

ASSOCIATION OF GEOTECHNICAL TESTING AUTHORITIES

OCTOBER 2011



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Editor Alan Bartlett

The views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect AGTA policy

A note from the Chairman Paul Coker



As I write this I note that our Conference is almost upon us. So much has been achieved and so much is still to be done. After the angst of the January floods and the postponement of the Conference, I wondered if we were attempting something too big, too soon, given the circumstances. After lots of hard work (by a few), the seemingly impossible is about to happen. All that is needed now is YOU and your attendance. If you haven't heard, better check our web site – FAST. Registrations close 4 October 2011.

I am heartened by the many sponsors and supporters who have come on board so far. At this point there are only three sponsorships left, all trade booths are taken and sponsorship for many other parts of the Conference.

Our theme of "Engaging The Future" has attracted some interesting papers covering the topics of:
 Technical Governance
 Knowledge and Sharing
 Construction Materials Testing – The Next Generation
 Technology and innovation

A Youth Forum is also planned for Day 1 with a report to the Conference on Day 2.

I'm sure that you will find some common ground with other CMT profes-

sionals and take the opportunity to gain new insights into developments in construction testing.

And don't forget the Welcome Reception on Wednesday night – a time to relax.

The Conference Dinner on Thursday night should be an interesting evening with Master of Ceremonies, Noel Sheridan, threatening to spread some "dirt" around.

I write these comments with disappointment, as I will not be able to attend due to a family commitment in England at the time of the Conference. I've no doubt that all will run smoothly under the capable leadership of your executive Committee. Please give your support. (By the way – there is still a need for assistance during the days with session Leaders and general helpers).

Not much else has happened, with Conference arrangements taking so much time. We hope you understand.

On a slightly disappointing note, the last Members' Forum was very poorly attended. The Association is YOUR Association and needs your support to be successful. I ask that you consider ways to be involved in YOUR Association to improve our industry for our members.

I wish you all the best and hope that you enjoy the time of the Conference and gain what is important to you. I also look forward to seeing you at our Annual Meeting, scheduled for Monday 5th December 2011. Details to follow.

Best Wishes

PAUL COKER
CHAIRMAN



Australian Conference of Construction Materials

Time is running out for you to register to attend the second annual conference of the CMT industry. VCMLA hosted the first in Melbourne in 2006 and it was a cracker, but we at AGTA are sure we can match or even better it.

We have delegates registered from all over Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and several coming across the ditch from the shaky isles. There will be representatives for the state roads authorities, geotechnical consultancies, the asphalt, concrete and extractive industries.

Papers and demonstrations to be presented cover topics as diverse as new testing equipment, laboratory information management systems, sustainability, a different approach to equipment maintenance, workplace health and safety, training and materials specifications.

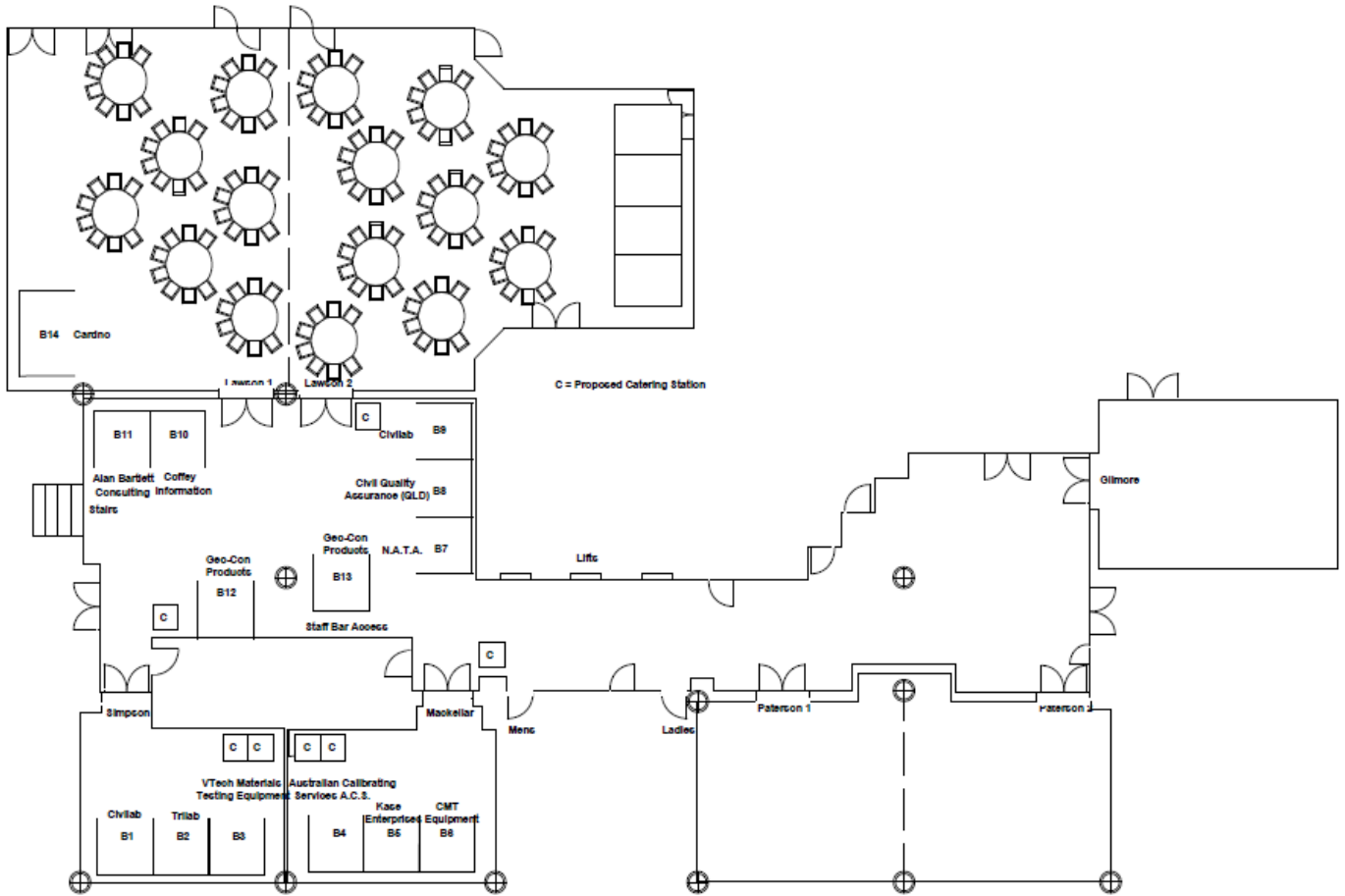
The Youth Forum will canvas the expectations and hopes of the younger delegates for the future of the industry. If you are under 35 come and have your say—if you are older come and listen. Come and meet with old friends and meet interesting people who work in your industry.

This is a truly international event; there will be presenters from





CMT Conference Floor Plan







Obituary

Eric Hanley WATSON

Eric with his twin brother Brian was a soil tester who worked for the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission during the sixties, seventies and eighties on a succession of major dam and irrigation projects.

The Watson family migrated to Australia from Manchester when Eric was a child. Eric's father was a baker and Eric served an apprenticeship in their bakery in Mulgildie near Monto. The early mornings did not suit Eric so he applied to join I&WSC. He was accepted and went to the Materials Laboratory at Rocklea for an intensive training course in soils, concrete and aggregates sampling and testing.

On completing the course he was transferred to Fairbairn Dam near Emerald during its construction. At that time, Fairbairn was the largest water storage project in Queensland. In fact, when at full supply level the water extends to the horizon. Originally built to supply the booming beef industry, by the time it was completed the industry had withered away. However, the canola, cotton and mining industries have been users of the available water.

From Fairbairn, Eric was transferred to Monduran Dam near Gin Gin, another earth and rockfill dam, second only to Fairbairn in capacity. Monduran was subsequently renamed Fred Haigh Dam in honour of the long-standing I&WSC Commissioner, although the lake it formed retained the name Lake Monduran.

From there he was transferred to Wivenhoe Dam near Fernvale, continuing sampling and testing soils, concrete and aggregates. He also would have worked on the Wivenhoe Power Station and Splyard Creek Dam which were part of the same project.

In 1979 he was transferred to Cania Dam near Monto which was then starting construction as my Senior Soil Tester. I learnt a lot about field testing on a major project from Eric and he and his family became good friends with me and mine. I was transferred back to Rocklea at the end of 1980 to resume the role of instrumentation technician when my successor in the role resigned from the Commission. Eric continued on as OIC Laboratory until completion of construction.

From Cania, Eric transferred to Clare Weir near Ayr in North Queensland but now as a construction foreman. This was natural career progression in the Commission, from laboratory to construction supervision.

Eric retired in 1990 when the Commission underwent one of its major downsizings and purchased a house at Thangool near Biloela. He passed away on 17th January this year. He is survived by his widow Nola, a stepson, two sons and three daughters.

Alan Bartlett

On A Lighter Note....

One day an old **German Shepherd** starts chasing rabbits and before long, discovers that he's lost. Wandering about, he notices a panther heading rapidly in his direction with the intention of having lunch. The old German Shepherd thinks, "Oh, oh! I'm in deep s*** now!"

Noticing some bones on the ground close by, he immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat. Just as the panther is about to leap, the old **German Shepherd** exclaims loudly, "Boy, that was one delicious panther! I wonder, if there are any more around here?"

Hearing this, the young panther halts his attack in mid-strike, a look of terror comes over him and he slinks away into the trees.

"Whew!," says the panther, "That was close! That old German Shepherd nearly had me!"

Meanwhile, a squirrel who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the panther. So, off he goes.

The squirrel soon catches up with the panther, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the panther.

The young panther is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here, squirrel, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine!"

Now, the old German Shepherd sees the panther coming with the squirrel on his back and thinks, "What am I going to do now?," but instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet, and just when they get close enough to hear, the old German Shepherd says...

"Where's that squirrel? I sent him off an hour ago to bring me another panther!"

Moral of this story...

Don't mess with the **old dogs**... Age and skill will always overcome youth and treachery! Bulls**t and brilliance only come with age and experience.

If you don't send this to five 'old' friends right away, there will be five fewer people laughing in the world.

Of course, I am in no way insinuating that you are old, just 'youthfully challenged'.

You did notice the size of the print, didn't you?