)

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END OF WW1:

Hostilities ceased – Germany signs the armistice

Rejoicing in Renmark...

November 15, 1918

"There must be no question of peace by negotiation," said Col. Kenneth Mackay when addressing a Renmark audience, a couple of weeks ago – and there wasn't.

Marshal Foch knew with whom he was dealing by better experience. It is said that as a subaltern he was present when Bismarck dictated Germany's humiliating terms to France nearly half a century ago. The only parleying he did was to tell the delegates of Hundom that they must accept the Allies' terms or he would batter them to pieces in a month.

Or, to employ the boxing term used by the R.S.A. magazine, "box on or sky the wipe".

With no choice but to submit, they chose the latter alternative, and thus it was that at 11 o'clock on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 hostilities ceased.

RENMARK RECEIVES THE NEWS

The news of signing the armistice reached Renmark between 8 and 9 o'clock on Monday evening. A phone message from the secretary of the Commercial Travellers' Club was the first tidings we had.

The fire bell was rung, a church bell chimed in, a few isolated cheers from children and then a rattle or two on empty tins. But the news soon spread and in half an hour there was a band of 50 tin kettlers marching the streets.

The people poured out of their houses in the town while many who were in bed at home in the settlement got up and drove, biked or motored in to swell the crowd that was too excited to know what to do.

After a short consultation a few gentlemen halted the procession in front of the hotel and 'Rule Britannia' and 'God Save the King' were enthusiastically sung and cheers given for the King, the Allies, Foch, and Our Boys.

Resuming the procession the band and its followers made their way to the post-office where 'The Marseillaise' and other

patriotic songs were sung, cheers given for America, Haig, the Navy, Australia, Lloyd George, the mothers, the nurses and others.

At the instance of the Rev. H. Woolnough the crowd stood in perfect silence for a minute with uncovered heads in memory of the brave who had fallen.

At this moment the E.R.O puffed in with its whistle blowing and added to the din the tin kettlers made.

There were several who were inclined to be sceptical about the news as no official telegram had been received and frequently someone asked for the official wire to be read. The majority, however, took the message as official following the telegrams and press notices of the preceding two or three days.

In point of the fact, the official announcement from the local postmaster did not arrive until midnight, when the impromptu celebration had ceased.

There was very little work done on Tuesday, some business places not opening and by general consent the day was observed as a public holiday.

There was a string of flags across Murray Avenue and from every flag pole flew the colours of the various Allies.

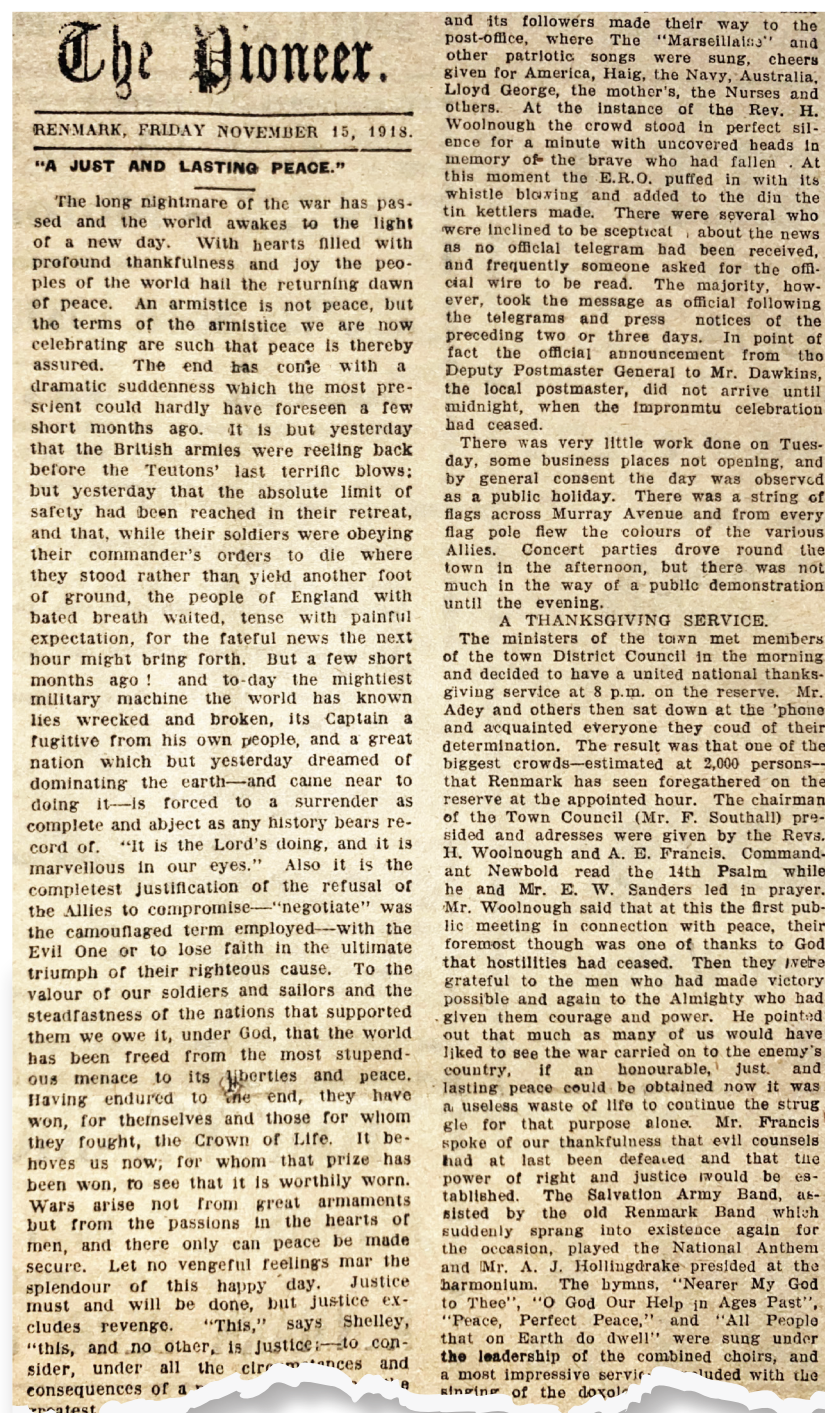
Concert parties drove around the town in the afternoon, but there was not much in the way of public demonstration until the evening.

The public holiday proclaimed by the Executive Council on Thursday was observed at Renmark by the holding of sports etc. on the reserve.

The singing of the National Anthem 'The Marseillaise' the hymn 'O God Our Help in Ages Past' and the doxology and appropriate addresses by the chairman (Mr. F. Southall) Messrs. J. M. Smith, H. S. Taylor, S. H. Fleming, Father Connelly and Cr. Hilton opened the proceedings.

An effigy of the ex-Kaiser was torn limb from limb and burnt.

Mr Hamilton presided at a piano on a trolley and kept the ball rolling with patriotic songs, in which all joined, and pianoforte solos.



Waikerie Punt sinks

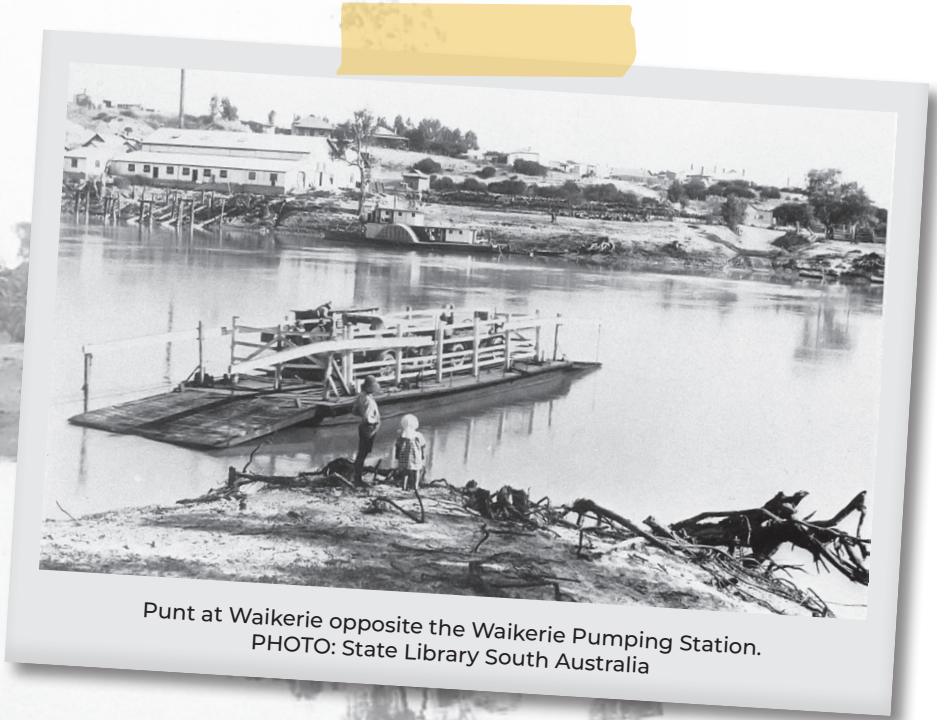
December 7, 1939

Following the receding of the flood waters at Waikerie, the town punt was opened to traffic on December 1, but after five days of constant use – owing to the Kingston punt still remaining closed – it sank this morning, and is now lying half submerged on the Taylorville side of the river.

The sinking was caused when a motor truck carrying over eight and a half tons of bricks was being crossed over the river at 6.30am. The punt had reached the opposite bank when the truck owned by Mr W Petersen, of Blanchetown, broke through the floor boards of the punt flap while

moving off on to the bank. This caused the front of the punt to be pinned firmly to the bank, while the water flowed through the hole wheels of the truck into the punt. Despite the efforts by the puntman, Mr Charlie Gunter, the punt was gradually flooded and half submerged.

With the assistance of several men from Waikerie, the motor truck, after being unloaded of its bricks, was removed from the punt. This afternoon a gang of men, including district council employees, will endeavour to pump the water out of the punt.



Punt at Waikerie opposite the Waikerie Pumping Station.
PHOTO: State Library South Australia

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REPATRIATED P.O.W's

Mrs. M. Jones of 17th Street Renmark, has received advice that her son,



Pte. Raymond G. Jones

Pte. Raymond G. Jones, who was taken prisoner in July 1942, has been recovered and is safe in Allied hands. Mrs. Jones had received a number of messages from her son up until the capitulation of Italy in September, but since then she had had no word from him. Pte. Jones and his brother Cpl. A. Murray Jones, now serving in Borneo, have five years service to their credit. Another brother, Leslie C., now discharged and living in Renmark, lost a leg in New Guinea.

Advice has been received by Mr. J. E. Fullston of Mindarie, from Bari, in Italy, that Pte. George Pearce, who has been a prisoner-of-war in Stalag 18A, Austria, for over four years, is now on his way home. He was taken prisoner when Greece fell. Pte. Pearce enlisted in the AIF in July 1940, and went overseas in November the same year.

Mr. J. H. Carroll, of Renmark has received word that his son, Mick, is safe and well in England after over 4 years in a German Prison Camp.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Dolan, of Renmark this week received the following cable from their son, Pte. Horrie L. Dolan,



Pte. H. L. Dolan

from Naples: "Arrived Naples. Home soon. Writing." Pte. Dolan was taken prisoner at El Alamein almost three years ago, and his parents had had word from him every few months since. The last card received was dated November 27, 1944. From Africa Pte. Dolan was taken to Italy and when Italy fell he was transferred to Stalag 18A in Germany. His service with the AIF included the siege of Tobruk.

Advice has been received by Cpl. Vera Hancock (WAAAF) Bairnsdale, and Mrs. Colin Gellert, of Karoonda, that Sgt. Norman Hancock has arrived in England from Stalag 383, Germany, after being a prisoner of over four years. He was captured in Crete.

RIVER CELEBRATES END OF WAR:

Gay scenes and services of thanksgiving follow Japanese surrender

August, 1945

Scenes of almost unprecedented gaiety and services of thanksgiving have taken place in the River districts yesterday and today, following the announcement yesterday morning that Japan had surrendered to the Allies.

Although the holiday did not officially commence until noon, shortly after the news received at 8.30am yesterday, shop doors closed and attendants thronged the streets where 'everyone' appeared to have assembled, and the populace gave vent to its feelings in no uncertain manner.

Whistles sounded, vehicles tore around the streets with horns peeling, bells ringing, engines backfiring, and everything that created a din was brought into commission.

Church bells were tolled, and religious services held.

RENMARK

There were scenes of wild excitement in the streets of Renmark yesterday morning. Big crowds assembled, and danced and sang, while all manner of vehicles careered around the streets. The Mayor (Mr S. A. James) led a "gang of kids" around the town, to his own musical accompaniment of a kerosene tin and hammer.

Bunting was soon decked across the streets and flags fluttered from almost every building.

A crowd estimated at nearly 3000 attended a service of thanksgiving in the Rotunda Gardens in the afternoon, conducted by local clergymen.

A parade led by the combined Renmark Citizens Silver and Salvation Army Bands included servicemen, returned soldiers, Red Cross aids, air training corps, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and school children of the district.

In the evening a ball and carnival was held in the RFGC Packing House, when the attendance again, probably exceeded 2000. There was dancing, singing and a spirit of gay frivolity throughout.

This afternoon a children's sports programme is being conducted on the Showground. Services have been held in various churches.

BARMERA

In common with other districts Barmera celebrated VP Day right royally.

There was general rejoicing, with dancing, games and a procession.

Today sports and games for children are being held on the oval, followed by a barbecue in Barwell Avenue.

LOXTON

The people of Loxton received the news of Japan's surrender with spontaneous rejoicing. Large numbers were soon in the streets after the announcement yesterday morning. Decorated cars and lorries raced around, and crowds followed a drum marching and singing.

A civic service of thanksgiving was held at the Soldiers' Memorial Bandstand in the afternoon. The Loxton Band, under bandmaster W. E. Baker, was brought together again for the purpose. Mr F. J. Petch (chairman of the Loxton District Council) opened the proceedings and handed the service over to the presiding minister, the Rev. R. F. Woods.

Mr A. M. Hilbig (president of the RSL sub-branch) read the scripture lesson, and Mr E. H. Hechler presided at the piano for the hymns. An amplifier was installed by Mr Ern Eime.

It was a wonderfully well-attended and impressive gathering.

The streets were decorated with flags and streamers, and coloured lighting added to the gay scene when an open-air festival was held on the lawns last night. The band played, there was community singing and dancing, and much frivolity among the happy throng.

A typical feature was the rendering of the items by a combined choir from the two Lutheran churches. Mr Erwin Thiele was MC.

This afternoon (Thursday) a procession is leading to the showground for a sport gathering, and in the evening a Victory RSL ball will be held in the Institute Hall.

WAIKERIE

Waikerie went gay yesterday with the news of peace, and two full days' celebrations have been arranged.

Yesterday a divine service, over which Mr J. H. Strangman presided, was conducted by the Rev. A. H. Ellison in the institute. The hall was packed to capacity.

A schools ball was held last night.

This morning a procession is being held in the streets in which school children and local war organisations are taking part and this will be fol-

lowed by a sports programme with sideshows at the oval.

Tonight, a victory ball is to be held in the institute with the overflow in the main street.

BERRI

Shops in Berri closed at 9.30am yesterday and there were gay scenes in the streets, although celebrations were purely informal until this morning.

Last night coloured lights which had previously been erected in readiness were lit.

Today there is a full day of festivities. The district schools marched to the oval, where addresses were given by chairman of the district council (Dr L. S. Trenaman) and Mr W. M. C. Symonds. Sports for the children followed.

Tonight there will be bands playing and dancing in the streets.

BERRI'S BIGGEST CELEBRATIONS EVER 2,000 People Attend At Memorial Oval

Berri, Aug. 21

Following on the announcement by the Prime Minister that Japan had accepted the Allied surrender terms, gay scenes were witnessed in the streets of Berri. Many people were already at their places of employment, but as soon as they realized that this time the news was official, all shops and business establishments immediately closed down. Motor car horns were tooted, bells rang, the Fire Brigade siren sounded out in a wailing, weeping scream, and above all the whistle from the irrigation pumps could be heard all over the area. Land Army girls stopped work at Toora Vale and dashed into the town on two crowded motor lorries whooping, yelling and singing all types of songs. Flags, bunting and crackers appeared from all directions.

Several local horsemen soon galloped into the street in full cowboy outfit, giving vent to their feelings with Indian whoopees. Later one of the riders reappeared minus his horse, this time riding on the radiator of a motor car complete with saddle, whip and spurs. Les Trenaman's motor lorry with 30 to 40 girls aboard paraded through the main thoroughfares, the girls waving flags, throwing



Lock family's long Pioneer association

1905 - 2014

DEIRDRE GRAHAM

The Murray Pioneer and the Lock family go right back to when John Lock and H. S. Taylor moved to the area together from Mildura in 1905, and Mr Taylor purchased the then Renmark Pioneer.

The Lock family members who went on to work at The Murray Pioneer included John's son Harry, who spent 46 years with the paper, and his son Barry, who clocked up 45 years.

The Murray Pioneer spoke with Barry, who recalled he also had three uncles work for the business – Mick, Lindsay and Jack.

"My dad Harry went to World War II and more or less the week after he was discharged he was back at The Pioneer," Barry recalled.

"He got his discharge papers in Adelaide and got on the train to Renmark and that was it."

Barry said two of his uncles met their future wives, both of whom were proof readers, at the newspaper, as did he with his wife Monika, who worked as a book



The Lock Family (from left), Jim, mother Ethelwynne ("Granny"), Harry, Glen (front), father Jack, Lindsay, Tina (Mrs H. Drogemuller), Mickey and Dulcie (Mrs R. Lill) in Renmark in the 1940s. Absent: Jack Jr.

binder, proof reader and tea maker.

Barry started work at The Pioneer at 17, working through the 1970s when the newspaper industry underwent a massive

change in technology with the introduction to offset printing.

"I started in the commercial section with Alan Wescombe, who was the fore-

man in that side, and then Tony Hersey took over from Alan and I went into the newspaper side on a linotype," he said.

"(The industry) went from letterpress to offset, so I saw right through to when they brought in computers with the small screens and huge keyboards.

"There were only two guys doing all the setting: me and Ken Warner.

"We had to learn typing because the intertypes were all caps on one side and lowercase on the other.

"We had to go to TAFE and learn typing when they brought in the universal fours.

"And then they went from universal fours to computers and I was always the one doing the ads and stuff."

The work was never without humorous moments.

"We had a lot of funny thing happen, like the incinerator blowing up," Barry said.

"And we used to burn ink drums out the back – the 44-gallon drums that the ink used to come in for the machine."



Barry Lock at work at The Murray Pioneer office in 2009.

The early days of computer typesetting.

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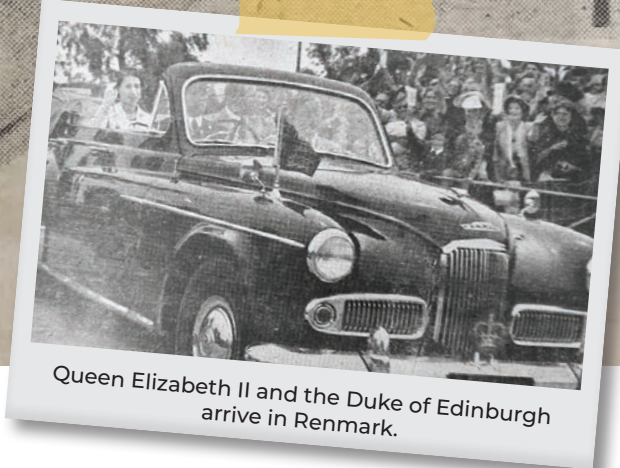
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The remarkable scene in Renmark, where 28,000 people were on hand for the royal visit.



Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh arrive in Renmark.

Queen welcomed by record crowd of 28,000 people

April 1, 1954

Renmark and the River districts gave a right royal welcome to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh when they paid their long-awaited visit to the town last Thursday.

A record crowd of about 28,000 people came from miles around for this greatest occasion in the region's history – some 15,000 including an assembly of 5000 school children thronging the Renmark Oval and another 13,000 lining the route of the Royal Progress through the streets.

From an early hour in the morning, people began flocking to the oval and the main streets to secure their positions, while some even camped on the spot overnight, mostly in cars.

On the arrival of the Royal plane at the Renmark aerodrome from Adelaide the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh were met by the state director of the Royal tour (Mr M.A.F Pearce) and the weather was mild and pleasantly overcast as the 10 beaming cars in the procession made their way towards the town through vineyards and orchards along broad, tree-lined Renmark Avenue.

Homes and business houses were gaily decorated and strings of pennants and flags overhead marked the line of route as the Royal Progress commenced at 18th Street, where a large banner bearing the 'Renmark Welcomes You,' and on the reverse 'Farewell and Godspeed' marked the entrance to the town proper.

Crowds lining the route were thickest at the main intersection of Renmark and Ral Ral Avenues, along which the Royal car passed.

Long lines of bemedaled ex-servicemen guarded the roadway and the river boats 'Connawarra' and 'Canberra' at the nearby wharf joined in the enthusiastic welcome with blasts from their whistles.

There was a minor break at this point by the crowd as the Royal car turned into

Ral Ral Avenue, but the situation was soon brought under control by the police, 120 of whom were in Renmark mostly from Adelaide, for special duty on the day.

AT OVAL

A burst of cheering greeted the arrival of the Royal car at the oval where the entrance was lined by members of B Company, 10th Infantry Battalion (the Adelaide Rifles) CME, under Major W.A. Brocksopp and the Renmark Flight ATC, under Flying Officer E. H. Cope.

The cheering was intensified as the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh entered the beautiful, grassed arena – deservedly famed as one of the best in the state – and then made a complete circuit inside the crowded cycle track.

Appropriately in such a region as the Murray Valley, the Hon. C. S. Hincks (Minister of Lands, Repatriation and Irrigation), representing the State Government, presented the Mayor of Renmark (Mr S. A. James, MBE), resplendent in his new robe of office, and Mrs James to Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh. As the group moved toward the official dais, the Queen was presented with an exquisite posy of Cecil Brunner Roses.

The arrival of Her Majesty at the oval was marked by the raising of the Royal Standard, and when positions were taken at the dais, the assemblage joined fervently in the singing of the National Anthem, led by the Renmark-Berri Citizens' Band.

The Mayor presented an address of loyalty on behalf of Renmark and the other River districts and Her Majesty replied.

ARTISTIC DAIS

The dais provided a perfect setting for this central feature of the visit.

Beautifully proportioned with its 16-foot high canopy and red, white and

blue drapings, it had the lower part of the four corner pillars most artistically draped with bunches of grapes and the base colourfully and tastefully decked with fruits and flowers.

The Queen looking, one thought, a little subdued after an air trip which is reported to have belied the mildness of the weather at ground level wore an attractive white frock, springed with green, a green straw hat trimmed with red and white, a green handbag and white open-toed shoes.

The large assembly of children on the oval next claimed the attention of the Royal couple who drove up and down their long columns in a Land Rover after the marshal in charge, Mr L. N. Pearson (headmaster of the Renmark Primary School) had been presented by the Mayor.

The first column, comprising mainly of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, remained strictly at the salute while the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh moved along their front, but they turned round and joined the rest of the young folk in a tremendous demonstration of flag waving and cheering as the vehicle rounded the end of the column to move up the next.

On her Majesty's return to the official dais, the Mayor presented 32 prominent local citizens.

DISPLAY OF PRODUCE

The Mayor and Mayoress next escorted the Royal couple to a most attractively arranged display of the district's products. The Mayor presented Mr J. L. Showell (president of the Renmark A. & H. Society) and Mr K. Weidenhofer (general manager Renmark Growers' Distillery), who conducted her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh around the display.

Here they saw set out in tiers on the base of a lovely array of fresh and dried fruits, fruit juices, cereals and wool, sur-

mounted by a revolving pyramid of dried fruit in show boxes.

It was no wonder their attention was specially claimed by this striking demonstration of the good Earth's rich productivity.

As Her Majesty left the display, she was presented with a lovely basket of fruit by Miss Jilleen James, daughter of the Mayor and Mayoress.

Further cheering attested to the people's loyalty and affection as the Royal couple made their departure and all joined in singing the 'Song of Australia'.

Royal Progress was resumed on the return trip through the town, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh freely acknowledging the renewed demonstration of the crowds lining the route.

Throughout the Royal visit to Renmark, a public address system with 22 loud speakers installed by Mr R. W. Pearce kept the people both at the oval and in the streets closely in touch with proceedings as described by ABC commentators.



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Sandbagging was crucial in salvaging important businesses.
PHOTO: Loxton Public Library



Working on the banks in '56

1956 ALISHA FOGDEN

The following article was originally printed in the August 22, 2006 edition of The Murray Pioneer.

Renmark's Peter Tucker was a young 18-year-old during the 1956 flood and recalls working on the banks with his Ferguson tractor.

Mr Tucker said he was part of many labouring efforts, including levelling out the soil on the banks.

"I can remember all the shovel work quite clearly as well," he said.

"We had to de-water our properties and run it all out of our block into a series of channels and up to the corner of Eighteenth Street where there was a pump there to push it out over the bank.

"It was a fairly constant job to keep all those channels running to stop our place getting flooded and the pump ran day and night."

Peter said his father, Murvin, was the electrical supervisor at the Renmark Irrigation Trust, which looked after all the electricity in those days.

"I went out with him a few times when they had power emergencies, as they supplied Paringa and Lyrup as well," he said. "Keeping the substation

clear of water was very important."

Peter said his family's vineyard on Twentieth Street went completely underwater and totally disappeared.

"The vines died, we recovered nothing from that block," he said.

"We also had a poultry farm on the supposed dry side of the flood bank and it was lucky we had just got rid of all the poultry, around 500, otherwise they would have all been walking in water."

Peter said the flood determined future employment prospects.

"I had been working on the bank at the time, plus a few odd jobs, and my uncle came over from the South East with earthmoving equipment," he said.

"I ended up driving a truck to deliver dirt on the banks, instead of on the tractor."

"So I ended up in earthmoving work after the flood."

Peter said what happened in '56 could be a long way off but not impossible.

"There are people that say that there would never be a flood like in '56," he said.

"But they probably said that after the 1931 flood."



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Catalyst for change

1892 - 2022 9

1956

HEATHER EVERINGHAM

The following article was originally printed in the August 18, 2006 edition of The Murray Pioneer.

Immediately after floodwaters receded, the Riverland embarked on an enormous task of rehabilitation and recovery aided by an enthusiastic community who had emerged victorious, in what had often appeared to be a battle against hopeless odds.

The cost of the flood to SA was estimated to be four million pounds, which took in damage to public and private property.

The Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund was able to compensate victims for flood-damaged-property, also owners of land acquired for the protection of levees, for soil removed to build levees and for damage caused to property in building levee banks (e.g. bulldozers caused much damage in the Berri area).

One third of the Lord Mayor's Fund was given to Renmark; 70,000 pounds was given to the RIT and Corporation for the restoration of the district's roads and bridges.

These had taken a severe hammering and been broken up badly after the carting of soil for the levee banks.

The raised bitumen road on Ral Ral Avenue between the town and hospital was reopened in August 1957 after being closed to traffic for 12 months and the two main highways through the town were transformed into dual highways with extensive new sealing of roads also undertaken.

Priority for money relief was given to those applicants who had suffered the greatest hardship.

A contentious issue to arise was the reimbursement of the district councils for flood work carried out when the Federal Government would only fund the re-installment of public utilities.

RENMARK

Building projects that started before the flood were resumed, notably Renmark's new municipal buildings which included a specially constructed studio to house the ABC's new regional station 5MV.

Major alterations and additions were completed at Renmark's hotel, as with the other community hotels in Barmera and Berri.

Renmark had a 'facelift' when business houses co-operated with the corporation to remove all veranda posts, which

coupled with reconstructed footpaths greatly improved the town's appearance.

It was mid-1957 before it was evident that Renmark's street trees had suffered from flood-induced seepage with a loss of 63 per cent.

The hardest hit areas were near the intersections of Ral Ral Avenue and Murtho Streets where the town's finest jacarandas and kurrajongs had to be removed and in Renmark Avenue between Fifteenth and Sixteenth Streets where 22 well-developed jacarandas died.

Norfolk Island pines and silky oak trees and a range of palms all survived regardless of age or situation.

Renmark Hospital was reopened in March 1957, patients having been accommodated in Loxton, Berri and Barmera's hospitals since August 1956. A town working-bee removed every last tree from the grounds immediately in front of the hospital's entrance. The area was then graded and top-dressed with sand before a re-planting program commenced.

However, this was a minor consideration in comparison to the major work involved in rehabilitating the hospital, which included painting, repairs to floors, doors and furniture, and extensive renewal of electrical and plumbing installations. Also included were the re-siting of levee banks and demolition of old isolation block.

The cost of this work was greater than

originally anticipated and the board had considered a proposal to build a new hospital on another site instead of renovating the present premises, however the costs of that venture were deemed prohibitive.

Renmark High School opened on time in January 1957 with chief damage being to the school orchard where a fine array of peach trees, which had just reached maturity were wiped out.

At the close of that year director of education Mander-Jones, was a special guest at the annual speech night and likened the flooding of the high school to a country being invaded by a foe in war-time, that the buildings were merely the shell of the school's existence but that the students and teachers were the ones that made the high school what it was.

BARMERA

At the same time the Barmera Community Centre started a re-planting program.

Nine years previously a tree-planting scheme had been started on the foreshore of the lake, the oval and caravan reserve.

Practically all of the 500 trees had been killed by floodwaters. Those that did not survive were silky oak and English ash and the re-planting commenced with 200 silky oaks donated by Mr and Mrs K. from their nursery.

After the 56,000-pound extensions to the Barmera Community Hotel, the rehabilitation of the foreshore was seen as a priority to entice holidaymakers to return to the Riverland. The foreshore had been

under six feet of water, which caused extensive damage to buildings and sheds.

New steel frame shelter sheds replaced the old thatched sheds, which had been washed away. A retaining wall was constructed, with lawns and gardens established in the most central part of the foreshore area and plans laid down to bituminise Dean Drive.

BERRI

The two-storey Berri Rowing Club was demolished to realign the flood bank and at Barmera the show hall on the lakeside oval, which had been battered beyond repair, was sold and dismantled.

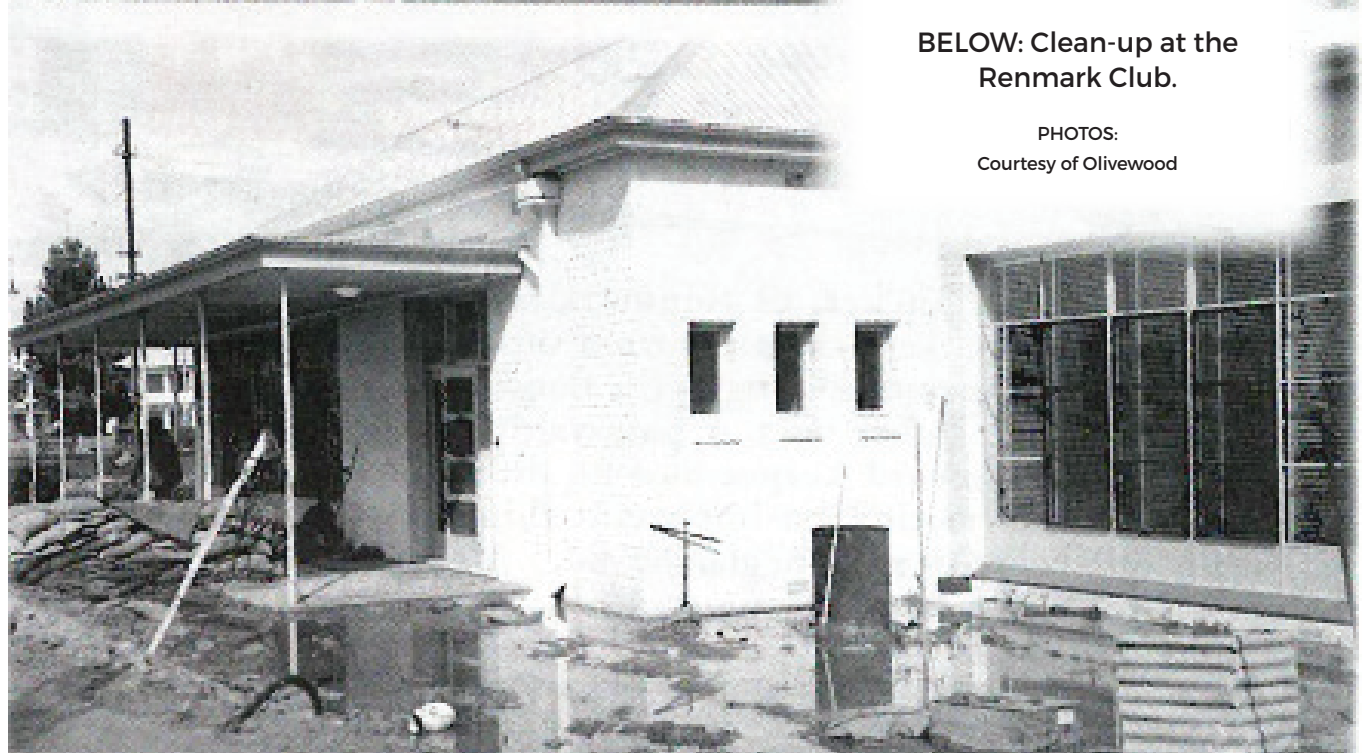
At Gurra, losses were estimated to be over 8000 deciduous and citrus trees with many plantings in the 20 years prior to the flood. Sixteen fruit growers in that district were affected and 10 homes evacuated, some having been submerged to a depth of five feet.

Most importantly confidence in the Riverland's primary industries was maintained and greatly encouraged by the establishment of a huge co-operative cannery.

The flood proved a catalyst for improvement in all areas of each of the river towns. Riverlanders had been resilient and were justifiably proud of what they had achieved. The flood had wiped away factions within communities and in their place emerged a spirit of optimism in the future, which was to extend well into the 1960s.



ABOVE: Berri Hotel during extensions undertaken after the flood.



BELOW: Clean-up at the Renmark Club.

PHOTOS:
Courtesy of Olivewood

I REMEMBER

For a 13-year-old boy the 1956 flood was a time of real excitement, adventure and an experience I had not encountered before. As the flood waters receded, I, with a group of boys would ride our bikes along the flood banks finding all sorts of things to salvage. Perhaps our biggest find was a Murray cod that was trapped in a pool of water. It looked bigger than us, perhaps a metre in length and was the biggest fish I had ever seen.

DAVID SHOWELL
Renmark



Every available man got out his block tractor and truck and worked around the clock building the flood bank.



Curious locals watching work being carried out on the flood bank in Cobdogla.

‘Hard to imagine’

1956

ROSEMARY GOWER

The following article was originally printed in the August 18, 2006 edition of The Murray Pioneer.

I was 11 years old and in grade 5 at the Cobdogla Primary School during the 1956 flood, and it was one of the most memorable years of my life.

Our headmaster was Frank Plummer, and as the danger from the flood water increased he put evacuation plans in place, in case the bank surrounding the town burst, and the water flooded the school ground. They would ring the bell, and we had to file out of the classroom in an orderly manner, pick up our school cases and school bags, and walk up to the nearby channel bank. We would follow the bank up to high ground, and safety.

Not long after that it was decided to close the school, and the children were bussed to the Barmera school every day. My brother, Hallett Shueard and Peter Coats and I, were billeted with Nan and Don Carlyle at Barmera and our furniture was placed in their shed. If the bank collapsed at Cobby we would have had over two feet of water through our house.

When the first flood warnings came through, it was with great excitement we watched the first bank being erected around the oval. We had experienced high rivers before, so it was hard to imagine the

water would ever get that high.

However reports were coming through that a lot more water than previously expected was coming down the river, and it became obvious that the existing bank would not protect the town. A larger levee had to be constructed.

Yvonne Fletcher, who lived opposite the flood bank which ran down Park Terrace, removed all of her furniture to storage in Loveday, as a precaution. She and her husband Syd had to sleep on a mattress on fruit boxes.

They operated a trucking company in Cobby, and Syd was a member of the CFS, so he was approached to arrange a public meeting in the hall to organise volunteers to fight the flood waters.

Yvonne remembers attending the meeting, where she was asked by Jack Foote, the chairman of the Barmera District Council, to arrange an afternoon tea party for the governor of South Australia, Sir Robert George, and Lady George, when they came up to inspect the flood damage.

Mr Foote addressed the growers at the public meeting, and it was decided to build a four-mile flood bank, and to split it into sections for easy management.

As a result of the meeting every available man got out his block tractor and truck and worked around the clock building the flood bank. The authorities

turned a blind eye to the trucks which were not registered, provided they were working on the banks.

As the water rose and the banks had to be built higher, the Department of Lands sent in their loaders and bulldozers. When their workers used to knock off at the end of the day, Ron and Richard Caddy used to take over and continued elevating the bank.

Soil was excavated from nearby properties, and transported by trucks to the flood bank, and on the weekends curious spectators used to flock into the town to watch the work being carried out.

In an interview Ron Shueard said that Cobdogla was very vulnerable because it was a very low-lying area.

He spoke about Jack Foote and said he should have received special recognition for the enormous contribution he made to save our town.

At one-point Jack approached Sir Thomas Playford to seek place to help build bigger banks, and this led to the Lands Department equipment being sent in.

He also said it was marvellous the way people responded to the emergency, with so many people willingly volunteering their time. He and Glen Jenke both complimented the work carried out by the women, who kept the men in food and hot drinks. They also placed brush along

the outside of the town bank to stop the waves eroding the levee.

Glen and son helped patrol the bank of Cobdogla when they were available and he says they lifted fish nets and kept themselves warm with a bottle of port. He was one of the volunteers at the Cobdogla Pumping Station the night the bank broke and the gas-driven Humphrey Pumps went under.

The flood bank in front of the shop was as high as the veranda. If the bank collapsed the water would have been lapping the ceiling in the shop. May and Herb Klingbiel continued to operate the shop despite the danger. They stayed on but billeted out their children with family and friends.

When the northern bank broke its levee near Clement's, (a man) rocked up in his boat, and quoted Clancy of the Overflow by saying 'I just rowed (rode) over to lend a hand'.

Everyone was highly amused.

The most remarkable thing about the 1956 flood was the determination of the people to save their town and their properties, and everyone pitching in and helping.

Men patrolled the flood banks day and night, and endured great hardship.

The remains of the old bank are reminders of how a courageous community kept nature at bay.



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Recollections of a flood child

1956

The following recollection of Gurra resident Rosalie Richards' experiences during the 1956 flood were originally compiled by the Berri and District Heritage Collection, and appeared in The Murray Pioneer on August 22, 2006.

Although only a five-year-old in Gurra at the time, Rosalie Richards' memories of the 1956 Flood experience were so marked and significant that they have left her with a detailed memory of the event.

"First of all, there were the preparations, chiefly the bank building and the sandbagging around our riverside property at Gurra," she said.

"Dad and Mum worked all day and late into the night to try to keep the flood waters out of our fruit block, all of which they had newly planted or replanted in the early years of their marriage and out of their new two-storey Overland Corner stone house, which they had laboured to build, mostly themselves, over three years following the de-roofing of our previous home in a storm in 1951."

Rosalie said just before the Gurra road flooded and the Berri ferry ceased to operate, her family all went in an old truck to Berri Primary School.

"While Mum and Dad went to inform the headmaster that my older sisters, Joy and Val, would no longer be able to attend school, I watched the school chooks scrabbling in the dirt near a brush covered shed, about where the Berri Primary School playground stands today," she said.

Rosalie said she used to help

patrol the banks by day.

"I kept a guilty secret for years afterwards, as my brother Geoff and I found a tiny leak in the base of the bank at the road end of the property," she said.

"We proudly mended it with our little buckets of dirt and patted wet mud over the leak, successfully stemming the flow."

Rosalie said they didn't think to report the leak when they finally got back to the house for mealtime.

the foresight to build an inner square of banks, which held right through the flood.

"Life now settled down a lot as we waited out the months of the flood on our little island," she said.

"Ducks abounded, enjoying the seepage water that collected inside the banks."

Rosalie said her father had bought a boat with a motor in readiness for the flood.

"I still remember his pride

to picnic there," she said.

"All of the Gurra rabbits retreated to the sandhill as the water flooded their usual haunts and Dad trapped them, returning with a handy change of diet."

"Dad rowed off across the main river each day to work he had found, picking oranges on an upstream property unaffected by the floodwaters, to help keep his family fed and clothed – and the mortgage paid."

Rosalie said the waves and

Rosalie said the storm had hit them with full force by the time her father launched out across the main river.

"We were swept downstream as Dad battled the current, and Mum baled madly. The rest of us lay down on the floor of the boat covered with grey blankets, to shelter and to avoid upsetting the balance of the little boat as it was tossed wildly on the waves."

"Finally, Dad managed to cross the main current. I remember him rowing in between the veranda posts, and in under the veranda (now enclosed) of the downstream neighbours' flooded house, to get out of the wind and rain for a time.

"We younger children did not really comprehend the danger – but were buoyed up by my mother's frequently repeated adage that 'flood kids are brave kids'."

Rosalie said it was many months before the ferry and the Gurra road were reopened.

"The bulldozer followed soon after to push out all the dead trees ready for the years of replanting for Dad and Mum," she said.

"It was a number of years of struggle before the effects of the flood were finally over, leaving us with healthy respect for – along with a love of – the mighty Murray."

That fascination, together with the joy of watching the rich bird life, the enjoyment of the scrub, creeks and sandhill of Gurra, led Rosalie to eventually bring her own children back to the riverside, at Gurra, many years later.

SOURCE: Berri and District Heritage Collection



The flats above Berri (bottom left). Gurra's Rosalie Richards said her family was lucky to have a house on higher ground, as they continued to live on their own little island. PHOTO: Berri and District Heritage Collection

"The next morning, to my absolute horror, I got up to find water only metres from the front door of the house," she said.

"Almost the whole block had flooded."

"It was only years later that I found out that Dad had laboured most of the night with the tractor and grader blade trying to keep the bank intact – but in vain."

Rosalie said her parents had

as he took us all out for our first ride and his disgust as the engine very quickly died," she said.

"He was a handy mechanic, keeping pumps, tractors, trucks and cars running – but he could not get that engine going again."

Rosalie said from then on, it was oar power against the fear-some might of the flood.

"Dad rowed out to the Gurra sandhill regularly and we loved

current were strong.

"Dad rowed up the shallows on the Berri side of the river a long way upstream from our house – up to where a number of houses were flooded beyond Martin's Bend," she said.

"All but one of those houses were demolished in the flood."

"I remember Dad clinging to (a clothesline) post for a rest, holding the boat balanced against that post.

“We were swept downstream as Dad battled the current, and Mum baled madly. The rest of us lay down on the floor of the boat covered with grey blankets, to shelter and to avoid upsetting the balance of the little boat as it was tossed wildly on the waves.



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Final words from Tim O'Brien AM

I was not familiar with the Riverland when I came to live here. As so happened then I immediately became engaged in sport.

And then, within a couple of years, the Berri Hotel.



Photo: Italo Vardaro

Fortunately, each area of my life has afforded me the opportunity for deep long-standing engagement.

The Practice grew quickly and has been a major practice in regional South Australia.

The Berri Hotel became one of the most successful hotels in South Australia and continues to develop.

I played an instrumental part in the development of the tennis facilities in Berri and, following that, the creation of the Seniors Tennis Tournament which for years has been one of the largest seniors tennis events in Australia.

There is a common theme with these engagements and that is long-term relationships with people involved in those areas.

For example, Malcom Hill was manager of the Berri Hotel for 22 years. Shane Roberts was for 16 years. But the winning card has been practice manager, Kathy Rosenthal who has been with me for 47 years. Additionally, Judy Bannear and Jo Keightley were with me for nearly 40 years. And further, Sue Coden has been with me for 26 years.

Deciding to retire from the practice has been a difficult decision just as it was at the Hotel after 43 years in the chair.

The decision has been made easier because it involved an arrangement with John Levy. John is an old colleague of mine stretching back decades. He has always been respected in the legal profession for his intelligence, professionalism and high performance. He has always possessed the quality of broad judgment.

His partners Talia Begley and Nathaniel Nguyen demonstrate like qualities.

I leave the practice confident that it will continue to develop and grow with all my existing staff continuing.

I look forward to assisting as a consultant to the firm.



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JL LAWYERS CONTINUING O'BRIENS SOLICITORS TRADITIONS *By John Levy*

Although he is only technically a size 9, Tim O'Brien will leave big shoes to fill upon his retirement from full time legal practice.

Tim has been a constant in the Riverland since first arriving as a fresh-faced 22-year-old in January 1969.

Throughout the succeeding decades Tim has practised in a broad range of commercial, estate and other legal matters. More than just his legal advice, Tim has been a confidante, sounding board and counsel to many Riverland families – and is now dealing with the third and even fourth generation of his clients.

And his influence extends to many community and sporting groups and clubs – not least his long-standing role in guiding the activities of the Berri Hotel Group.

So, its not surprising that Tim's decision to retire from full-time practice hasn't come easily. Apart from the long-term client relationships, Tim has always been proud of the long-term commitment of the O'Briens Solicitors staff. It was a great internal conflict for Tim to decide to leave the staff behind and relocate to Adelaide.

But in the end the lure of family and spending time with his growing band of grandchildren won out.

Tim wasn't prepared to consider leaving the practice unless he was confident that the staff and clients would be well taken care of.

JL Lawyers conducts a similar practice from its current Adelaide base- with a strong emphasis on commercial law, property transactions and wills and estates.

JL Lawyers director Nathaniel Nguyen, who will be the principal practitioner overseeing the transition of the O'Briens' practice, stated "We are very excited to be able to continue the proud tradition of the O'Brien's Solicitors practice. With our complimentary skills and experience, we are very confident we can provide the support and resources to enable the practice to continue in a similar way in which Tim and the team have operated it for many

years".

Although JL Lawyers is an Adelaide-based practice, the firm does have a substantial practice involving winery and other primary producer clients and therefore are well aware of the types of issues facing those sectors. Indeed, John Levy, the founding director of JL Lawyers, has recently been recognized by the prestigious Doyle's Guide as a leading practitioner in the Agribusiness field of practice.

Talia Begley, the other JL Lawyers director has a strong commercial practice and is also very experienced in advising clients on the tax implications of commercial transactions. "We believe that this aspect of our practice will provide even greater opportunities for O'Briens clients to benefit from the firm's advice moving forward' Nathaniel said.

And for those clients who want the benefit of Tim O'Brien's accumulated history and background knowledge, they can rest easy knowing that Tim will still maintain an association with the firm via an ongoing consultancy arrangement.

There will be no change to the day-to-day operation of the practice – Esteemed Practice Manager Kathy Rosenthal will oversee the running of the firm from its existing premises and will have the benefit of the legal and conveyancing skills of solicitors Sheena Vagg and Roxanne Gillespie and the other experienced staff, Sue Coden, Simone Gunn, Helen Pedler, Merridy Rady and Cindy Kassebaum.

Nathaniel and the other members of the JL Lawyers team will be in the Riverview Drive Berri office regularly and look forward to carrying on the fine tradition started by Tim and his predecessors over the earlier journey of the firm commencing in 1920.

The JL Lawyers office in Adelaide also has the expertise of Sia Koulianos, Practice Manager, who has more than 30+ years' experience in the legal industry. Tyson Bateman and Oliver Johnson, Solicitors, work in our commercial transactions, agribusiness, property and corporate structures, medical and retirement sectors.

"We congratulate The Murray Pioneer on their success and look forward to working with them for the next 130 years", says Nathaniel.



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Murray Pioneer stalwart Lorna Taylor (front, third from right) with some of the collating crew from a few years ago.

Lovely Lorna's second home for 55 years

1958 - 2015

The Murray Pioneer has seen many people walk through its doors over the years, with people coming and going like clockwork, but for Lorna Taylor, the paper was her second home for over 55 years.

Lorna started at the paper when she was a fresh-eyed 15-year-old, and took on everything from making teas for people, to proofing the paper several times a week.

"I loved it, I just absolutely loved working there," she said.

"I used to start around 8am every morning and I would ride my bike there.

"There were three brothers working there at the time and they would always sit outside on the fence together before work."

Lorna recalled many fond memories from her time at The Pioneer.

"We had lots of fun together, everyone was always good to each other," Lorna said.

"We tried to put something in the Christmas pageant each year as a workplace which was fun.

"I used to proof with another lady every week which was also nice.

"It was a great place to work – everyone looked after each other."

Lorna also noted some of the changes she saw happen at The Murray Pioneer during her time here.

"Probably the biggest was going from metal typesetting to computers," she said.

"It was a very noisy place to work sometimes. We used to have the great big printing machine that took up the whole room.

"We also got air-conditioning which was nice."

Remembering what the office was like back in the day, Lorna said it was "not the most flash place to work".

"I always got dressed up when I went to work," she said.

"I was about the only girl out the back with all the boys too.

"I used to take in flowers every week and put them on the front counter.

"I was happy working there. I just did whatever they wanted me to do."

Lorna also reflected on the paper's reflection of the times, from seeing a work colleague go to the Vietnam War, to having to use an outdoor bathroom.

"Everyone has always put so much effort into it and they have won lots of awards," she said.

"I feel proud to see it turn 130 years old."

Pioneer managing director Ben Taylor described Lorna (no relation) and her contribution to the paper over the years as "priceless".

"Lorna was a gem – an absolute pleasure to have," he said.

"She cared so much about the paper. She put her heart and soul into every different job that she had here.

"She was an extremely popular staff member, and still is. Over the years she and her husband Brad also took in many Pioneer journalists who were looking for somewhere to live – and she's still doing it today.

"Every workplace needs an employee like Lorna."



One of The Murray Pioneer's Christmas Pageant floats.

Premier opens Orange Week



August 28, 1975

Premier Don Dunstan described the Riverland as one of the state's prime tourist areas in his address to mark the official opening of Orange Week Festival '75 on Saturday.

He said there was no area where more stable employment could be provided than within the tourist industry.

South Australia was fast developing as a leader in tourism and already had the highest domestic surplus of any state, including Queensland.

This surplus of \$3 per head demonstrated the contribution tourism was making to the economy of SA.

Ventures such as Orange Week helped in the promotion of towns and regions, said Mr Dunstan, adding that everyone involved in the development and conduct of the festival should be congratulated.

A "town crier" dressed in medieval costume called the townspeople to gather for the opening ceremony.

The Mayor, Mr L. G. Sims officially welcomes the Premier and the Member for Chaffey, Mr Peter Arnold and Mrs Arnold.

"Orange Week is our greatest festival occasion in Renmark, when all of

the town's talents, skills and imagination are collated to present entertaining and cultural activities for the benefit of visitors and local residents", he said.

Mr Sims commended the Chamber of Commerce and all the other organisations involved in the venture and said he hoped their efforts would be rewarded.

The decision to invite "the state's first citizen" to open the festival was also commended by the Mayor, who said he believed Mr Dunstan had the welfare of the state and the Riverland at heart and would continue his efforts to achieve fairer consideration for primary industries.

Ventures such as Orange Week help in the promotion of towns and regions...

- Don Dunstan

Premier Opens Orange Week



The Premier (Mr. Dunstan) addresses the crowd assembled on the Taylor Memorial Garden before officially declaring Renmark's Orange Week Festival '75 open on Saturday morning. — K. Heritage photo.

Region One of State's Prime Tourist Areas

The Premier (Mr. Don Dunstan) described the Riverland as one of the prime tourist areas in his address to mark the opening of Orange Week Festival '75.

CHANGES GALORE:

My 18 years as The Murray Pioneer editor

1978 - 1996

PETER READ

Running a successful campaign to overturn the Renmark Council's decision to block calls to restore the ps Industry to working condition was one of many highlights of my stint at the helm of The Murray Pioneer.

The council at the time, and the mayor in particular, were determined that the Industry should remain tied up as a static museum.

And I believe it would have become another rotting river shipping relic, sitting in the Murray mud, had it not been for the "power of the pen" and the support of the Renmark Apex Club.

Thankfully the Taylor family unreservedly backed our stand on this and many other controversial issues, including a "Drug Stop" campaign that caused substantial waves in high places in the SA Police force.

Our journalistic team included many outstanding young recruits who later had great success in their chosen career.

Jeni Cooper became the editor of Australia's biggest paper, the Sydney Sunday Telegraph and a News Ltd high flyer at a time when women were less well represented in senior roles, while Chris Kenny is now an associate editor at The Australian and high-profile Sky News commentator. I remember thinking at one stage when we had Chris, Josie Gibson and David Burtenshaw on the staff what an incredible editorial team we had assembled.

And there were many other outstanding and colourful characters, including our Texan Jubilee 150 Twin Town exchangee, Mark 'Tex' Waite. Josie Gibson went to Texas for a year and Tex came to Renmark on a journalistic exchange.

Another journalist, Debbie Drummond, became Miss South Australia while on our team and the list goes on, with so many other memorable journalists starting their career at The Pioneer.

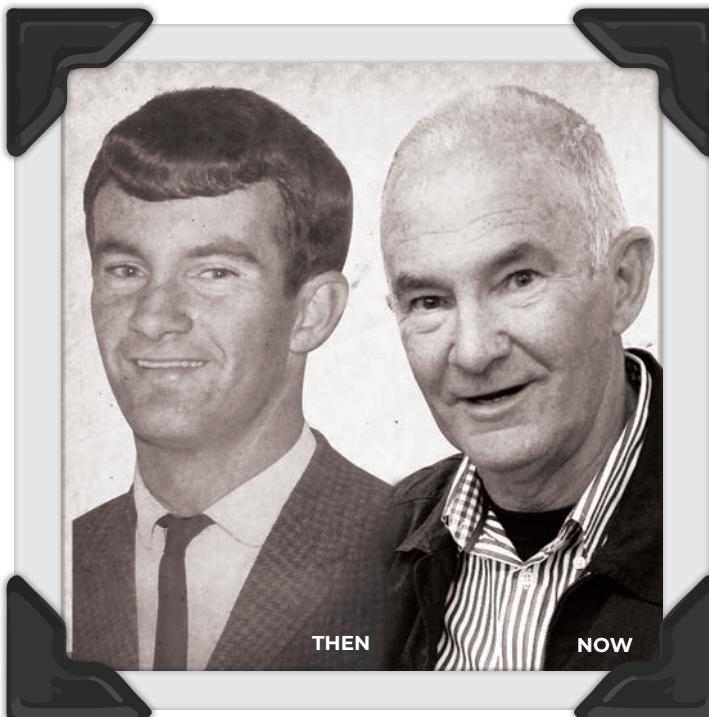
In total I had 31 years on the staff at The Pioneer thanks to a recruiting offer from the editor at the time, Arch Grosvenor. As a high school student, I worked with Arch, answering the phones at The Pioneer from 4pm on Saturdays, taking sports scores for the 5RM Sports Report broadcast he did live from The Pioneer editor's office each Saturday night.

My plan had been to go to teachers' college but Dick Telfer fortunately left The Pioneer to take up a job at The Advertiser, creating a life-changing opportunity for me.

When I joined The Pioneer our journalistic copy was hand written but I found and claimed an old typewriter "out the back" and many years later we moved to a very basic networked newspaper system (with a whole 30 megabytes of storage). It produced copy on photographic paper that could be "pasted" onto newspaper pages, making the old lead-based hot metal Linotype system redundant.

Many other bigger papers were moving to more sophisticated systems using very expensive, networked PCs as their input and pagination tool. This was beyond The Pioneer's budget. But I had a plan.

After much negotiation, managing director, Darnley Taylor finally agreed to my plan that we employ Garry Douglas as our IT guru. Darnley was not convinced that it would work, but finally agreed to a 12-month trial after I doggedly (and probably annoyingly) argued that we could start a computer business (Riverland Computers) to offset



Former editor Peter Read during his Murray Pioneer days (left) and more recently.

the cost.

And what a boon that proved to be.

Riverland Computers grew into a business in its own right, very successfully building and installing PCs and networks built to customer requirements (basically the Dell Computer model).

It also meant we could join the PC-based newspaper revolution without spending a fortune and being locked in with system developers.

An article in the main national newspaper industry publication at the time highlighted the fact that a country paper in SA had built its own DIY sophisticated newspaper pagination system using off-the-shelf software. This innovation was recognised nationally and adopted by many other smaller papers.

The newspaper industry changed dramatically (and

not for the better in my view) during my five decades in the industry.

For many years The Pioneer was printed and delivered by staff cars at an irregular time on Thursday mornings, or into the early afternoon on occasions. If we were running late, there would be a queue of often very angry readers waiting at each outlet, as it seemed that they could not face their day without getting the news hot off the press.

This was an era when "hatches, matches and despatches" were so popular that for many years the classifieds page was the back page of the paper, instead of the sports pages most papers ran as their back page. When we finally bowed to tradition, moving the classics inside and running sport on the back, many readers were hor-

rified – and a number gave me both barrels.

Before the advent of social media, country papers were a vital part of most local communities – read from cover to cover as we were the "itching powder of local democracy". And readers were not slow to let us know if something was not correct or had been overlooked.

Sadly, in many markets the paid local paper has been lost or replaced with poorly resourced free papers that rarely run hard news.

The Riverland is lucky to have The Pioneer, run by four generations of the Taylor family and functioning as well as it does, despite the tragic impact the move to digital advertising has had on traditional media.

Living in a Queensland region which has largely lost its paid local papers, it is becoming increasingly apparent that locals are not well informed about what is happening in their community. For instance, try the question: "Is the new mayor doing a good job in your opinion?" I find this is generally met with a frighteningly ignorant response along the lines of "I have no idea..."

Or even worse, an opinion based on fake news on social media.

The times they are a changing. But not necessarily for the better.

After leaving The Murray Pioneer, PETER READ worked in WA, Victoria and Queensland as a group editor and later general manager. He retired in 2015 and now lives at Pomona, in the Noosa hinterland. His final posting was to restructure the regional daily, The Gympie Times, which subsequently won four PANPA Regional Daily Newspaper of the Year Awards.

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LIFE OF A PIONEER CADET:

Typewriters, Darnley's advice and Uncle Murray

1982 - 1986

DAVID BURTENSHAW

Anyone remember Uncle Murray? Managing the Young Folk's Page was a secret duty in my first couple of years as a cadet reporter at The Murray Pioneer, nearly 40 years ago.

The page was supposedly on the way out through a lack of interest but the newest of a long line of Uncle Murrys enthusiastically revived the kids' club membership with competitions, birthday shout-outs, responses to letters, some advice and even a recipe for cheese toast.

If they had KPIs back then, I was smashing them!

Moving to Renmark, straight from school in the city, was an ideal start to a career in newspapers.

The river was already flowing through me. My mother, Nance Greenslade, grew up in Renmark and school holidays in the 1970s were spent with my grandparents, May and Dave Hopkins, on 20th Street.

I unsuccessfully applied for the Pioneer cadetship in 1982 but then received another better call later in the year during my Year 12 exams.

It was a good time to start as a young reporter and I loved the job.

The whole process of creating the newspaper was there to absorb and it was exciting to hear and feel the printing press start, watch the newspapers slide

down the delivery belt and to see your work on a page.

Learning through doing and watching was the only way. Corrections were made and explained, and news story structures and styles memorised.

School essay writing was rejected and replaced by an inverted pyramid, key information first. Who, what, when, where, why and how?

Typewriters were still used to tap out stories, one sentence per page. I still batter the keyboard with the same force that was needed on these dinosaurs.

There were no cut-and-paste or delete buttons, and if you made too many mistakes or subbing marks on your copy the typesetters out the back (hello Barry Lock and Ken Warner) would let you know.

There was no Google to help. When I didn't know what a farm header was, I called Mum.

Fortunately, The Pioneer was large enough to offer wise guidance and support, from bosses including Peter Read and Darnley Taylor, to talented reporters and staff, plus contributors including Peter Frankcom, John Menzel, Graham Charlton and David Dunhill.

I was only 18, so Lorna Taylor and Mrs. Boceley Wickham kept an eye on me in the office, and snapping a few



David Burtenshaw at The Murray Pioneer office in 1985, when the new "video display terminals" arrived.

social photos at the CWA was a great way to save on lunch.

My first article made the front page, headlined "November Very Hot".

Covering sport was my preference but the cadet was kept busy with a series of daily phone calls to check river and salinity levels, temperatures, rainfall, court appearances, police incidents, community notes and council updates.

Article cuttings and photo negative filing were other regular jobs and there was the responsibility of compiling the TV listings and highlights, 'From the Files' flashbacks, weddings and anniversaries, annual Orange Week guide, and big vegetable/fruit stories.

Sunday nights were busy in the office answering the phones for all the results from local sport, from football and netball through to homing pigeons.

It could be tedious work collating results but a valuable lesson from Mr Taylor (I didn't call him Darnley at the start) was to double-check names. Smith might be Smythe or Smyth, for instance, he said, and when I played cricket against Loxton North's Russell Smyth the advice made more sense.

We were also (very) amateur pho-

tographers. Any good photos were just lucky or had been rescued by Tess Smart or Trevor Schulz in the darkroom.

When Princess Diana (and Prince Charles) landed at Renmark airport in 1983 the chief reporter Berny Slattery had to remind me it was my job to take photos, not stare. A couple of shots of the royals were in focus.

The noisy typewriters were thrown out and replaced from 1985 with expensive "video display terminals" which seemed pretty flash at the time but were glorified word processors. We could save and edit articles with instructions for type size, style and column measure.

It wasn't long before my favourite geek Garry Douglas led The Pioneer's switch to editorial computers, eventually allowing full pages to be created on screen, well before most of Australia's newspaper industry.

Technology is useful but newspapers are all about the words, stories, photos, information and readers.

I didn't understand that back in 1983 but the early Uncle Murray page success was achieved by building an interested and passionate community. This is what the best newspapers do.



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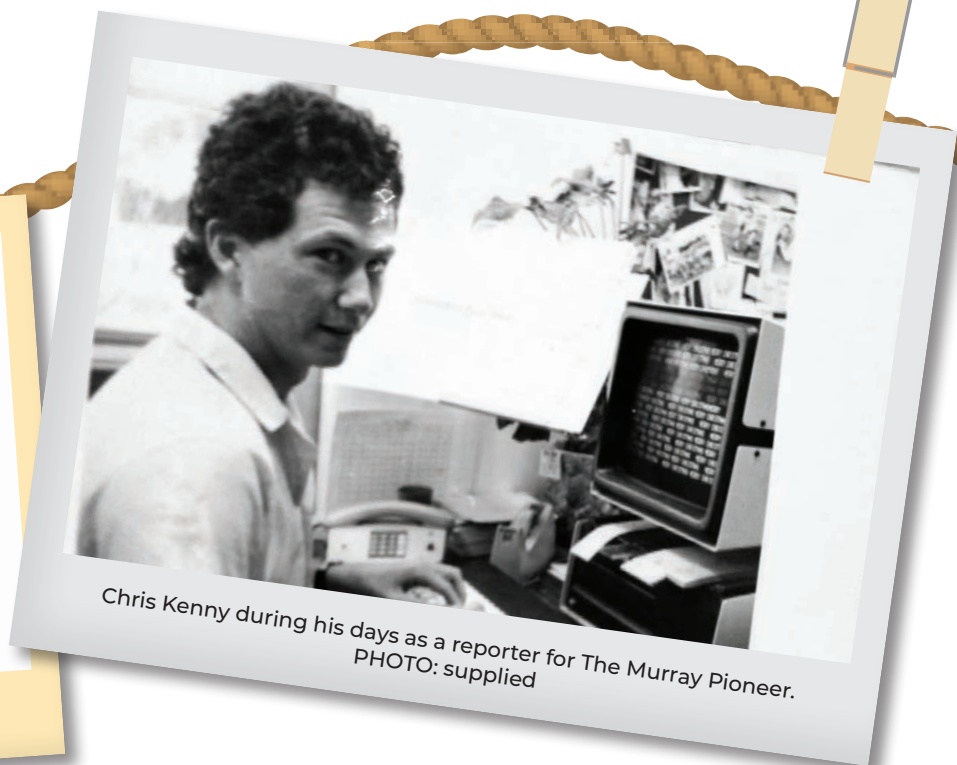
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Chris Kenny today on Sky News Australia.

Chris Kenny during his days as a reporter for The Murray Pioneer.
PHOTO: supplied

RIVERLAND FOOTY, VINE PULLS AND RIVER FUN:

Now reaching for the Sky, Chris Kenny recalls his Pioneer days

1984 - 1985

CHRIS KENNY

Chris Kenny hosts *The Kenny Report* on Sky News Australia and is associate editor (national affairs) at *The Australian*. He worked at *The Murray Pioneer* in 1984 and 1985.

A newspaper like *The Murray Pioneer* is as much the lifeblood of its community as the mighty river that runs through the Riverland.

My time at *The Pioneer* taught me many things about journalism, people, and regional Australia, but the biggest lesson was the importance of connection within communities, fostering pride, sharing highs and lows, and solving problems.

We worked hard without ever taking ourselves too seriously. (How could we when locals teased us as *The Murray Diarrhoea*?). But we knew we were providing the conversational glue that helped to bind together the distinct towns and districts that make up the Riverland.

I will never forget the thrill of popping into a shop on Renmark Avenue or a newsa-

gent in Berri and seeing someone hand over their cash for a newspaper carrying my story as the splash.

We took our own photographs too, and I would always strive to snare the best picture for the front page.

When I was first employed by *The Pioneer* for a temporary stint in the lead-up to the bumper Christmas edition in 1984, I was anxious about my first job in journalism and wanted to demonstrate as much professionalism as possible, so I stretched my finances to buy some smart attire and turned up in a sports jacket and tie, only to find my colleagues in shorts and open-necked shirts.

Weeks later, when I had become mates with the other journalists, they told me how the jacket and tie saw me pegged as a city-slicker trying to big note himself – if only they knew how nervous I had been!

I worked with some great reporters on *The Pioneer* and covered some wonderful stories.

The first time I interviewed a state premier was for *The Pioneer*. It was the late John Bannon on a trip to the

Riverland in what would have been only his second of 10 years as premier.

I pressed him to commit to a bridge at Berri and from recollection we made that the front-page splash. Most people now could not imagine the Riverland without that bridge.

The story of *A Man Called Possum* fascinated me too, and I returned a few years later to film one of my early stories for the ABC 7.30 Report on that classic bush tale.

My first helicopter flight happened when a bushfire was burning north of Renmark and Jenni Carbins and I drove a two-wheel drive Sigma up on the sandy tracks into Danggali Conservation Park. The fire controller was about to take off in the chopper and I had just asked to join him to get a decent photograph.

We had so much fun. And the grounding I received on issues of water rights, environmental flows and the ebbs and flows of various agricultural sectors have stood me in good stead through almost four decades of media and political work.

During my time in the Riverland the vine-pull schemes

were in full flight, with vineyard owners paid by the government to bulldoze their grapes. A decade or two later massive new vineyards were being installed – and now, we face a glut again.

We used to print *The Pioneer* on Friday afternoons and lunch-time Tuesdays so that by early afternoon on Tuesdays we would often be somewhere like Plush's Bend, with the editor Peter Read (yes it was an apt name) supplying a barbecue and boat. It truly was the life of Riley.

Apart from learning to water ski (courtesy of the legendary Mickan clan) and eating steaks with yabbies on top, my time in the Riverland was terrific for footy. The rivalry between the towns was visceral, and I played in a losing grand final for the Renmark Rovers against Buff Tyrrell's Barmera-Monash – it sticks in my craw to this day.

The Riverland competition was a terrific standard, the grounds and crowds were great, and I don't think we ever had a wet game.

The Pioneer, of course, gave the footy – and the netball, cricket and other sports – comprehensive coverage (I

might have secretly lobbied David Burtenshaw to make the *Pioneer's* Team of the Year).

But that's what I mean about community; without a means to share all those issues and interests, it is much harder to keep a town or a region connected, and that is why local newspapers like *The Pioneer* are vital. I remember writing an opinion piece that argued Renmark's numbered streets were boring.

"Why not name them after our prime ministers?" I offered, suggesting the town incorporates a bit of history in its street names.

A letter writer pointed out that the numbered streets were a product of the Chaffey brothers, who imported their American grid system along with their irrigation expertise – so the numbered streets actually were an integral part of Renmark's history. Nothing beats local knowledge.

Like the vigneron and orchardists, local newspaper publishers have seen their good times and their bad, but long may they survive.

Happy birthday to *The Pioneer* – 130 years is an astonishing achievement.

Renmark's Royal Day

April 8, 1983



Despite the depressingly chilly weather and the stifling security surrounding their visit Prince Charles and Princess Diana brought a fairy-tale romance right into the laps of many Riverlanders.

From the moment they stepped from the plane out onto the windswept Renmark Airport tarmac (a trifle behind schedule) it was clear who would hold centre stage for the next two hours.

As the Royal entourage sped down Renmark Avenue towards the Renmark Hotel it left behind quite a few tears and remonstrances among the hordes of school children who had waited patiently for a glimpse of the Royal couple, in vain as it turned out.

Crowds milling about restlessly behind barricades out front of the hotel erupted into a frenzy of cheers, flag waving and calling as the Royal procession came into view, however.

First the motorcycle police guard, then a line of gleaming white Ford Fairmonts sporting blackened tyres and impassive drivers.

Rugged up spectators craned for a view of the Royal black limousine – which turned out to be a luxurious white LTD instead, sporting the Royal couple's Personal Standard.

But the hours of waiting, the tedious preparation that had gone into the visit were made worthwhile when the car doors were opened and the fairy-tale Prince and Princess hopped out.

There they stood (amidst gasps from the milling crowd), not a bit different from the millions of photographs plastered throughout publications right around Australia.

Princess Diana, with eyes lowered, won the hearts in this crowd from the start, her dress, now something of a trademark, being meticulously filed away in the minds of many keen Royal watchers.

Dressed in a red two-piece silk outfit which provided a welcome dash of colour among the mundane masses of thick jump-

ers and overcoats, Princess Di was clearly the centre of attention.

Moving easily towards the Nanya Lounge in her loose-fitting suit it was obvious popular press reports of her slimness had not been exaggerated.

With quick aplomb Sergeant Theo Tsavalas, representing the No. 3 Flight, SA Squadron Air Training Corps, broke the Prince's Personal Standard.

Up skipped little Merridy Sims with her official posy, gracefully accepted by the Prince and Princess, and the Royal party, including Mr and Mrs Sims and Mr and Mrs Arnold, moved upstairs to the Nanya Lounge for the civic reception.



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Riverland remembers Anzac Day

April 27, 1990

DAN LENNARD

The Riverland remembered past wars and fallen comrades on Wednesday.

Anzac Day, 1990 – the 75th anniversary of the start of the Gallipoli campaign was commemorated with dawn and mid-morning services in several Riverland towns.

A few hours before a select band of Gallipoli diggers held their own dawn service at Anzac Cove, in Turkey, a lone trumpeter played the Last Post at three separate dawn services in Renmark, Loxton and Barmera.

The dawn service at Renmark's Cross of Sacrifice was attended by more than 200 people.

About 150 ex-servicemen took part in a street march held later in the morning.

In a first for the annual march, Legacy widows marched with the veterans to the cross of sacrifice, where another service was held.

Among the wreaths laid at the cross during the service was one from the Tamblyn family, for Renmark's last Gallipoli digger, Keith Tamblyn, who died recently.

More than 500 people attended the Berri-Barmera dawn service at Barmera's Garden of Memory, while Loxton's dawn service at its Cross of Sacrifice was witnessed by more than 100 people.

These included representatives from the TS Sturt, Loxton High School and Loxton Scouts.

One wreath was placed on the cross after the service was by nine-year-old Ocea Ferber, of Loxton.

The wreath was for her late grandfather who served in World War Two.

More than 100 people attended Waikerie's mid-morning Anzac Day service at the Waikerie Memorial Gardens.



War veterans stand at ease in Renmark on Wednesday while listening to special guest Berri Mayor, Mrs Margaret Evans, speak.



Gate takings up at 75th Loxton Show

October 5, 1994

REBECCA TILLY

Near-record entries were recorded at the 75th Annual Loxton Show on Sunday and Monday, with an increase in gate takings of more than \$5000.

Show secretary, Mr Jeff Eager, said gate takings for the two days totalled around \$23,000, compared with only \$18,000 for last year.

"We are very happy with the numbers," he said.

"The weather was great and the place was buzzing."

ENTHUSIASM

Mr Eager's enthusiasm was echoed by show president, Mr Theo Kaesler, who said it was "a great show day".

He said he was "extremely happy" with both the turnout of numbers and the increase in entries.

Mr Kaesler said the increase in gate takings could be attributed to the weather on Monday, which he described as "perfect".

He said that new entries may have been encouraged by the inclusion of new novice classes in many of the sections.

He said that both the log chopping

and engine rebuilding again proved popular.

A three-man team from Berri won the engine rebuilding competition and broke the Australian record in a time of 3.34 minutes. Mr Kaesler said a new innovation, the sheep shearing competition, proved to be a crowd winner, and would "definitely be back next year".

He said another highlight of this year's show was the Miss Loxton Showgirl competition, taken out by Miss Tracey Gibbs, and the Miss Junior by Michelle Sawade. Miss Gibbs will represent Loxton at the Murraylands final at the Loxton Club next month.

The 75th annual Loxton Show was officially opened by Riverland identity, Mrs Yvonne 'Johnny' Gurr, of Renmark, who reflected on the history of Loxton.

"Sometimes you must look back so that you can look forward," she said.

Mrs Gurr referred to the Loxton District Council's slogan of "Faith and Work", as one that "epitomises the history of the district and the history of this Loxton Show".

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Former Berri and Berri Barmera mayor Margaret Evans in front of the Berri Bridge ahead of its 25th anniversary later this month.

Berri Bridge battle 25 years on

JOSH BRINE

A former Riverland mayor has recounted the near 30-year fight to build one of the region's most iconic – and used – pieces of infrastructure, ahead of its 25th anniversary later this month.

The opening of the Berri Bridge, on Sunday, July 27, 1997, marked the end of a prolonged battle by locals to improve transport in the region by replacing the two ferries that used to operate on the town's river front and providing a better link between Berri and Loxton.

Former Berri and Berri Barmera mayor, and current Berri Barmera councillor, Margaret Evans, said the district councils of Berri and Loxton had to "fight tooth and nail" to get the bridge built.

"Over the years, the (state) government kept saying they couldn't afford to build a bridge," she said.

Despite a promise by the state government in 1981 under Liberal Premier David Tonkin to build the bridge, the project was eventually scrapped by John Bannon's Labor government following the 1983 election.

"John Bannon gave me the grace of saying, 'Look Margaret, I won't get any more votes giving you a bridge in Berri'," Ms Evans said.

"I appreciated his honesty, but I told him that wasn't the point and that the bridge was very necessary to us.

"If the bridge had gone ahead back then, there would have been a causeway halfway up Bookpurnong Hill.

"As it is now, if we get a high river again because (Bookpurnong) Road is so low, the whole road would go out."

By the 1990s, Ms Evans said the state government, then led by Liberal Premier

Dean Brown, had intended to build the Hindmarsh Island Bridge, before controversial issues with the project raised by local Aboriginal women delayed its construction.

Ms Evans said the councils still had to fight to convince the government that building a bridge was more cost-effective than continuing to run two ferries across the river.

"Information fell off the back of a truck which showed the cost of running two ferries across the river at the time was more expensive than building the bridge," she said.

"They just couldn't argue with us anymore.

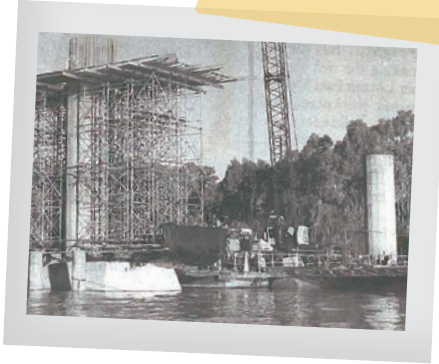
"Dean Brown was always supportive of us getting the bridge, and John Olsen (who succeeded Mr Brown as premier) also became positive when we gave them indisputable evidence."

In a supplement included in the July 25, 1997 edition of The Murray Pioneer, commuters from Berri reported journeys to and from Loxton taking as much as an additional 30 minutes.

"Traffic would line up nearly down to the pumping station at times," Ms Evans said.

"Down towards the ferry there were no toilets, there was no shade and it was hot and terrible."

For the bridge's official opening, covered extensively at the time by The Murray Pioneer reporter Richard



Henderson, an estimated crowd of 13,000 gathered to see the \$17m structure unveiled.

The ceremony was attended by Mr Olsen and Mr Brown, Transport Minister Diana Laidlaw and Chaffey MP Kent Andrew.

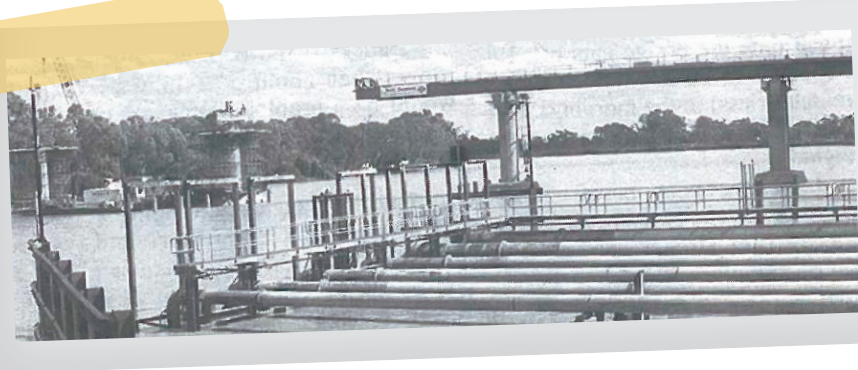
"I'll never forget that," Ms Evans said.

"(Loxton Waikerie Mayor) Jan Cass came over from Loxton... and we left (council) to walk to the bridge along Wilson Street and you couldn't move – there were people everywhere.

"It was a day I couldn't describe; it was the culmination of a lot of hard work..."

"There's no way it hasn't been beneficial to everyone, and that includes Renmark and the rest of the region too.

"It took a lot of agonising and a lot of hard work, but if you had to stick up for your community, you did."



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Riverland super council? Former mayor says yes



JOSH BRINE

Further council amalgamations could help the region attract more government funding, according to the first mayor of the combined Berri Barmera Council.

Margaret Evans, who became Berri Barmera mayor when the district councils of Berri and Barmera amalgamated in October 1996, said it would be beneficial for the Riverland to appear as a united region by amalgamating into a single council.

"Years ago with the Riverland Local Government Association, when there were seven of us (councils). We used to rotate the president of that," she said.

"I remember when it was my turn coming up I thought this was a good chance to get the councils to work together, particularly Renmark and Berri...

"I hit my head against a brick wall – it didn't work.

"That's when you give up and you think it's not going to happen because they're so determined they won't work together.

"I can't count the number of times over the years where if we had been more united we'd have attracted far more funding than we did.

"I sometimes think about how sad it is we didn't work together."

Ms Evans was previously Berri mayor from 1979 until amalgamation.

She said it had taken about one year to bring the two councils together.

"The state government kept talking about councils amalgamating, particularly the Liberals," she said.

"At one stage it looked like if we didn't agree among ourselves they would force amalgamations.

"Renmark and Paringa decided they would amalgamate, which made sense because Renmark was always the business town for Paringa people and Renmark got the rate revenue from the big subdivisions in Paringa.

"Berri Barmera seemed natural too because a lot of Barmera people used to come to Berri, especially after we got the shopping centre.

"Brown's Well and Loxton had also decided to amalgamate, which was fair enough.

"Just prior to that, Berri, Barmera and Loxton were talking and to this day I'm sorry that didn't go ahead.

"It would have been one strong council in the middle of the Riverland. But, for whatever reason, Loxton decided to hesitate.

"Originally it was always expected that Waikerie and Morgan would get together, but Morgan didn't want to.

"Waikerie really was their business town and had the hospital, but Morgan decided to go with Mannum and become the Mid Murray Council.

"So, Loxton and Waikerie got together."

When Berri and Barmera councils came together, it was decided Ms Evans would continue as mayor, with then-Barmera Mayor Mary Ridley becoming deputy mayor of the combined council.

Ms Ridley lost her spot in council entirely at the May 1997 elections.

"Sometimes I think I was a bit greedy staying on," Ms Evans said.

"But you had to do what was best for the community, and Berri was the larger area."

Ms Evans recalled some resistance to the decision, particularly from Barmera residents who were concerned Berri would receive more attention from the new council.

"When we amalgamated, Barmera had already secured funding to upgrade Queen Elizabeth Drive... and immediately we put our plans on hold in Berri," Ms Evans said. "We had a lot of plans, particularly along our river front.

"Alan Glassey said if we didn't want Barmera to lose grant money (for the project) we had to stop everything while the road upgrade went ahead.

"So, when everyone said things were only getting done in Berri, I thought that was a bit unfair.

"Luckily, things have settled down a lot now."

Ms Evans said she believed the "old parochialism" of the Riverland would prevent a region-wide council being created.

"With the amalgamations, one town would complain about another getting more than them," she said.

"How would that work if you've got all the towns from Waikerie to Paringa?"

"But I think it would be positive because until such time as we look like we're all together, there will always be that trouble of getting funding to do anything.

"Hopefully as time goes by young people will think more positively about if they want to get things done we need to look more like a city than a group of towns.

"I'm not too optimistic though – not into the near future anyway."



Maywald's historic win

October 14, 1997

CATHERINE HOCKLEY

Waikerie's Karlene Maywald became the first woman and the first National Party candidate to succeed in Chaffey when she wrested the blue-ribbon Liberal seat from Kent Andrew in the State Election on Saturday.

While the primary vote favoured Mr Andrew, the preferences, which are still being counted will secure the seat for Mrs Maywald by nearly 11 per cent on a two-party preferred basis.

Labor and the Liberal Party both gave their second preferences to the National Party.

Mr Andrew collected 7095 in the first preference voting and Mrs Maywald received 6569.

Labor Party candidate Michael Subacius received 2330 votes followed by the Australian

Democrat Karrie Lannstrom who attracted 1148 votes.

The results of the voting showed an 11 per cent swing in favour of Mrs Maywald and the National Party's primary vote increased from nearly 23 per cent to almost 39 per cent in Chaffey.

At the end of polling on Saturday night Mrs Maywald and Mr Andrew joined their families and supporters at separate gatherings in Waikerie to await the results.

By 8.30pm early counting showed that Mrs Maywald would win the seat through preferences.

Mr Andrew acknowledged his defeat at midnight, telephoning Mrs Maywald to concede the outcome.

Mrs Maywald yesterday welcomed the result,

attributing it to voter dissatisfaction with the Liberal Party.

"One of the major factors was this disenchantment with the Liberals as a whole. People felt they were not getting the representation they deserved," she said.

Mrs Maywald claimed the controversial TeleTrak proposal for Waikerie which she promoted had little bearing on the result.

"TeleTrak was important initially when I first joined the National party, but I don't believe it was the issue that got me elected," she said.

Mrs Maywald could be in the unique position of holding the balance of power in the House of Assembly if the result of the State Election is a hung parliament.

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130 Years*

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Murray Pioneer cartoons

1981 to 2022

1981 - 2022

TONY HERSEY

In 1964 I was lucky to be apprenticed as a letterpress compositor with the Murray Pioneer. This laid a foundation for 41 years in the graphics industry, the bulk of my working life.

Later, after a four-year stint as The Renmark tourist officer, my wife and I opened a business in 1979 comprising art and craft sales, show-card and sign writing, graphic design and screen printing.

There was no worse time to start such a venture as it was a period of spiralling inflation which led to a recession. I started taking on part-time jobs to help and cover overdraft interest fees of 22 per cent.

An opportunity for some extra income arose when The Murray Pioneer cartoonist, Phil Smith, was leaving. The then-editor, Peter Read, let me have a go.

I had no formal education, nor natural talent for cartooning, and have to admit the drawings were pretty bad. While I exercised persistence, Peter exercised patience and I gradually improved on a self-learning path without taking classes, which should have been a priority.

My first cartoon was in April 1981 and later that year I accepted an offer to return to The Pioneer in the commercial printing department. During the period I continued working my business part time before returning full time around 1985.

Through the period I worked for five editors. They were Peter Read, Gabrielle Johnston, Tim Jackson, Jane Kuerschner and now Paul Mitchell. I found Tim and Paul were particularly keen and encouraging to maintain a cartoon in the paper.

People often ask me how the subjects are picked and sometimes make suggestions. The ideas for potential topics come from the editor and Tim started providing me with drafts of two or three stories.

Paul continued this but sends me topics on Monday nights, allowing time to sleep on them overnight.

I think the ideas that jump out of the story straight away are the best, rather than – without ideas – having to brainstorm two hours before deadline.

The drawings are made on Tuesdays, scanned and then emailed back to the editor in time for inclusion in Wednesday's paper. The remuneration does not allow spending too much time, however the average for drawing is

around two hours. Research is sometimes required and the internet makes this job easy, while reference pictures can also be downloaded.

The idea for the rabbits came early. The need to support a particular cartoon with extra wording was required. The rabbits fitted that scene and they stayed from then on.

Researched proverbs or sayings are

During this period I supplied two cartoons a week, however for a period only one in Friday's paper was the norm.

I recall two other cartoonists who did the Tuesday issue. They were Brian Todd from Barmera and Paul Dorin a professional from Sydney. Dorin creates cartoons each week and newspapers Australia-wide are able to source his work for a fee.

certain interests that they are close to, they will be protective.

Besides, differing views should be allowed airing and accepted by all as a necessary part of life.

On a few occasions, for legal reasons the editor has chosen not to publish a cartoon. And at times if unsure I run my idea past them before proceeding.

Peter Read, while editor, used to like small cartoons to accompany stories and the most memorable attack occurred in 1985 when a grant was made to open two women's shelters in Berri.

The cartoon was the subject of the backlash, which came in an orchestrated weekly stream of letters to the editor.

They were from Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) project officer; adviser, women and welfare, Dept. of Community Welfare; women's advisor to the Premier; and others.

Journalist Josie Gibson ended up writing to them about their continued bombardment.

On another occasion the subject was a Volvo car which crashed into the National Bank in Renmark.

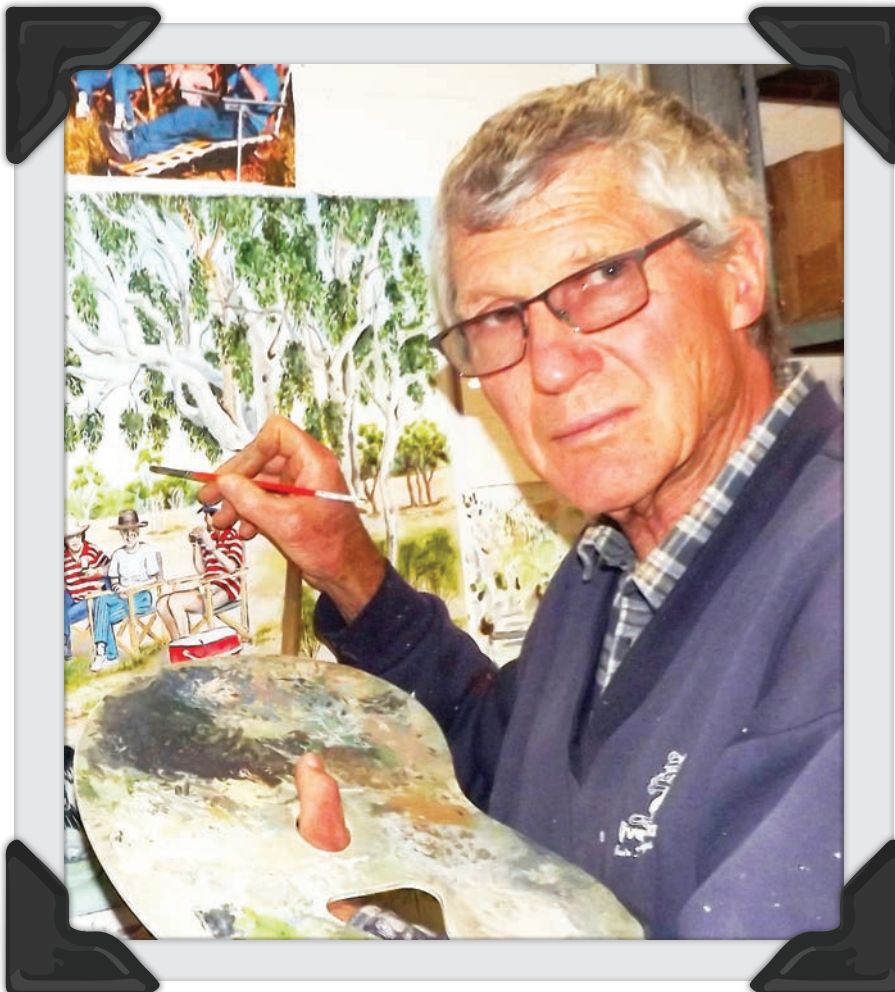
I was very surprised when a package arrived from the marketing arm of Volvo in Australia espousing the attributes of Volvo cars and their drivers that were not portrayed in the cartoon.

In 1999 I was asked by the Renmark Paringa CEO Ali Khan to meet with him at his office. He said unless future cartoons only portrayed the council in positive light I wouldn't be getting any more work from the council.

I gave him a positive reply: "No."

The cartoons also gave rise to creating caricatures over the years comprising a pen and colour wash method. I no longer do these but many would be hanging in rooms around the Riverland.

The Murray Pioneer cartoons have given me something to hang my hat on and I am appreciative of the editors who have persevered with me. As time marches on I have suggested to Paul Mitchell that a younger generation of humour and values would be more appropriate for The Murray Pioneer of the 2020s and that I should retire. He has not taken me up on that suggestion, so until he rubs me out I will keep on scribbling.



Murray Pioneer cartoonist Tony Hersey is also a sometime artist.

used where applicable, while at other times I make them up myself.

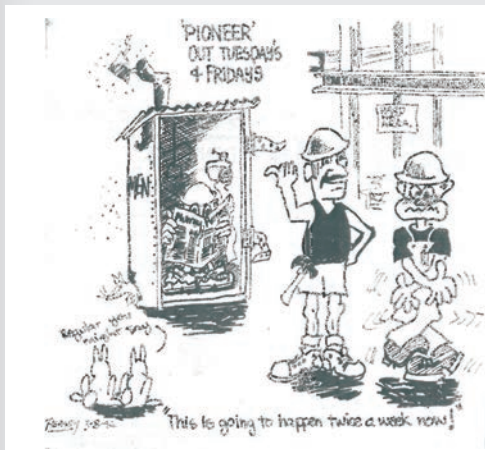
Unlike national daily papers where cartoonists are commenting on subjects that most people are aware of, this is not so for Riverlanders about local topics. For this reason, to relate the two, the page number for the story is included.

For 37 years from 1982 until 2019 there were two Pioneers a week.

In the early years 'Hersey' cartoons attracted a lot of negative feedback from readers. Perhaps they were too blunt, or close to the bone on occasions.

Negative comment is rare these days, but I like to think that a message is still being conveyed, albeit in a more acceptable manner to all of the readers.

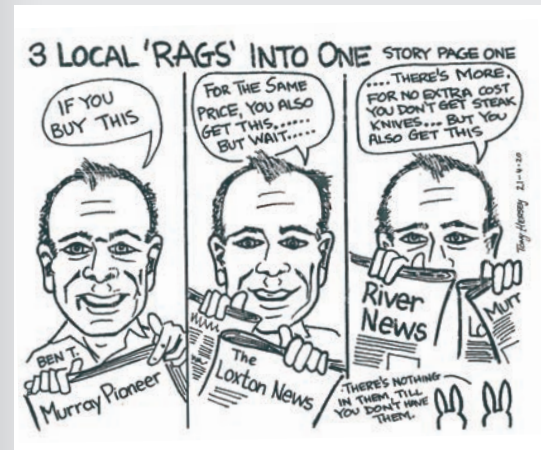
I am not offended by complaints because it is natural that if people have



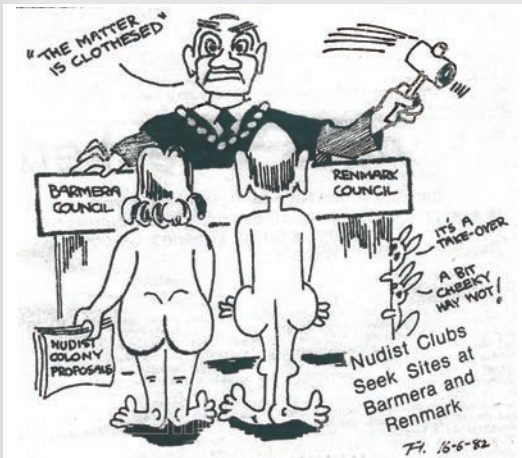
3/8/1982: The Pioneer goes to two issues a week.



27/6/2019: The Murray Pioneer changes from a bi-weekly issue.



21/4/2020: The three Riverland newspapers merge into one.



16/6/1982:
Nudist sites proposed for Riverland.



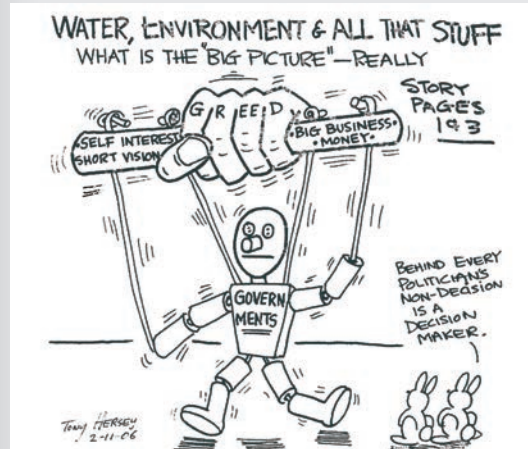
24/1/1991: This one created the most feedback directly to me. Probably because many people experienced the effect that thunder had on their dogs.



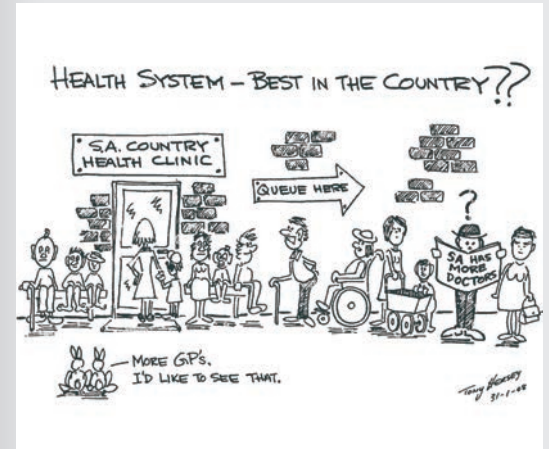
16/3/2000: And we thought 99 cents a litre for fuel was extreme, but in 2022 we are paying double.



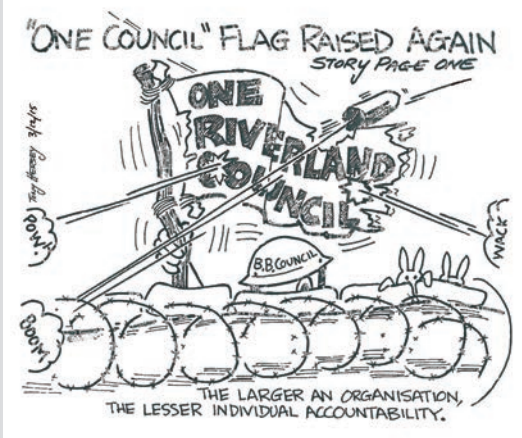
1/11/2001:
Racism starts to become an issue.



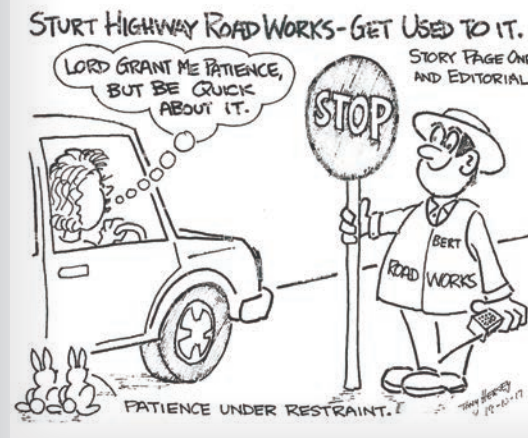
2/11/2006: Who really pulls the strings in Australia on our important matters?



31/1/2008: Ramping for medical assistance is not new to the country. The first decade of 2000's saw an acute shortage of practitioners.



3/12/2015: One Riverland council has been debated for decades in the past and will do for years to come.



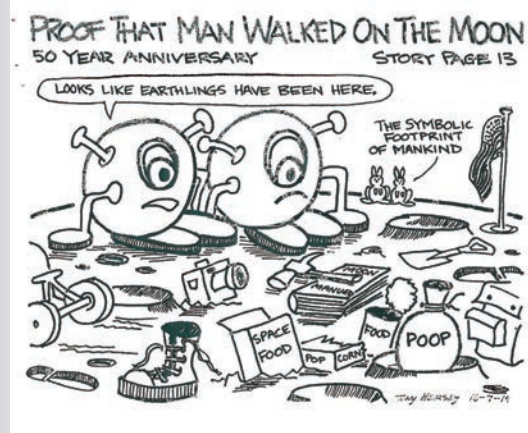
19/10/2017: Road works are always a bane on motorists but then they are quick to criticise poor roads.



8/3/2018: Crime rates increase but police station hours reduce.



5/7/2018: Mobile phones are becoming part of our arms, but not for everyone.



16/7/2019: The human race will never learn.
The easy way is the way for us.



5/5/2020: Covid restrictions bring with it confusion, resistance and information overload.

Front pages through the years

1900 - 2022



1900



1950



1961



1988



1994



1999



2003



2008



2010



2012



2017



2022

Honoured to be first female editor

1999 - 2002

GABRIELLE JOHNSTON

Gabrielle Johnston was the first female editor of The Murray Pioneer and fulfilled the role from 1999 to 2002.

Congratulations to Taylor Group Media and all the team behind The Murray Pioneer.

I was honoured when Paul Mitchell asked me to say a few words for The Murray Pioneer's 130 years. A remarkable achievement.

We all know times are changing in the media space but papers such as The Murray Pioneer have stood the test of time and I believe in coming years will have an even bigger role to play.

News has become a very fragmented business these days and is fraught with too many options. The Murray Pioneer provides a comprehensive local news service that you can trust.

The Murray Pioneer is the people's paper. Over the past 130 years the team has been providing your local news, your community views, opinions and achievements. This is no small achievement.

During my time as editor, like those before me, we published without fear or favour and covered the big issues including the then prime minister John Howard's visit, issues relating to the River Murray and impacts of wine grape prices. Importantly, no story was too big or too small, and I believe this is a key to the success that the newspaper has enjoyed over the past 130 years.

The Riverland is a special community and will always be in my heart. During my time in the beautiful region, I made some lifelong friends including Paul and Judy Taylor, Rosemary Gower and Christine Webster, who has enjoyed a stellar career with the ABC and now, I think

you would all agree, is doing an amazing job reporting on Riverland West news for The Murray Pioneer.

I still keep in touch with Riverland news, and have such fond memories including those amazing staff morning teas and the efforts of people like Lorna Taylor, on this front, did not go unnoticed and were greatly appreciated.

I will forever be grateful for the hospitality, friendship and goodwill of the Riverland people and the team at The Murray Pioneer. To be the first female editor was an honour which I will forever treasure.

You can also be assured that I still enjoy the region's wines – and have been known to convert many a New South Wales person across to Riverland wines.

There's something magical about the fine wines and produce from the region.

Just before I left the Riverland, I made mention (probably at one of those fabulous morning teas) that I was writing a book and promised to send a copy to The Murray Pioneer.

Well, suffice to say it's been a long-term project, but if all goes to plan said book (a fantasy fiction) will be published later this year, and I will send forth promised book. If you'd like to get in touch, I would really love to hear from you and you will find me on LinkedIn.



At the inaugural Rose Run on Sunday were from left, Lee Chaplin, and Laura Strout, of Renmark, Sue Scott, of Paringa, Pip Inglis, of Loxton and Ruth Strout, of Renmark.

Rose festival attracts 4000

October 28, 2003

About 4000 visitors travelled to Renmark last week for the annual Rose Festival.

Open gardens, walking tours, a musical performance, a fun run and other activities attracted visitors from around Australia to the region.

Festival co-ordinating committee secretary Lorelie Burr said while numbers were slightly down on last year it had been a "very successful festival".

"The people we spoke to were all very happy with what they came and saw. The roses were fantastic and the weather we had was brilliant after the slow start," she said.

SLOW START

Mrs Burr said the slow start to the rose season, which led to the cancellation of the Roses Around the World display at the Renmark Institute, had also affected some events.

"At the open day at Ruston's garden the numbers were slightly down because people had heard the roses were a bit slow this year," she said. "But it has been a nation-wide thing."

Mrs Burr said the Festival of Music, which featured performances from local artists such as Desiree Frahn and Anne McKinlay, was one of the week's major attractions.

A luncheon flower-arranging demonstration conducted by David Ruston was also a big attraction.

Mrs Burr said the open gardens attracted a large amount of attention with one garden reporting more than 1000 visitors throughout the week to Friday.

Mrs Burr said the committee had already begun planning for next year's event.

"Next year will be the 10th festival and we want to make it a bit more special. There are a lot of other important anniversaries happening in the town."

This year's inaugural Rose Run drew about 80 people to the Renmark river front on Sunday morning.

Organiser Rex Vesotsky said people from across the region, as well as a group of runners from Mildura, took part in the event.

Mr Vesotsky said those involved gave some positive feedback about the walkway, which runs from the Jarrett Memorial Gardens to the Paringa Bridge.

He said there were plans to hold the event again next year, but at the start of Rose Week to avoid the daylight saving time change and clashes with other festival events.

Rose festival attracts 4000

Renmark Rose Festival
October 18-20

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ABOVE: At the Rose Run on Sunday were from left, Lee Chaplin, and Laura Strout, of Renmark, Sue Scott, of Paringa, Pip Inglis, of Loxton and Ruth Strout, of Renmark.

From the family at Nippys we would like to congratulate The Murray Pioneer on their 130 years of success and wish them all the best for their future.

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Wanting to congratulate the team at The Murray Pioneer on 130 years in business, and wishing them the best for many more years to come.

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THE MIGHTY SOUTH AUSSIES
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46 East Terrace, Loxton
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By our records, 2002 driest in 112 years

February 14, 2003

One of the legacies left by the late managing director of The Murray Pioneer, Darnley Taylor, was a stack of rainfall records. By our reckoning 2002 will go down as the driest year in Renmark since records began in 1890. Darnley used to love producing such statistics, knowing full well that many readers also enjoyed historic comparison.

From our records, 2002 was by far the driest year we've experienced. 1982 was the only other year to have less than 100mm (or four inches). Renmark's average rainfall is 232mm.

Worst drought yet to affect river

December 7, 2004

This season's dry conditions will make the current drought the most serious to affect the River Murray since records began in the 1890s, according to the Murray Darling Basin Commission.

The commission said if inflows remain low, total reserves could fall to the lowest level since Dartmouth was completed in 1979.

A report released by the commission said the drought would only break when inflows improve substantially. Until then the environment will continue to be damaged, increasing fish kills and harming river red gums.

Local environmentalist Jack Seekamp said rain was especially needed in the highlands to flood the river, considering the last real flood was in 1993.

Mr Seekamp also said that while there was plenty of water for South Australians this season, there could be a battle for water again next season.

The commission said the drought had left no one untouched, impacting on irrigation, communities and the environment.

River Murray Water general manager David Dreverman said the main areas affected by the drought were the wetlands and floodplains.

However, the impact on Riverland irrigators was quite small because of the state's very high security policies for water allocations. However, the commission said some irrigators were now experiencing the third consecutive year with less than full allocations.

Mr Dreverman said the river had drought periods of two or three years before, but never the four-year drought period experienced now.

He said each year all of the water reserve in the system was allocated, with no reserves left for the future.

"What the river needs is a wet year and these only come about every five years," he said. "But that much water would be sufficient to fill empty storages and the flood flows would get water into the flood plains."

However, the next flood is likely to lead to increased salinity as accumulated salt on the floodplain is washed into the river system, he said.

Explore the rich history

of the area at the original 1889 homestead of pioneer Charles Chaffey.

Congratulations to The Murray Pioneer on 130 years!

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OPEN: Thursday to Monday 10 am to 4 pm
P: 08 8586 6175 | olivewood.renmark@gmail.com

Olivewood Historic Homestead and Museum

2004 STORAGE LEVELS

Storages	Full storage	Current storage		Dead storage	Active storage	Change in week
	(GL)	(GL)	%	(GL)	(GL)	(GL)
Dartmouth	3 906	1773	45	80	1 603	-26
Hume	3038	1640	54	30	1 610	-8
Lake Victoria	677	675	100	100	575	14
Menindee Lakes	1 603	248	15	640	0	-8
Total	9 224	4 336	47	850	3 878	-27



Woolworths Riverland congratulates
The Murray Pioneer on 130 years



CONGRATULATIONS
MURRAY PIONEER
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Saturday: Closed | Sunday: Closed | Closed Public Holidays





Save the Lake campaigners joined protesters against the Wellington weir on the steps of Parliament House last week.

Late call for more Lake Bonney info

February 23, 2007

Alack of information about the ecological impacts of the proposal to close Lake Bonney has led to a call for the State Government to consider local knowledge when making its decision.

The Lake Bonney Community Consultative Committee plans to invite Barmera locals with knowledge about the lake to prepare submissions for consideration by the State Government.

The next meeting of the committee is not scheduled until after the decision deadline, but chairman Neil Andrew said a special meeting could be held if the situation warrants.

"We're a bit short on some detail about the impact of the lowered lake level, should that happen on marine life," Mr Andrew said.

"So it was thought that we could bring in people who could make a submission to the committee at a future meeting, and who could be an authority on marine life,

salinity or whatever."

Mr Andrew said some members of the Barmera community have challenged State Government claims that recent scientific surveys of Lake Bonney have not found any threatened, rare or endangered species.

"Some of the reports and some of the details have been challenged by some of the local people, who probably know just as much about the native marine life as anybody," he said.

"That is why we're looking at getting information from the locals as well as the department."

Save the Lake campaigner Mark Beech has welcomed the idea, but says it has come too late.

"If the decision is two or three weeks away, that wouldn't give people enough time, I would have thought, to prepare anything substantial," he said.

"The idea has merit, but you would certainly need to inform the public, and you would certainly need to give the public enough time to

get something substantial together."

He said the lack of state government representation at a Save the Lake briefing session held at Parliament House this week, attended by Greens, Democrats, Liberal and Independent MPs, was evidence that the government was not prepared to consider input from a 'grass roots' level.

"On the evidence that we have at the moment... for (River Murray Minister Karlene Maywald) not to attend (the meeting) or not to send anyone on her behalf to attend, would illustrate to us that she is not prepared to listen to the residents of Barmera and their concerns," Mr Beech said.

"That's illustrated again through the make up of the (Lake Bonney Community Consultation) committee... which is being used as a vehicle to portray a message that there has been a consultation with the public through this committee when the membership is actually stacked in favour of the pro-

posal to close Lake Bonney."

Mrs Maywald maintains that she was represented by a member of her staff at Monday's presentation.

Mr Beech said the state government has not yet been able to provide any current scientific evidence or data to warrant the lake's closure.

He added that the Save the Lake group would view any report produced by a state government department with scepticism, and has called for an independent report to be commissioned into the possible ecological impacts of the proposal before the lake's future is set in stone.

"I can only go on what was suggested at the meeting this week, and that was they didn't have current data on the lake," he said.

"But if any evidence was produced that was independent, I don't think there could be too much cause for argument."

Mr Beech said the group would continue to canvas political support for its fight against the proposal to close Lake Bonney.

Renmark Show's centenary success

November 2, 2010

Event organisers have dubbed the 100th Renmark and Paringa District Show a "great success", with an estimated 60 per cent increase in crowd numbers.

Show society president Maureen Brauer said gate numbers were easily higher than previous years.

"We haven't done a count yet, but attendance numbers are looking better than the last few years," she said.

"And there was also a real buzz around. People were really pleased that they were there and they were happy and smiley."

"It just turned out to be a great day."

However, Mrs Brauer said at 77 years of age it was "definitely" her last year and time for somebody new to take the reins.

"I'm sad in one way but I feel I've given it all I possibly could," she said.

"And I don't have enough energy left to keep something like this going...so it'll be up to somebody else to get up and take over."

"I don't know who that will be, but I certainly hope somebody does."

"We'd like to see some young people, with young ideas and enthusiasm pick up the reins and run with it."

Mrs Brauer said she would be disappointed if the event did not continue.

"There are a lot of people that are really keen to keep something going," she said.

"If nobody takes over I don't know what's going to happen."

"I think it's something that people should be thinking about because it's a community day and it's something for the town."

The fate of the event will be decided at the Renmark Show Society's annual general meeting in March next year.

Maureen's big finale

By KYLE GODFREY

After almost three decades as Renmark Show Society president, Maureen Brauer says a "spectacular" closing night at this year's 100th Renmark and Paringa District Show was the "perfect finale".

Mrs Brauer said the evening entertainment, which saw the Police Jazz Band and Cirque du Soleil perform, was "a real treat".

"The fire dancers were absolutely something else," she said. "They worked all the lights and stuff. It was just so spectacular looking down tonight on them."

And the police band were great at closing, and the young men and women in the band were fantastic. It was the best part of the whole show.

Mrs Brauer, who is stepping down as show society president, said the evening presentation and the morning presentation were "a real treat".

"I didn't even know these people for they took the time to come over and say what a great evening it was," she said. "And that made me feel really good."

"It was my final day and I was a bit sad."

"It just turned out to be a great day."

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Congratulations to the team at The Murray Pioneer on a massive 130 years in business

Wishing you every success for the future



32 East Terrace, Loxton
Phone 8584 6663

The Country
Bakehouse

Congratulations to the Taylor Group and The Murray Pioneer on their milestone 130th birthday!

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NICOLA CENTOFANTI

MLC

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Fire devastates Waikerie Hotel

By PAMELA PERRE

Patrons could be sipping on a beer at the Waikerie Hotel Motel in just two weeks, after a devastating fire ripped through the pub in the early hours of Sunday morning.

The damage bill was yesterday predicted to reach up to \$3.5 million – however hotel management is already planning to re-open parts of the hotel.

“We’ve got half the hotel, so we’ve got the gaming area and we’ve got the dining room and the bistro room, so the estimation is probably a couple of weeks at this point in time,” hotel manager Andrew Tyson told *The Pioneer* yesterday.

“We just want to let people know that the Waikerie Hotel Motel is still here, that it isn’t razed to the ground and that we will commence operations, where we can, as soon as humanly possible.”

Once the hotel does re-open,



CFS crews from Waikerie, Blanchetown, Cadell and Barmera worked tirelessly for two hours to control the blaze at the Waikerie Hotel Motel on Sunday morning. PHOTO: Maddie Miller

“It was a pretty intense fire and the crews did a fantastic job actually holding the progression so that the whole thing didn’t go up,” he said.

Mr Thompson said the newer area, including the gaming area, the bistro room and accommodation is still intact but the bottle shop and bar would likely need to be rebuilt.

“Work has started today,” he said. “All the loss assessors and insurance people are here at the moment and I have an architect

are covered by insurance also. But they have all been very supportive in coming forward in helping and cleaning.”

While disappointed the fire occurred in the lead up to the pub’s centenary anniversary, Mr Thompson said the situation had demonstrated local community support.

“For the older people in the town in particular it’s a landmark that’s been part of their lives and we’ve had 80-year-olds coming up and reminiscing,” he said.

“Many are upset about the fact that it didn’t make it to its 100th birthday. But that’s life and we’ve just got to rebuild now and get on with it.”

“We have been inundated with offers to help and we’ve had loads of support from local tradesmen... it’s just been a tremendous community feel.”

Mr Tyson, who was on site at the time of the fire, said he was in shock when

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September 6, 2011

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“We just want to let people know that the Waikerie Hotel Motel is still here, that it isn’t razed to the ground and that we will commence operations, where we can, as soon as humanly possible.”

Once the hotel does reopen, community support will be crucial to its future, said board chairman Graeme Thompson.

“When we are able to open again we are going to need a lot of community support, because very obviously if we don’t get the community support it will be a very expensive rebuild,” he said.

“We will need patrons (and) we just plead for support once it’s up and running again.”

The CFS was called to the scene at about 4.30am on Sunday after an electrical fault was believed to have started the blaze.

Regional commander of CFS Region 3, Richard Coombe, said crews from Waikerie, Cadell, Blanchetown and Barmera took over two hours to control the fire.

“By the time the crew got there Oscar’s Bar (at the hotel) was fully (ablaze),” he said.

“(Crews) were successful in containing the fire to the single storey part and stopped the progression into the two-storey accommodation and bar and gaming areas.”

Mr Coombe said about 40 crew members, including several local volunteers, battled the fire.

“It was a pretty intense fire and the crews did a fantastic job actually holding the progression so that the whole thing didn’t go up,” he said.

Mr Thompson said the newer area, including the gaming area, the bistro room and accommodation was still intact but the bottle shop and bar would likely need to be rebuilt.

“Work has started today,” he said. “All the loss assessors and insurance people are here at the moment and I have an architect

(coming) to start to plan the revival.”

Mr Thompson said a full insurance cover means the fire’s financial impact on the hotel and staff will be minimal.

“The board has been very conscious of insurance issues and we had upgraded our insurance regularly,” he said.

“All our staff at this point are covered by insurance also. But they have all been very supportive in coming forward in helping and cleaning.”

While disappointed the fire occurred in the lead-up to the pub’s centenary anniversary, Mr Thompson said the situation had demonstrated local community support.

“For the older people in the town in particular it’s a landmark that’s been part of their lives and we’ve had 80-year-olds coming up and reminiscing,” he said.

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“But that’s life and we’ve just got to rebuild now and get on with it.

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Mr Tyson, who was on site at the time of the fire, said he was initially in shock when notified of the blaze.

“The shock then turned to procedural thinking, getting people out and safe as a priority,” he said.

“Once everyone was safe and there were no problems in that respect and the CFS had arrived, there was nothing more that we could do, and it turned to be absolute shock and devastation.”



BRADMAN THRILLS BERRI CROWD

1800 see champion in scintillating innings in Berri

March 19, 1936

The match between Don Bradman's SACA interstate team and the Berri-Barmera District Association played here yesterday provided the crowd at the Memorial Oval with all the cricket thrills they wanted.

The champion was in great form and gave an exhibition of hard hitting and wonderfully judged placement, which kept the spectators in a state of excited suspense until his innings closed.

Bradman took the ball and received a great ovation from the crowd. His first over was a maiden, but the first ball of his second over was returned by Aldenhoven and snapped up by the champion.

Mahoney, the young left-hander, was then sent in to face the bowling. Bradman then had the best bowling average for his team, 1 for 0. Mahoney however, treated him with little respect and opened his account with a single and followed with a boundary hit off Badcock's bowling.

Bradman took over the bowling again, and Mahoney, playing confidently, collected two fours. The two youngsters were providing entertaining batting, and Munro hit two more boundaries off Badcock.

After the luncheon adjournment Walker opened the bowling with Bradman behind the stumps. The batsmen both scored three

more runs each and the innings closed when Mahoney was bowled by Burton, with a total of 96.

Bradman then went to the wicket followed by the cheers of the crowd which settled down ready for anything.

The field moved out to be ready for big hitting, but the champion opened up his score with a ball padded short to square leg.

The first ball of the next over whistled to the fence and the next was a hot drive to Battams who did not quite get on to it for a catch.

Any loose balls were treated lightly. Max Lean was punished in his opening over, but was rewarded when Leak was caught by Royal off him for 42.

Moyle then partnered Bradman, and opened with a single from Battams. The champion then laid on the wood and was scoring freely with every known shot, several times knocking over 20 from one over.

In his first 45 minutes of play he had accounted for 81 runs.

Moyle was Lean's next victim. He had driven a ball hard to the fence but the next one, pulled to leg, lifted and he was caught by J. Morrell near the boundary.

Hamence joined the captain who further demonstrated his

run-getting ability by knocking three fours, running two, then another four, finishing up with 22 from that over.

Woods came on again at the River end and increased his pace. Hamence opened his account and a square cut by Bradman brought his score to 100, taking 51 minutes.

Waye was given the ball and evidently Bradman decided to really hit out, and the ball kept flying.

When Cant went to the bowling crease, Bradman lifted his third ball for the first six for the match, followed with a square cut to the fence, then another six, the ball disappearing into a neighbouring vineyard.

To the great enjoyment of the crowd, two more sixes came off the next over. Continuing to hit at everything, the champion gave a chance when he shied a ball straight up into the air close to the wicket, but Cant dropped it.

At the tea adjournment the score was 4 for 230, and the batsmen received a great ovation as they came off the ground.

Resuming play, Bradman continued his entertaining methods and after several more boundaries, was caught by Aldenhoven on the square leg boundary, having scored 155 in smashing style (21 fours and four sixes).



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CURTIS TAKES 9/60 AGAINST ENGLAND

Caliph man's bowling a feature for SA Country

January 25, 1951

The well-improved oval and delightful summer weather provided ideal conditions for the SA Country versus Engald cricket match played at Renmark yesterday and today.

With wickets falling rapidly and a liberal measure of exciting incidents, it was crowd-pleasing cricket of a high order, and the thousands of people present from far and near were not slow to show their appreciation.

Although SA Country's batting on the opening day was disappointing, the locals made amends by an excellent performance in the field.

The bowling was never really collared on the opening day; and largely due to a sterling effort by young East Murray all-rounder Lou Curtis, of Caliph, the English total was kept within surprisingly modest proportions. The final result was a win to England by an innings and 25 runs.

The Country's first innings was dominated by Ken Perry, the Strathalbyn batsman who opening the innings. He compiled an excellent 42 – exactly half the side's total before being dismissed.

No other batsman reached double figures, although both Harry Bennett (Glossop), who opened with Perry, and Eddie

Renner (Kapunda) who went in first wicket down, showed impressive form in contributing 9 apiece. In a last-wicket stand which considerably helped the small total, George Gross (Mt. Gambier) used the long handle to some effect, remaining 9 not out, and was well supported by SA Country skipper, Arch Grosvenor (Renmark).

ENGLISH ATTACK

There was much interest in the first appearance in Australia of Brian Statham and Roy Tattersall, the relief bowlers from Lancashire who have been rushed out to Australia by air to join the English team because of injuries suffered by Bailey and Wright.

However, although they both bowled impressively to take one wicket each, it was a fellow Lancashire man, Robert Berry, who was responsible for the collapse of the Country men, with his left-arm slows accounting for six wickets off 9.5 overs.

EVANS INJURY

An unfortunate incident during the Country innings, shortly before lunch, led to the retirement from the field of England's first wicketkeeper, Godfrey Evans. He had a nasty gash on the bridge of the nose sustained through being hit by

the bat when Perry pulled a ball late from the bowling of Compton.

Three stitches had to be inserted in the wound, but Evans was back at the oval during the afternoon and it is not thought that the injury will affect his availability for the Fourth Test in Adelaide.

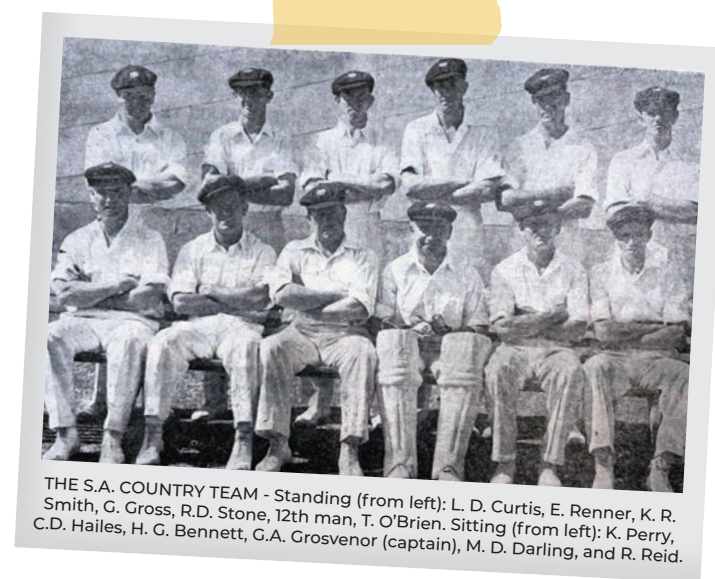
Reserve wicketkeeper A.J. McInture, although not in the 12 declared players, took over from Evans as a result of a sporting gesture by the Country captain which was much appreciated by the MCC team.

The Englishmen's innings on the first day was notable, apart from Curtis's great bowling performance, for the delightful batting of the opening pair, Sheppard and Simpson, and later by Compton and Brown.

This was notable for crisply made shots to all parts of the field, and the great number of singles taken as a result of clever placing of the ball and perfect understanding between the batsmen.

At the close of play on Wednesday, Curtis had the remarkably fine figures of 5/28.

He commanded the greatest respect from the galaxy of English batsmen. It took the advent of Compton, batting usually low on the list, to stop a



THE S.A. COUNTRY TEAM - Standing (from left): L. D. Curtis, E. Renner, K. R. Smith, G. Gross, R.D. Stone, 12th man, T. O'Brien. Sitting (from left): K. Perry, C.D. Hailes, H. G. Bennett, G.A. Grosvenor (captain), M. D. Darling, and R. Reid.

possible hat-trick after Curtis had taken the wickets of Close and Parkhouse off successive balls. His figures were then 4/17, and in his next over he bowled Dewes, also for a duck, to have 5/22.

GREAT BOWLING

Curtis continued in great form when the Englishmen's innings was resumed this morning, and accounted for the remaining three batsmen to return the amazing figures of 9/60.

This must rank as one of the best bowling performances recorded against an MCC team.

Arthur Gilligan, former England captain, said that he could not recall a finer perfor-

mance against any English touring side.

The young bowler from the Murray Mallee is being showered with congratulations from all sides for his remarkable performance.

The Englishmen's innings reached 233, with Brown once more playing a real captain's part with a well-made 77 (9 fours).

Opening their second innings shortly before lunch, SA Country were soon in trouble, losing three wickets (Bennett, Renner and Smith) for 16.

The innings closed at 124, but included some bright batting by Hailes (32, one six and one four), Darling (28, one four) and Reid (22, four fours).

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~ All Riverland Towns ~

Football abandoned for season in all three Upper Murray grades

July 12, 1956

ARCH GROSVENOR

Football has been abandoned for the season in the Upper Murray Football League, following a meeting of delegates on Tuesday night.

A special meeting was called by the chairman (Mr W. J. Moore) to consider future operations in view of the flood position, and history was made in the manner in which the meeting was conducted.

Delegates from all clubs except Loxton assembled in Winzen's café at Berri, and the Loxton representatives were in Hosking's Pharmacy at Loxton. A telephone line was booked for the duration of the meeting with amplifier equipment installed in both rooms.

It was decided that the programme would be abandoned from this week in all three grades.

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Roos beat jinx to capture flag

September 30, 1983

DAVID DUNHILL

Barmera-Monash shrugged off a premiership hoodoo to impressively defeat Renmark by 11 points in Saturday's Riverland Football League A grade grand final at Berri.

It was the Roos' first flag in 27 years as a combine and the first for a Barmera-based A grade side since 1937. Barmera-Monash were runners-up in the previous three grand finals, losing to Berri once and Renmark twice.

A crowd of about 6000 saw the Roos go to the front in the first quarter and hold the lead all day. Final scores were: Barmera-Monash 13-14, Renmark 12-9.

Barmera joined the Upper Murray Football Association after World War I and were premiers in 1922, the only other occasion the club has recorded a premiership in the top grade.

Saturday's triumph brought wild scenes of jubilation after the final siren, which was just audible above the din of a pro-Barmera-Monash crowd.

Nineteen ecstatic Roos and captain-coach Barry "Buff" Tyrrell were engulfed by a mass of elated Barmera-Monash supporters, most of whom had waited a very long time for this moment.

However, their courage and ability to bounce back late in the game when all had seemed lost earlier, was admired by friend and foe.

It was B-M's fine first quarter showing when they played with great skill, desperation and determination to post 5-6 to Renmark's 2-2, plus their ability to withstand the pressure later instead of folding, that brought success.

Whereas the Roos were a team of one grabbers, the Rovers fumbled at critical periods even while not under a lot of pressure.

Renmark, by allowing their opponents enough latitude to get a good early break and maintain a lead, destroyed their chances of winning and achieving a hat-trick of premierships.

B-M, with winning rucks and

rovers, did all of the early attacking while having the benefit of a strong breeze in the first quarter. Both teams took the field as published.

Glenn Millard was in scintillating form at the bounces and Tony Van der Biezen gleefully grabbed the opportunities presented to him. David Butterworth at centre half forward brought up the first major for the match as he steered the ball neatly through the big opening.

Not to be denied, Renmark replied through Mark Schwartzkopff five minutes later. Many of the Rovers' forward sorties later in the term went unrewarded as Barry Tyrrell in particular, and Hadi Van der Biezen held them up on the last line of defence.

Mick Schwertfeger appeared to have Steve Symonds' measure at the goal front and this situation continued for most of the game. Goals to Tony Van der Biezen, Steve Buchecker, Neville Hamood and Millard made the first term a productive one for B-M.

Kel Markham, a busy rover for most of the opening quarter, finished off an attack for Renmark's only other major during that period. Although Ron Bennett stopped a number of promising attacking movements by the Roos with some strong marking and solid groundplay, he allowed Terry Fisher too much room and the determined veteran made good use of some important possessions.

Butterworth proved too strong overhead for Rick Edmonds and his speed and accurate disposal posed a problem for the Rovers.

Stuart Scott, when moved to the key defensive position, managed to restrict the skilful forward somewhat. Renmark had solid contributors in Michael Grosse, opposed to Mick Beech on a wing, follower Bill Parousis and custodian Ian French, while on the other wing Peter Hendrick got a tonne of kicks with Steve Sard showing out later.

Although the Rovers used the breeze well to increase their score to a presentable 7-6 at half time, the Roos were also allowed to add five goals to have a very useful margin of 19 points with the wind advantage to follow.

Millard was the outstanding player for B-M during the second quarter, probably sharing the honour of best afield with Renmark's Bennett, who had tightened his game considerably.

Fred Andary was in dashing form on a forward flank, giving the Rovers' highly credentialled Rick Frahn the run-around. As Frahn is often inclined to back his judgement, a tighter checker may have helped Renmark's cause.

Andary booted two full-pointers himself and was instrumental in several others for Barmera.

Deane Dunhill started to make his presence felt and contributed a fine goal while Schwartzkopff (two), Symonds and Rick Stoeckel added further majors.

The Rovers raised their supporters' spirits and stirred the crowd with a tremendous revival during the third term.

Motivated by Andrew Coombe, who started to give something in ruck, midfielder Trevor Gill, who had been rarely sighted in the first half, Gary Wright, also well controlled by the B-M defenders, and Hendrick, Renmark registered 3-1 to 1-4 while still battling the stiff breeze.

It was a top effort and fully displayed their skill and resilience. Schwartzkopff, who has the happy knack of finding a space in which to place himself, notched two further goals in a useful performance.

Gill had a dozen possessions, all of which he used well, Wright



Triumphant Barmera-Monash captain-coach Barry Tyrrell after the Roos' exciting 11 point premiership win on Saturday.

Mild panic seemed to grip a few of the Roos, but Tyrrell, who had been relatively quiet since just before half time, took control and in a tough, tight and absorbing last stanza B-M finally triumphed.

Luck did not seem to favour Renmark as they threw themselves into the fray for a last-ditch effort.

Timely goals to Buchecker and Beech spelt doom for the Rovers, whose only reply came from the consistent Grosse just before the siren sounded to bring down the curtain on what finished as a great grand final and a fine season for the Roos.

Basking in the honour and glory of victory shortly after the game, Tyrrell was quick to pay a tribute to his charges for what he called a truly "gutsy" effort.

He was thrilled with their magnificent performances; particularly in withstanding the pressure which Renmark applied after half time. He also paid a compliment to the Rovers when he suggested they were the only RFL side capable of staging such a great fight back.



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Draw causes bewilderment

September 18, 1990

Bewildered they all stood and stared.
 Each one full of emotion but with no reason to express it.
 The Riverland A grade football grand final had ended in a draw. Gut-wrenching fears of defeat and hopes of glory remained bottled up inside.
 And as the realisation of the result dawned players slumped to the ground in disbelief.
 An afternoon of supreme effort had amounted to nothing.
 Suddenly a week set aside for little more than either celebrating or drowning one's sorrows takes on significantly different dimensions.
 It is grand final week again.
 Another seven days of train-

ing, nerves, questions with no answers and four quarters of football.
 Five seconds from the end on Saturday Waikerie were all but premiers.
 The Magpies were six points in front and holding firm. A 16-year premiership drought looked set to be broken.
 But somehow Renmark launched one final attack which ended with a levelling goal on the siren.
 Some dreams were dashed, others saved.
 It is only the second drawn grand final in Riverland football. Barmera-Monash and Loxton drew in 1962 before Loxton went on to win the replay.

Waikerie and Renmark played out a draw in the 1974 preliminary final before the Magpies went on to win the premiership.
 Similar to the West Coast Eagles-Collingwood qualifying final draw a week ago, Saturday's result has forced major reshuffles on many fronts.
 Riverland Football League executives are yet to finalise Saturday's itinerary.
 A meeting in Berri last night failed to resolve a number of matters including a curtain raiser. Likely candidates Cobdogla and Loxton North reserves are unavailable and league secretary Mr Neil Lemmey said yesterday he was hopeful an over 35s match would be staged.



Renmark crowned premiers after one-sided flag replay

September 25, 1990

Renmark Rovers won their first Riverland A grade football premiership in eight years at the Berri Oval on Saturday.
 They beat luckless Waikerie by 67 points after the pair had played a draw the week before.
 More than 3000 people returned to the ground expecting another ding-dong battle but it did not eventuate.
 Waikerie failed to reproduce the form

that had them all but accepting the premiership flag with five seconds remaining in the previous week's match.
 A goal on the siren that day to Renmark full forward Tony Modra had saved the Rovers and they made the most of their second chance on the weekend.
 More than 1000 people converged on Renmark Oval to celebrate the victory on Saturday night.

Photo showing Renmark Patisserie and Daves in the 1930's

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World Cup cricket match a triumph

March 17, 1992

TIM JACKSON

The Riverland has received lavish praise from the Australian Cricket Board for the staging of the World Cup match between the West Indies and Sri Lanka at Berri Oval last Friday.

ACB general manager Mr Graham Halbish told organisers on Friday he was "very impressed" with what he saw.

"I knew the Riverland wouldn't let me down," he said.

Despite a crowd well below expectation (approximately 3000) Mr Halbish said the number of spectators wasn't the sole criteria on which a match was judged.

WINDIES WIN

The West Indies beat Sri Lanka by 91 runs with West Indian Phil Simmons being named man of the match after becoming the first international cricketer in more than 40 years to score a century in the Riverland.

However, local organisers were still angry yesterday by a last-minute decision by the liquor licensing commission last week that banned spectators from taking alcohol into the ground.

They believe the lateness of the decision took a significant toll on the size of crowd.

Chairman of the local organising committee Don Woon said last night the ban was inappropriate for such an event. He said introducing a ban three days before the match was unacceptable.

"I think the authorities overreacted (by imposing the ban)," Mr Woon said.

"What do they think we are, a mob of city yobbos?"

"I know a lot of peo-

ple who decided not to go once they heard of the alcohol ban."

Riverland police announced last Tuesday that the liquor licensing commissioner had made the decision after concern was expressed that people or property may be damaged if bottles and cans were allowed.

Mr Woon and his committee were not consulted on the matter. They were told of the ban at the same time as the public.

He said he found it difficult to see the logic behind the ban when cans of alcohol could be bought from booths set up at the ground.

It is believed that spectators who bought tickets on the condition they could take alcohol into the ground would have a strong case to if they wished to take legal action.

Mr Woon said the timing of the alcohol ban could not have been worse and was the only sour element on what was otherwise a triumphant day for the Riverland.

Despite the heat, which saw the mercury soar to 39.3 degrees at the hottest point of the day, a well-behaved crowd stayed right to the end of the Sri Lankan innings.



BERRI OVAL:

A Cinderella story on World Cup debut

March 17, 1992

It was as though Berri Oval had taken Cinderella's place and gone to the ball.

As spectators walked into the ground for last Friday's historic World Cup game between the West Indies and Sri Lanka the venue looked anything but a country oval on the edge of the Australian outback.

The lush green outfield adorned with painted insignias, sparkling new sight screens, a detailed scoreboard and circled by a kaleidoscope of beach umbrellas and seating had helped transform the place into an international venue. There was little doubt that this was Riverland sport's greatest achievement.

Two international sides head-to-head in a World Cup clash. It is unlikely to happen again.

A crowd of nearly 3000 made up the extras in a production that ultimately saw one of the cricket's giants, the West Indies, conquer newcomer Sri Lanka in typical style.

The relatively unknown Phil Simmons will not be forgotten by locals for some time after scoring the first century by an international crick-

eter in the Riverland.

His 110 off 125 balls included seven fours and six sixes. It was to be a match-winning effort that earned him the man of the match award.

The West Indies posted 8/268 and Sri Lanka replied with 9/177. From a local point of view there were several performances worthy of man of the match honours.

Berri town clerk Mike Hurley began working toward the match six months ago and his attention to detail was evident in the final product.

Cricketer-turned-curator Neil Weinert also came into calculations for preparing a wicket that brought the approval of silence from both camps. (At this level if they don't complain you must be doing something right.)

Ground announcer Bruce Mellett also made a late charge with his pronouncement of the names of the Sri Lankan players as they strode to the crease to either bowl or bat.

It is believed he was up most of the night before trying to wrap his tongue around Wickremesinghe and Hathurusinghe.



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Hail Riverland Masters, our netball world champions

October 11, 1994

The Riverland Masters netballers fulfilled what most thought to be an impossible dream by winning gold at the World Masters Games in Brisbane on Friday night.

They defeated New Zealand team, Paddy Barrys 35-14 in the gold medal play-off.

"This is the ultimate," coach Marg Lambert said after the game,

"It doesn't get any better than this."

Those sentiments were shared by their many supporters in the Riverland over the weekend as news filtered through that the netballers had 'done it'.

Lambert yesterday paid tribute to her players, some of whom she has coached for almost 30 years.

"We set our goal in April and started working towards it from there," she said.

"They have been so committed. Some have got young families and it hasn't been easy, but they have managed to get to all the trainings.

"There is a very special relationship within this group of girls.

"We are very united. I suppose that was one of our biggest strengths. It is something that will stay with me forever."

The Masters were undefeated during the Games, winning 10 games in eight days. But they saved their best for last.

In the semi-final on Thursday night they demolished the WA Eagles 40-17 and then blitzed the Paddy Barrys 13-2 in the opening quarter of the grand final to set up the victory.

"We were ready to go, there is no doubt about it," centre Ann Noack said of the grand final first quarter.

"We were really pumped up. There was nothing left to do but to go out and do it.

"Everyone just played so well for the whole week. We didn't have a weak link."

Lambert said the professionalism of the team pulled them through.

"Don't be fooled by the scores of some of the early games," she said. "There were some exceptional teams there.

"It was our fitness that gave us that edge."

Lambert told her players before the big game that "pain is temporary, pride lasts forever".

"It is still difficult to come to terms with the enormity of what we have done," she said.

"It is hard to comprehend that we are

world champions."

Goal shooters Lynn Smith and Marg Howie exemplified the thoroughness of the side. After discovering they were playing the tournament with rubber balls instead of the traditional leather, both rose early each morning for extra goal shooting practice at the courts.

At 7am each day the pair would drive down the vacant courts to adjust to the rubber balls.

"I wasn't coming home without a gold medal," Howie said on the weekend.

Howie is expected to retire from the game. She could be the only member to give the game away.

All others appear to play in the Riverland A1 competition again next year.

Lambert said it was gratifying to know they had the support of the Riverland throughout the week.

"We received so many faxes and phone calls from people back home," she said.

"It was fantastic. It gave the girls a real lift."

The Riverlanders were also named the best dressed team at the Games by the journalists covering the opening and closing ceremonies event.

The Riverland team was sponsored by the locally based almond co-operative firm Australian Nut Processors.

It was also a special week for Riverland A grade badge umpire Irene Hunyadi who officiated in two grand finals at the Games. Her performances during the week were rated among the best of the tournament.



Marg Howie (left) and Sue Fox.

Big crowd for Roo's homecoming

April 29, 2008

NICK DILLON

Mark Ricciuto's impact on Riverland football was evident on Friday, with a crowd of 2200 on hand to watch Waikerie defeat Loxton in the A grade Anzac Day grand final rematch.

The Brownlow Medallist and AFL premiership player kicked two goals in his return to Riverland ranks, and set up several others in a classy display.

RFL executive officer Mick Beech said the atmosphere at the match was akin to a grand final.

"I think they ended up with 2200 people, when you consider we only had 1500 at the grand final three years ago," Mr Beech said.

"There was heaps of media with cameras down there and being a twilight match, the atmosphere as pretty good.

"There were a lot of people there from towns other than Waikerie and

Loxton. It was a credit to the Waikerie Football Club, who hosted it really well."

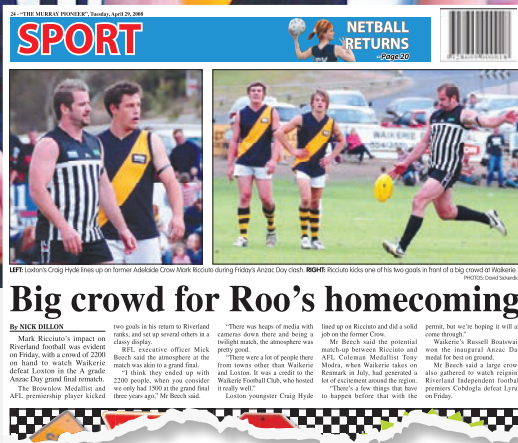
Loxton youngster Craig Hyde lined up on Ricciuto and did a solid job on the former Crow.

Mr Beech said the potential match-up between Ricciuto and AFL Coleman Medallist Tony Modra, when Waikerie takes on Renmark in July, had generated a lot of excitement around the region.

"There's a few things that have to happen before that with the permit, but we're hoping it will all come through."

Waikerie's Russell Boatswain won the inaugural Anzac Day medal for best on ground.

Mr Beech said a large crowd also gathered to watch reigning Riverland Independent football premiers Cobdogla defeat Lyrup on Friday.





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RFL CENTENARY

What a day for the RFL

May 19, 2009

NICK DILLON

After a lot of hard work, the Riverland Football League's centenary celebrations went off without a hitch on Saturday.

A kick after the siren saw a draw recorded in the A grade clash between North of the River and South of the River. The game preceded a brilliant dinner at the Renmark Greek Community Hall, with the best of the region's footballers – current and former – in attendance.

RFL executive officer Mick Beech was a tired and weary man yesterday, but was elated with the way the weekend turned out.

"It was worth it, mate," Mr Beech said. "I think everyone was stoked."

"I've had phone calls saying it was one of the best days they've had involved in footy."

"With the draw as well, that just capped things off during the day."

"You couldn't have scripted it better."

Former Essendon coach and Richmond player Kevin Sheedy kept the crowd spellbound with tales of his career, while former Loveday and South Australian football legend Neil Kerley had the crowd in fits of laughter.

Add to the mix former Brownlow Medallist Mark Ricciuto, arguably the best footballer South Australia has produced in Russell Ebert, and a host of current and former local stars, and it was a night to remember.

"I didn't think we'd be able to shut Kevin up," Mr Beech joked.

"The crowd loved him and also Russell Ebert, Mark Ricciuto and Neil Kerley on the couch."

Mr Beech said the team of the cen-

tury was well received and commended the centenary sub-committee for their efforts.

"You're probably on a hiding to nothing with those sort of things, but the centenary sub-committee put in a whole lot of effort."

"It wasn't taken lightly and they've done a fair bit of investigation into a lot of players."

"Generally I think the decisions they made were very good."

"Footballers are generally pretty modest sort of blokes but you could tell they were pretty proud of being named in there."

The Riverland Legends team was announced on the night, while the 38 Independent champions for 38 years were also recognised.

RFL LEGENDS

F: Mark Mickan (West Adelaide, Brisbane Bears, Adelaide); Tony Modra (West Adelaide, Adelaide, Fremantle); Kym Lehmann (North Adelaide). HF: Bruce Lindner (West Adelaide, Geelong, Adelaide); Don Lindner (North Adelaide); Bob Proud (North Adelaide). C: Grantley Fielke (West Adelaide, Adelaide, Collingwood); Russell Ebert v/c (Port Adelaide, North Melbourne); Bruce Light (Port Adelaide). HB: Rodney Seekamp (Norwood); Phillip 'Sandy' Nelson (Sturt); Sam Fisher (West Adelaide, St Kilda). B: Rex Voigt (Glenelg); Ron Elleway (Port Adelaide); Jim Thiel (Norwood). Ruck: Neil Kerley capt/coach (West Adelaide, South Adelaide, Glenelg); Mark Ricciuto v/c (West Adelaide/ Adelaide); Byron

Schammer (Fremantle). Int: Ross Lehmann (North Adelaide); Matthew Battams (South Adelaide); Alby Yeo (Glenelg, West Adelaide, Essendon); Peter Winter (West Adelaide); Troy Lehmann (North Adelaide, Collingwood, Brisbane Bears); Kerry Hamilton (Glenelg); Michael Murphy (Glenelg, North Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane Bears).

INDEPENDENT 38 CHAMPIONS FOR 38 YEARS

Ron Drewett (Chaffey/ Lyrup); Jeff Freer (Lyrup); Charlie Kassulke (Moorook-Kingston); Bob Mapey (Chaffey/ Paringa); Neville Parker (Wunkar); John Rowe (Brown's Well); Malcolm Rowe (Brown's Well); Colin Smith (Cobdogla); Dennis Stasinowsky (Wunkar); Bob Stuart (Lyrup); Kerry Thompson (Moorook-Kingston); Don Viney (Brown's Well); Ian Gillespie (Cobdogla); Mike McCallum (Cobdogla); Ken Roberts (Gerard); Steven Smith (Brown's Well/ Lyrup); Rick Frahn (Paringa); Rodney Hill (Moorook-Kingston); Anthony Markham (Lyrup/ Paringa); Lyall Lindsay (Gerard); Leon Braun (Brown's Well); Benny Burton (Cobdogla); Mark Hamann (Wunkar); Greg Neindorf (Cobdogla); Alan Singh (Gerard); Mark Westley (Paringa); Richard Liddell (Cobdogla); Brett Tschirpigg (Moorook-Kingston); Kenton Farr (Wunkar); David Francis (East Murray); Shane Schulz (Wunkar); Darrell Tilbrook (Lyrup/ Cobdogla); Sam Lloyd (Lyrup); Craig

Ociepa (Paringa); Russell Charles (Brown's Well); Mark McConnell (East Murray); Brian Parsons (East Murray); Todd Rivers (Paringa/Moorook-Kingston).

RFL TEAM OF THE CENTURY

FORWARD

Kym Lehmann (Waikerie)

Exciting half forward with athleticism, pace, safe hands and long kicking among his attributes. Twice a Whillas Medallist, either side of a league career at North Adelaide.

Barry 'Buff' Tyrrell (Barmera-Monash)

Recruited as a playing coach, he brought stability, authority, discipline, enthusiasm and a hunger for success. Originally a tough defender, history was made at full forward as the superb athlete with a powerful mark and wonderful disposal bagged a career total of 692 goals during a golden club era. Team of the year six times, RFL season record of 111 goals and coached five flags in a row.

Rudy van der Biezen (Barmera-Monash)

Natural talent with a high skill level to the fore in a variety of smaller man positions. Clever and courageous. Chosen 13 times in the team of the year and always polled well in the Whillas Medal.

HALF FORWARD

Allen Goldfinch (Loxton)

Eminent player in a variety of positions, especially centre. Premiership playing coach and more coaching successes followed after retirement.



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Loxton North - 1979 Premiers

Bob Proud (Loxton) (c)

Peerless half forward and occasional ruckman, won consecutive Whillas Medals after returning from North Adelaide where he became a state player. Captained combined teams a record 20 times. The inspirational left footer was brilliant and elusive with a great mark and disposal.

Grant Foley (Berri/Renmark)

Equally at home at centre, on the ball or in the forward lines, the stylish mover exuded class and had wonderful skills. The Whillas Medallist led the UMFL to victory in the 1970 SA country championships.

CENTRE

Terry Fisher (Berri/Barmera-Monash)

The talented, dashing, dynamic and inspirational centreman clinched two Whillas Medals early in his career with the Demons. He resurrected his career by changing clubs and completed 280 games that included many personal and team achievements.

Trevor Gill (Renmark)

Supremely talented, polished and dexterous. A host of club awards came his way during a magnificent 285-game career. Club captaincy, coaching roles and state country representation for the triple Whillas Medallist. The super centreman is revered as one of the greats.

Matthew Schutz (Loxton)

Courageous wingman with blistering

pace. Hard at the body and ball. Best on ground in the 1996 grand final victory. Periods of captain and playing coach. Chosen nine times in the team of the year. Generally regarded as one of the best ever Tigers.

HALF BACK

Craig Griffiths (Waikerie) (vc)

Superb utility player and a daring, inspirational leader with splendid skills. Triple Whillas Medallist, excellent record as an astute playing coach. SA country representative. Non-playing coach of the victorious 2008 zone side in the country carnival.

Fred Proud (Loxton)

Equally dynamic at centre half back or full forward. He captained club and representative teams with distinction. A Whillas Medallist.

Harold Oliver (Lyrup/Berri)

Captained Lyrup to the first Murray Football Association title in 1909. Generally played in key positions or ruck for Berri and Port Adelaide. Regarded as among the best ever footballers in South Australia.

BACK

Glenn Millard

(Barmera-Monash/Renmark)

Well built, athletic and gifted. A potent force usually positioned at centre half forward or in the ruck. Triple best on ground awards in grand finals. Winner of the Whillas Medal, playing coach of

Renmark in its 1990 premiership.

Steve Rollins (Loxton)

Highly rated full back. Steadfast, safe hands and a great ability to rebound strongly with accurate disposal. Five times named in the team of the year.

Allen 'Frosty' Kroemer (Loxton)

Robust back pocket. Fearless and uncompromising, noted for his fierce tackling and attack on the ball.

RUCK

Malcolm Hill (Barmera-Monash/Berri)

Powerful, intelligent ruckman with great hand and foot skills. Had an enormous influence on his teammates. Playing coach in a golden era at Berri. Valuable contributor in premierships with Hawthorn and Sturt.

Adrian Jolly (Loxton)

Outstanding forward and ruckman with surprising pace and agility. An inspiring leader as captain and coach. In the top echelon of all time, he was the first to win three Whillas Medals.

Bill Harris (Berri)

Wonderful rover with an uncanny ability to read the ball at ruck contests, to crumb the packs and boot goals. Best afield five times in 26 representative games for the league. Triple Whillas Medallist and a best on ground trophy in the 1955 grand final.

INTERCHANGE

Tony Battams (Loxton North)

Talented and at times a simply brilliant wingman, he was confident, courageous and had impeccable disposal. The club's games record holder with 313.

Jim Milne (Renmark)

Masterful, quick thinking and a slick ball mover. Equally at home in the centre, roving or at half forward. Twice best on ground in a grand final. Regarded as being a talent well ahead of his time.

Ross 'Snow' Lehmann (Waikerie)

High-scoring, accurate full forward, represented the state while at North Adelaide.

Stan Burnett (Waikerie)

Strong and resolute centre half back and excellent centreman. Dual Whillas Medallist.

Craig Wooldridge (Loxton North)

On baller/midfielder/forward. Exquisite skills, fast and elusive, ever dangerous near goal. Played 250 games and among the best ever Panthers. Team of the year six times and a state country representative.

Mac Grummet (Loxton North)

Key position player mainly in defence. A knock ruckman with many attributes, big occasion performer. State country representative three times, twice winning All-Australian selection.

Bill Pontt (Loxton)

Key ruckman/key position forward with strength and class.



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Oarsome Alex's Tokyo calling

August 4, 2021

When Alexander Hill stood on the podium with his Oarsome Foursome teammates last week amid a rousing rendition of Advance Australia Fair, thoughts of home were on his mind.

The new Olympic gold medallist put a smile on every face in the room at the Loxton North Sports Club when the former Panthers junior footballer-turned rowing superstar rang his family – gathered with close friends at the clubrooms – just minutes after the medal ceremony was televised around the world.

"I was super stoked that it coincided with the lockdown ending in SA," Hill told The Murray Pioneer.

"I knew everyone as able to be at the sports club and it was pretty fortunate it did happen that way.

"There's a lot of amazing people back home who are friends and family and I was sure they had the Loxton North Sports Club absolutely pumping.

"I can't wait to head back home, quarantine and celebrate with them all."

Despite the distance and water-tight bubble surrounding the Australian rowing team in the Tokyo Olympic Village, the adulation did flow from home across the globe to the 28-year-old.

"It's such a tight-knit community in Loxton North and it's just amazing to have them backing you," he said.

"You even feel it when you're out there racing..."



Rower Alexander Hill (right) salutes moments after his crew crossed the line to win gold in the men's four at the Tokyo Olympic Games. PHOTO: Rowing Australia

The dual Olympic medallist was the only remaining member of the silver medal winning men's fours team from the Rio Games.

Just minutes before the race former Oarsome Foursome member Nick Green mentioned in the commentary the original Barcelona-Atlanta games crew had decided they were ready to hand over the title to the Tokyo Olympics crew.

Hill felt once the line-up of Jack Hargreaves, Alexander Purnell, Spencer Turrin and himself came together in 2017 the group had the "structure and

personnel," to pull off something special.

"Even to be sitting in that (fours) boat class in Australia is quite prestigious," he said.

"With the Oarsome Foursome legends before us, it is an absolute honour to have been able to achieve what they have achieved.

"And to be the ultimate Olympic champions is a pretty amazing feeling."

Australia had been the bridesmaid to Great Britain at every Olympics since the Sydney Games in 2000.

In Tokyo, the antipodean crew flipped

the script on the Brits, bookending an unforgettable table chapter.

"I suppose you could call it a bit of an Ashes rivalry," Hill said.

"It has always been a hot race between us and the Brits... and some other countries have been in there red-hot throughout the years as well.

"But the Brits have had it on us for the past 26 years.

"Just to be able to bring it home to where we believe it belongs is an amazing feeling."



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‘He belonged to the Riverland’

November 10, 2021

STEPHANIE THOMPSON

IN the days since Russell Ebert’s death on Friday, the footy champion has belonged to Waikerie, Loxton and even Berri – but as eldest brother Bill puts it, “he belonged to the Riverland”.

After a battle with leukaemia, the South Australian football great died on Friday, aged 72.

Bill said his younger brother, who will be forever known as an Aussie rules legend, would be dearly missed.

“He’s been an icon of our family,” Bill said this week.

“We’ve always idolised him.”

Born in Berri, Russell was one of six siblings and spent his childhood at Alawoona and Loxton, before working in a bank at Waikerie.

“He was always a Riverland boy... he’d come back every opportunity he got,” Bill said.

“He used to use my houseboat at Christmas and New Year, so that was always booked for him.

“He belonged to the Riverland,

that’s the way I put it.”

Bill said he has fond memories of Russell, forever the courageous one.

“He’d be the one to climb up trees and into the bird nests, stick all the eggs in his mouth so he wouldn’t break them,” he said.

“On the odd occasions, we’d make him laugh and he’d break the eggs and the broken eggs would be in his mouth.

“He was the one that would go up the highest and be the bravest, always.”

After playing for Loxton and Waikerie, Russell made his debut for the Port Adelaide Football Club in the South Australian National Football League (SANFL) in 1968 at the age of 18.

During his time at Port Adelaide, he won a record four Magarey Medals, played 392 games, won three premierships and six best and fairest awards.

Bill said the family is in possession of a special piece of football memorabilia.

“Bruce McAvaney put together a tape of Russ back in his prime and he presented it to Mum,” he said.

“I have that tape.

“He used to do the possible and the impossible on the football field.

“He was an exceptional talent...”

Possessing a humble nature and genuine compassion, Russell was also well-known for his charity work and was a co-founder of Novita’s Mighty River Run.

Bill’s loss will hit home particularly hard tomorrow night.

“For the last 10 years, he has rang me every Thursday night at 6.15pm just to see how I was going,” he said.

The Murray Pioneer understands Russell will be farewelled at Alberton Oval, as per his wishes, on a date to be advised.

Russell is survived by his wife Di and three children, including Tammie, who resides in Loxton.



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