



The Dambusters



Newsletter of the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group June 2008

From the President

Thanks to all who supported Steve Posselt's epic kayak trip and who turned up at the various locations along the way. Steve's journey generated significant publicity about the stupidity of the Government's plan to build the dam and included excellent coverage on Brisbane TV news on several occasions during the four weeks.

There are several events planned for the next month or so, the details of some of which are in other parts of this newsletter. Probably the most important is the State Labor Conference Rally to be held on 21st June on the Gold Coast. We are seeking to get a very significant turnout for this event and expect good support from Brisbane and Gold Coast people who care about the rights of individuals in the community to demonstrate their opposition to ill considered, politically motivated Government decisions. A good turnout will send a strong message to both State & Federal Labor that we don't want this dam because there are cheaper and more reliable ways of supplying Brisbane's water needs.

WE NEED YOU TO SUPPORT THIS IMPORTANT INITIATIVE!

Be warned however that we may not have a permit for this march and protest

and may be harassed by officials who just don't want to know us. BUS AND CAR POOL TRANSPORT WILL BE PROVIDED. More details will be available shortly.

Despite some recent publicity that may have indicated otherwise, the Gympie Regional Council remains opposed to the dam. Mayor Ron Dyne has stated publicly on several occasions his personal opposition and is a strong supporter of the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group. As decision time gets closer you can expect continuing misleading information from the Government as it attempts to divide the community. What this shows is that they are truly worried about the outcome - and so they should be! We are two years older and two years wiser now and we won't be swayed from our opposition by plans worked up by the government spin doctors.

We and many Australian and International expert groups and individuals have provided the Federal Government with compelling reasons as to why this dam proposal must never be allowed to proceed. If the Federal Environment Minister's decision is made on the basis of technical and scientific arguments the dam will not be approved.

Kevin Ingersole

It's Time To Rally

By John Porter

The Old State Conference of the Old Labor Party will be held on June 21, 22 at the Gold Coast Convention Centre.

This is a call to arms. We must be there... they must see us ... they must hear our voice.

In 2 years we've done hard yards - thousands of hours of painstaking research, hundreds of meetings, thousands of submissions to the EIS, thousands of letters to politicians both Federal and State, marches, rallies, letters to editors, days of phone calls, trips to Canberra, conversations in pubs and on the streets, and the list goes on.

It has dominated every day of our lives since Beattie came to Gympie and told us it was beyond his control - crying tears into his onion soaked hankie.

Continued over...

Inside this edition:

Steve Posselt's reflects on his epic adventure

It's Time to Rally - ALP State Labor Conference June 21

Quote of the week - page 4

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN CREATING WORLD'S LARGEST COD FISH

Join internationally-renowned artist Jorge Pujol to create an exciting new powerful illuminated artwork:

DOK'KU

Butchulla (local Aboriginal language) name for Cod Fish

WHEN: SUNDAY 08 JUNE

WHERE: TANDORA HOMESTEAD

(turn off Hervey Bay-Maryborough highway at Dundathu into Prawle Road and follow the signs to the banks of the Mary River.)

HOW: ARRIVE 9 AM

to help create a Cod with 4,000 candles

ARRIVE 4 PM to watch the candle lighting ceremony at Sunset

WHY: TELL THE WORLD YOU CARE

about the fragile ecosystems of our Mary River and Great Sandy Strait

ENTRY FREE ! Includes Entertainment !

Bring a picnic lunch. Sausage sizzle also available.

Enquiries: Phone Elisabeth

Berry on **4125 2215**

It's Time To Rally...

We have experienced countless hours of confusion, misery, and desperation as our communities have been wrenched apart by our own Government, families torn asunder and businesses destroyed. We've been pushed around firstly by Qld's Department of Natural Resources and then by a specially set up Government Company QWI Pty Ltd who have used bucket-loads of our Government money against us. *We're still standing!*

We have the special Community Futures Task Force set up with more bucket loads of money to offer our communities this and that for the future when in fact they preside over the dismantling of our communities and their replacement with new ones. We say no to boiled lollies from strangers! *And we are STILL standing!*

We are still standing because we have a body of independent local and international experts behind us - in every field from conservation to business, from engineers to farmers, and from social scientists to experienced hydrologists.

And we are still standing because the people have spoken too. In what became a referendum on the dam issue, just 400 people in the new Gympie City Council electorate voted for the pro-dam candidate. By contrast, the Qld Gov't, who make decisions on a "feasible or not" basis have their own experts, ones whose bank accounts brim with our dollars. They are the mercenaries in this war, the pariahs of their profession, paid with our money to start with a finished dam and to tweak the figures to justify it.

Their hydrologists count the huge one in ten year flood volumes as available water for the droughts. Their dam will not stop this water.

Their environmentalists approve fish ladders, turtle ladders, and lungfish aquariums that ignore basic principles of elementary population viability analysis.

Their economists count hundreds of jobs that will last a couple of years, but ignore the many existing jobs threatened or already lost, and the hundreds of future jobs that the area could promote and maintain forever if the Mary Valley is used responsibly.

Their social workers tell us that they are here to help our communities when their brief from the Gov't is to help us make way for the dam.

So what do we want to tell Qld Labor at their Convention at the Gold Coast?

We want to tell them that there is evidence amassed that proves conclusively that a diverse set of non-rainfall dependent solutions, such as recycling, storm water harvesting, domestic tanks, retrofitting water saving devices, and desalination will supply Brisbane and SEQ with water, cheaper and at 100% reliability!

We want them to overturn Peter Beattie's decision to build a dam at Traveston Crossing - because it is clear that it cannot supply the promised volumes of water in a drought - when SEQ needs it most!

It is also clear that just one desalination plant can replace this proposed dam - the same output - cheaper, both in both setup costs, and supply costs, and 100% reliable - even in a drought. And it can be run by sources of renewable energy. WA already has a desalination plant run by a wind farm.

In 2006, Peter Beattie said, "Believe me ...if desalination was the answer we would do it."

We want to say, "Hey Anna, forget yesterdays man and his dinosaur technology, THE WORLD is embracing desalination!"

The local boy Kevin Rudd will be at the Convention. We want to speak to Kevin, Penny Wong, and Peter Garrett, because they have already demonstrated their intention to salvage that great Aussie icon the Murray River.

And we want to ask them, "Why Murray the Mary in the first place?"

We want them to see that Qld's beautiful Mary River, full of creatures not found anywhere else in the world, is a working river, but that even now it is working beyond its capacity. Why risk it when better options have been demonstrated?

Qld can save and improve its already scarce productive farmlands that provide our city folk with nourishment.

Qld can save the lungfish, the Mary river turtles and the cod, species unique to this river.

Qld can save the communities of people, their jobs and the towns that depend on them.

Qld can save the Great Sandy, the fisheries, the recreational fishing areas of Hervey Bay that are so important to our city holiday makers.

Qld can save all this for the cheaper cost of just one desal plant that will never fail!

And by doing this Qld can even save money!"



So we want Anna to grab for Qld the wonderful opportunity that she has staring her in the face.

It's time for our group and our supporters to sacrifice again, to push forward together again like we did in the Gympie rallies, the march on the Qld Labor Convention in 2006, and the EIS submissions.

We are enlisting the support of many groups, conservation groups, political groups, church groups, youth groups, water supply groups, cattlemen, farmers, groups at the Gold Coast and the south side of Brisbane. We will be approaching every group who made a submission to the Senate enquiry.

This is a big ask. It will be a big day.

Planning is at an early stage so this is notice of our intent. Yes we will hire buses to get you there. But if you don't like the idea of a bus trip we ask you to get a car full of friends. Make it a day out. There is a beautiful park and the beach close by. Make it a hoot! Start organising your little group now. Let us know - email or phone.

You may think you are just one and that you will not be missed. You will be missed. The power of one a hundred times over multiplies to become the power of a thousand.

Peter Garrett, the Federal Minister for the Environment is about to receive the Qld State Gov't Environmental Impact Study, on which he can refuse the dam. We are amassed behind him, watching him, as he makes his decision. We want him to see us, and Mr Rudd, you are here to help remember!

ITS TIME TO RALLY!!

Why is a Protest Rally against the proposed Traveston Dam desperately important RIGHT NOW?

The Federal Gov't is about to receive the Qld Gov't's Environmental Impact Statement for its review under the EPBC Act.

The Qld Labor Party is holding its State Convention at the Gold Coast Convention Centre on June 21. Kevin "I'm here to help" Rudd will be there. We will assemble at Cascade Gardens Broadbeach to march at 11.00am

Don't Murray the Mary!!

***Have picnic in the park, or hit Jupiters afterwards!!!
Make it a day out with friends – our bus or your own carload!!!***

Further details ring Rally Organisers - John Porter 5485 5255, 0427 476 488; Lyndall Ensbey 5484 3697, 0427167329; Kent Hutton 5482 8830, 0409 064 885; or the Kandanga Info Centre 5488 4800.

Expo Zaragoza 2008 Spain, June 14 - September 14

One of 21 International case studies, "Mary River Catchment – Traveston Dam Proposal" will be on display at the Expo and features Kandanga locals in front of the pub and at the cemetery.

Glenda Pickersgill, Vice President of the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group, is travelling to the Expo armed to the hilt with facts and figures on the social and environmental impacts of the proposed dam to share with the international audience.



Take fight to Brisbane urges Steve

By Steve Posselt

After the initial excitement of the launch, my trip settled into its usual hard work. The weather was great and both paddling and walking was a pleasure.

At the Mid-Brisbane River, between Kholo and Wivenhoe, I was dismayed to see that the water hyacinth is worse than ever. This is a real indictment on the government and the water commission, and an indicator of what would be in store for the Mary River.

The Conondales were magnificent although I doubt very much whether I want to pull a kayak over them again. I stood with one foot in the Mary River catchment and one in the Somerset dam catchment highlighting that they have the same weather systems.

I understand more about the Mary and what a dam would mean. More importantly I saw the effect on the people. It would be hard not to be touched by that. Perhaps the most telling comment was that if they could see it was necessary, if it really was a good thing to do, then that person would just sell out, albeit sadly. It is the tragedy of the folly that gets to most.

My main aim was to help lift the spirits of the people who have conducted a Herculean effort over the past two years. It seems that I may have done that. Given the novelty of the trip we managed to attract media attention from Bundaberg to Bribie and nationally, but Brisbane was elusive with the exception of channel 7.

It is time to fight. The fight must be taken to Brisbane. People in Brisbane must be confronted with the truth. The gov't has moved from rational to irrational thinking. Rationality will therefore not win. How you fight, what you do, will depend on how much you value this fight.

Thank you to all the wonderful people who helped and supported me. Good luck with everything in the future. I will continue to fight with you in whatever way I can.



Right foot flows to Somerset Dam,

A busy few weeks on the Mary

By Ian Mackay

With our second Flotilla and Steve Posselt's "Don't Murray the Mary" trip, the Mary's been quite in the news throughout April and May.

Steve's launch and return was on the tele in Brisbane and vision used to promo news events in the Wide Bay on on Channel 10 who ran a terrific interview with Steve Posselt and Kevin Ingersole on their new Sunday morning current affairs program. Countless newspaper articles have been published in local, regional and the state's newspapers and comments and opinions published in the Letters to the Editor and in online forums.

Professor Jenny Stewart has written a great piece on Traveston Dam. It's well worth a read for a great overview of the last 2 years. She really strikes at the heart of our issue. Find it at www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=7340&page=0

Speaking of excellent articles, Peter Meredith has produced a very thorough article, "To Paradise and Beyond", in the latest *Griffith Review*. Peter will be part of a panel, which includes Professor Ian Lowe, speaking at the Noosa Long Weekend in early July. Their topic "Cities on the Edge" will include discussion of Traveston Dam.

The Save the Mary website has been experiencing an increase in visitations, with a great proportion being from overseas. In April, 35% of information downloaded from the site went to the US. This pattern continued during May with many additional downloads going to Europe.

Steve Posselt will be back up this way soon, speaking at SCEC's World Environment day, Saturday May 31 at the University of the Sunshine Coast. The day runs from 9am till 4pm with speakers, stalls and entertainment. Save the Mary will be in attendance.

Farther from home, but of no less relevance, Federal Minister for Water, Senator Penny Wong gave an excellent address to the Australian Water Summit late last month.. A copy of her speech can be downloaded from www.environment.gov.au/minister/wong/2008/pubs/sp20080429.pdf

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Quote of the week

"Queensland is going through the biggest water infrastructure reforms in its history. Right now, the Qld gov't is investing billions of dollars in making sure that all Queenslanders have a water future—not just a few Old'ers in a few National Party seats. If you listened to the member for Wide Bay... he has divvied up Qld into a few family farms and he makes all his decisions... based on an issue's impact on a few family farms".

Mr Ripoll MP for Oxley, Hansard, 26 May, 2008

**LET'S EDUCATE
Mr RIPOLL MP for Oxley in
Brisbane.**

Email:

Bernie.Ripoll.MP@aph.gov.au

Or write to:

Mr Bernie Ripoll, MP
PO Box 6022

House of Representatives

The Save the Mary the River website has great gift ideas.

NO DAM merchandise
- now for sale online!

click here to enter.



activism in shopping

And you can purchase and pay online!

www.savethemaryriver.com