

# PANORAMA

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS  
OF BATHURST TEACHERS' COLLEGE  
**CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY**  
ISSUE NO. 28, WINTER 2015



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT AT THE 2015 AGM

The Bathurst Teachers' College Alumni Association is a relatively small organisation overall, but is one that is remarkably vibrant and surprisingly active. The membership of this association comprises a solid group of interested colleagues (mostly ex-teachers) who try to maintain their affiliations with the old BTC with a variety of activities. Over a period of some 19 years around 4000 students graduated from the college. This group stretches back to those who started teacher training college in 1951 (the well named Pioneers) through to those who completed their training in 1969.

The main purposes of the Association at the moment are threefold. These include communication about and promotion of fellowship activities such as year meetings and reunions; provision of a scholarship to assist a worthy student, with a family connection to a BTC graduate, in his/her studies in an educational or other course at a CSU campus; and thirdly some significant fund raising activities.

The success of these three purposes relies on effective communication, teamwork and a strong willingness to volunteer time and labour. The alumni of BTC seem to provide these elements in 'bucket loads'. This is a really admirable situation for such an association to prosper, as BTCAA does. However because of the 'ageing' in inverted commas (and certainly not derogatively) of early graduates, and a lesser involvement of later graduates there are some challenges ahead in keeping the association alive.

Early last year (31 May) a presentation of the BTCAA Scholarship was made to Lanae Robinson to help her studies in a Bachelor of Animal Science at the Wagga Campus of CSU. Lanae comes from Jamberoo and her grandmother was a graduate of the 1955-56 cohort at BTC. Lanae has done everyone proud in her 2014 coursework with an outstanding year that saw 5 credits, 2 Distinctions and a High Distinction over 2 semesters of course work. A

great achievement! I was able to visit this Ceremony in Wagga and present 'our' scholarship to Lanae. All up 92 scholarships, provided or sponsored by local businesses, community and service groups, were presented at this ceremony. As you can see it is a 'big deal' and very well supported.

The ability to award this scholarship has come from a fund built up over the years and supplemented each year by donations that are canvassed through past students with a donation request in our magazine *Panorama* and with other activities. The aim is to have a perpetual fund in which the interest earned is sufficient to fund the scholarship each year. We are still heading towards this target.

Over a number of years since the formation of the Association in 2001 we have raised funds for this scholarship largely through Open Garden days in spring in Katoomba. The garden involved belongs to Gail Metcalfe (60-61 cohort). In 2014 the Open Day was held in autumn around Anzac Day and the colours to be seen in this garden were simply superb. The weather wasn't the best but visitors still came and a significant amount of money was raised. Special thanks must go to Gail and her family for their generosity in making the garden available for such fund raising purposes. However we cannot rely on

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this source of fundraising to be always available to the association as it involves quite an amount of work for Gail, her family members and a number of association members. BTCAA committee members and other volunteers act as guides, gate keepers, provide morning and afternoon teas and generally assist Gail with her Open Day

Other activities in the year have mainly centred on meetings and reunions. During 2014 the Pioneers got together with a trip to Coonabarabran. The 64-65 group had a very successful and well attended 50th reunion since starting college in Bathurst at the end of February. The 63-64 group had another such reunion in mid February. This year sees the Pioneers having their 64th anniversary reunion in Canberra. There is also a reunion of 58-59-60 graduates in Bathurst as well as a BIG 50 for the 65-66 group in a few weeks, again in Bathurst. That these reunions and get togethers happen is testament to the collegiality, the familial connection these people have, all emanating from that Alma Mater Bathurst Teachers' College.

A unique and significant event during 2014 involved the establishment and official opening of a permanent memorabilia display in Bathurst in October. With considerable help from Associate Professor Jane Mitchell and support from Col Sharpe of CSU, this display is now housed in a chrome, glass and LED lighted cabinet in the Administration area at CSU. It is essentially a display of teaching resources and 'artifacts' and provides present day students with an insight into how things were done before the arrival of the Internet, Google and other resource oriented websites.

Much of the information in this report is published in more detail in the biannual alumni magazine *Panorama*. This publication, put together so efficiently by a committee led by Carole Goodwin, is greatly valued by ex-students as a source of information, reports on events, recollections from colleagues about things of interest and a kind of advance diary of the year's activities. However it is a costly activity to print and mail out (more than \$1200) and is putting pressure on the funding the Association has or is able to raise.

We try to cover the cost of these two publications by seeking donations from the graduates of BTC, providing a return guarantee of two 'hard', mailed out copies of *Panorama* during the year. The magazine is also available on-line via the CSU website. Part of the funds donated also goes into the scholarship pool and help with other costs.

We also try to organise some social get-togethers for committee members. During the last year we had a very pleasant luncheon at Watson's Bay, and another one mid year at Woy Woy. Early this year we had a well attended luncheon at

Cronulla RSL. We try to make use of the \$2.50 travel concession available to Seniors!

We would dearly love to have some more people join our committee and get involved with the activities. There are just four meetings a year and there is a number of activities into which fresh input and support would be beneficial. Have a think about whether you may be able to spare and/or donate a few hours of your time to the activities that have been described.

The BTCAA is a unique group covering ex-students from 1951 through to 1969. I think you can readily see that it is an active, self supporting association that serves its members well and does other beneficial and historic things. I am proud to have been its President over the last year. I commend this President's report to you all.

WAYNE BENSLEY  
PRESIDENT

[wrbensley@hotmail.com](mailto:wrbensley@hotmail.com)

#### **GUEST SPEAKER PETER WILKINSON**

With one person on *Twitter*, a handful on *Facebook* or *LinkedIn* and about half the room comfortable on email, it was not a technically advanced group gathered to hear the guest speaker, Peter Wilkinson. Peter, on the other hand, after completing his degree in Rural Science at the University of New England, has spent much of his career in the media.

Securing his first job as a roving reporter with the iconic *This Day Tonight* on ABC TV, he has since worked on *Four Corners*, *Sixty Minutes* and *A Current Affair*. He was working overseas when his last media scoop took place; at *The World Trade Centre* in September 2001.

Peter Wilkinson was instrumental in having Peter Greste released from an Egyptian gaol, working with the Department of Foreign Affairs, and with a lot of pressure placed on the Egyptian President. This operation was absolutely top secret with not a word released until Peter Greste landed on Cyprus.

How was Peter Wilkinson involved in such a high profile, sensitive operation? When he gave up journalism he started the Wilkinson Foundation which works with families and "companies" who have people in crisis overseas; what he calls Crisis PR.

The most important thing to help him and his team is that the "family", whether it is relatives or company top executives, is agreed on each step. This was something special about the Greste family; they were united in their approach.

Peter speaks of two groups that his foundation helps: Families and Companies. The former is self-explanatory but the latter includes Government departments, universities, mining and, pharmaceutical companies – all with different

cultures, but all with an external reason that they are in trouble.

Peter found that companies are probably more difficult to deal with than families as most managers are reluctant to appear on the media. Government areas particularly avoid publicity as the perceived opinion is that it serves to exacerbate a difficult situation rather than be helpful. Peter usually has concerns about the internal communications of a company so likes to sound out the attitudes of the employees.

Talking of communication, Peter went on to explore the role of the media which he sees as threefold::

1. Present the news;
2. Provide editorial views;
3. Commentary.

He agrees that it has a tendency to hyperbole and uses yellow journalism to do so; e.g. a current affairs panel programme sets out to create trouble by seeking opinions from both sides of the issue, which is good journalism, but they find people with the most extreme views.

As for social media, it exacerbates a situation even more and relies on one individual being more extreme than the previous one – more sensational, more dramatic. On one level, Peter fears, social media could make a government unstable. The answer is to wind down the media, an opinion also expressed by Malcolm Turnbull on Q & A.

Is the problem in the way society is heading – the domino effect of aggression? Is the answer for level-minded people to spend more time online? join social media?

However, many people are reluctant to do so because of a perceived suspension of ethics by the media, e.g. phone tapping which, according to Peter, is a grey area and apparently industries live or die by its use. It may be considered borderline but markets are competitive!

What of the media commentators who cross the line? The loudest noise wins! They will fight on even though they know they're wrong.

Peter opines that, although Facebook and Twitter might attract extreme contributions at first, later they move towards the middle. Someone begins a conversation with extreme views about, Example: (advantages of makes of cars). The voice of the middle will ultimately normalise the content.

Peter gave us a wonderful insight into the work of the mediators and the media. He believes his work with the foundation is PR in critical situations. As for the media, the descriptions of some of the strategies used could make us wonder if they contributed to his giving up journalism.

At the end of Peter's address it was not clear how many more of us would be joining the

*Twittersphere*, but he certainly provided us with an informative and entertaining view of the role of the media today.

DENISE GRAMSIE  
PANORAMA COMMITTEE



*Peter is seen here on the right, with Wayne Bensley and Committee Member Val Woodward*

### **REMEMBER TO REGISTER YOUR EMAIL WITH CSU**

For Alumni who have received this edition as a print version, please make sure your email is up to date with CSU by registering online at [www.csu.edu.au/alumni](http://www.csu.edu.au/alumni). This enables you to receive Alumni news that becomes current in between issues. Remember that CSU's *Free Member Benefit Programme* is available to you.

### **ARE YOU A FINANCIAL MEMBER OF THE BTCAA?**

The annual subscription of \$25 to the BTCAA. for 2015 is now due. As well as including 2 print copies of the magazine, the funds contribute to the running of our association. Please use the form on page 11 to give your financial support.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT AT THE AGM**

This is the tenth annual treasurer's report I have presented My how time flies. I seem to remember saying I would do this job for a few years. Be that as it may, during those years the Association has grown and undertaken several major projects.

We negotiated and contributed \$10 000 to the erection of the *Water Feature/Sculpture* which replaced the old *Fish Pond* that stood in the

centre of the quadrangle of the old lecture block. The new sculpture stands in the Alumni Common which is bounded by Heffron House, the Women's Dormitory, the Ponton Theatre and the current Faculty of Education.

A very successful Tenth Anniversary celebratory Luncheon of the Association was held in Parliament House in Sydney in 2012.

A decision was made to boost the funds set aside for the \$2,500 Scholarship which is awarded each year to a student at Charles Sturt University. Our aim was to increase the reserve to over \$30,000 and thus maintain a balance to ensure the continuation of the project. Consequently we have conducted three Open Garden weekends over the past three years. These openings have indeed not only boosted the funds for the scholarship but have been a great social success with people enjoying afternoon tea in the garden and catching up with friends. As of this week the balance of the fund is \$36,840.55. Congratulations. A special thank you is extended to those alumni who have so generously donated to the appeal with each production of *Panorama*.

Another significant decision was made for the Association to take over the production, printing and posting of *Panorama*. This has facilitated the development of our own data base



of those alumni who still have fond memories of their years at BTC and want to stay in touch. We have also been able to significantly reduce the cost involved with the printing and posting of *Panorama*.

I am pleased to report that the balance sheet this year sees us in a much healthier position with the net balance for the BTCAA being \$4,490.

56.

I wish to thank Mr Ron Jones for his continued helpful support in acting as honorary auditor. Thank you to the members of the Association and all those alumni who faithfully support the work we do.

GAIL METCALFE, TREASURER

### THE RELIGIOUS CENTRE – CSU BATHURST



This is my recollection of the story of The Cowshed and the beautiful altar which is in it.

The Cowshed (1805), part of the Bathurst Experiment Farm complex of buildings, is now used as the Religious Centre at CSU.

The wooden altar was originally in the chapel of *St Michael's Children's Home* built at Kelso and served as a memorial to Prisoners of War in World War II. The front of the altar, depicting a POW camp in the Malaysian jungle, was carved by Lorenz Otto.

Harry Thorpe, himself a former POW in Malaysia, was the instigator of the whole project when he was attached to the Bathurst Anglican Diocese after the war. I attended the opening of the home in May, 1957, when I was teaching at Cowra.

The Pioneers (1951-52) of Bathurst Teachers' College as part of their 40<sup>th</sup> reunion celebration, held a thanksgiving service at The Cowshed. The altar was moved onto the verandah as there were too many of us to fit inside the little building.

I don't know why or when the altar was transferred

to CSU. I understand the Home is now used for another purpose.

Incidentally Lorenz Otto and possibly his son sculpted the relief in the Trinity Chapel of St John's Anglican Church in Cowra which was built in the 1950s.

In the hurly-burly of life today it would, I'm sure, be beneficial to have a Quiet Room for reflection, meditation and prayer. It is to be hoped that the building and altar will be part of the Bathurst Campus of CSU for many years to come so that future generations can ponder on the history of the building and the significance of the carving on the wooden altar.

HELEN EGAN (LONG) 1951-52

*Pictured: Pioneers Peter Connolly (left) and John Hangar with CSU Chaplain 25/10/1992*



ALTAR CARVING (DETAIL)

### **BTC PIONEER LECTURER'S WONDERFUL ACHIEVEMENT**

Frank Atchinson was Lecturer in English for the Pioneer Student group 1951-52 and onwards until 1955. The Pioneer Group has been very special – moulded together in those awkward first years when college facilities were still being developed.

Frank and his wife Jean attached happily into the Pioneer group and have attended the majority of our frequent reunions. He really is a BTC Pioneer. It's always been a pleasure to visit Frank and Jean over the years. He has never changed – he continues as a loving and caring husband and father to his four sons and families who have religiously enjoyed the family fish and chips togetherness weekly over the decades.

Jean is currently under full time care and her sons visit and give her lunch every day and Frank attends every night, at the Care home in Tuncurry close to their home.

Frank and Jean have given the Pioneers an outstanding and loving relationship – they have always been in the top drawer to us and no doubt many others. Frank's life has been full of achievement and in his 94<sup>th</sup> year seems just as he was in 1951-52. He has been a keen sportsman and more recent achievements do him proud – Olympic Torch Bearer; Over Seventies Winner Sydney to Surf race to mention just two.

Pioneers well remember a simple spot of humour from the hockey field in 1952 when Frank called out to one of his sons, and the famous answer came back for all to smile about and remember with loving humour – "Here I are, Daddy."

With congratulations and much love to you Frank and Jean, from all your Pioneers.

GRAHAME HOWARD 1951/52

*The following article is printed with permission from the Editor of "The Great Lakes Advocate", Janine Watson, whose parents also studied at BTC under Frank in 1955. It was contributed by Frank's son, Carl of the "Here I are, Daddy", fame.*

### **70 Years of Marriage for the Atchinsons**

Frank Atchinson was eighteen and teaching less than a year when he was appointed to Upper Dingo Creek School in 1941.

On July 4 he called at Owen Lewis's dairy farm to pick up the school keys and Owen's daughter Jean, aged 17 answered the door. So started a relationship that now celebrates 70 years of marriage.

Frank was from generations of coal miners near Kurri Kurri and before that in northern England but did well at school and became a teacher.

Jean was Owen and Angus Lewis's only daughter with roots in the Manning going back to 1838. She was an active farm girl and keen horsewoman whose education was completed by her mum, a 1919 war bride from London.

Frank taught at Upper Dingo Creek for a year before heading to war where he served as a beach commander in allied landings from Rabaul to Brunei and a lieutenant aboard troop ships. On leave home he and Jean were engaged on April 4, 1944 and married at Wingham Court House on January 7, 1945.

After the war they started life in Sydney sharing houses in Narrabeen, Collaroy and Curl Curl during which time three sons Carl, Bruce and Greg were born. Frank taught at Freshwater and Glebe and went to Sydney University at night for his first degree.

In 1951 Frank went to the new Bathurst Teachers' College as an English lecturer. He and Jean picked fruit and vegetables, Jean worked in the post office and their youngest son, Chris was born. In 1956 Frank became a lecturer at Newcastle Teachers' College and the family spent their weekends in Cubs and Sea Scouts, rock fishing and swimming. Jean also worked in the post office and school canteen, ferried cubs about and untangled fishing lines while Frank studied for his Masters' Degree.

After a year at Wagga Wagga Frank started as District School Inspector of Schools at Albury in 1962. Over the next 20 years Frank was a *DI* at Albury, Taree, Newcastle and finally Taree again before retiring in 1982. Given Jean's family ties and the pair's long association with the Manning Great Lakes it was not surprising that they retired to Tuncurry. Their four sons have each married Manning girls and all the families live close by.

Frank and Jean made a life in retirement in Tuncurry and have been active, especially as



members of the Tuncurry Dunecare group since its inception. Frank has been a keen runner, winning the over 70 section of the City to Surf and was an Olympic torchbearer in 2000.

On Saturday January 17, family and friends gathered to celebrate Frank's and Jean's seventy years of marriage at GLAICA where Jean is a resident.

*Then and Now: Frank and Jean at their wedding and at their anniversary 70 years later.*

### **FUNDING . OF STATE SCHOOLS**

*Many years ago, when teaching music throughout the school, I went to a workshop at North Auburn Public school and saw two special things. First, two little girls on some sort of mission, running along holding hands, one very fair with long blond hair, one very brown with curly black hair. Later, the whole school entered the hall for school assembly with scores of ethnic groups represented, where they sang with gusto "Advance Australia Fair". I thought then that this is what public education does best: takes all pupils regardless of class, culture, religion or ability. So how are our NSW public schools faring?*

The NSW Teachers' Federation recently called on all political parties to lift investment in public school capital works and maintenance, pointing out that since 2009 the capital works spending has fallen by 40%. The 2011 Gonski Review found too many public schools were run down, affecting morale and ability to compete with private schools and called for more government investment in public school infrastructure.

Capital expenditure is today at least 40% less than its peak of \$780 billion, with the 2014-15 Federal Government Budget's allocation for public school capital expenditure being a \$21 million cut on the previous year's budget.

The NSW Auditor-General recently found there was a \$548m backlog in public school maintenance.

Perhaps the most telling statistic is from The Greens' analysis which shows that 62 wealthy NSW private schools receive a total of \$270m in

federal and state recurrent funding. While inner Sydney needs new schools, St Catherine's at Waverley has submitted a development application for an aquatic centre, a new state-of-the-art professional grade lyric theatre and a new research centre costed at \$60m, an amount which could certainly replace the ailing public school at Parramatta.

As Ross Gittens, the Economics Editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald* pointed out in an article before the election in March, any argument by the Catholic and Independent schools about shortfalls in NSW Government funding do not take into account the capital funding from the federal government which is a lot more generous than state grants. He questions whether it is reasonable for taxpayers to provide big subsidies towards the building of new facilities that remain the property of the churches or other groups involved.

The education system in NSW has evolved so that there are many alternatives to State-based education, but it is not clear why the State should fund these alternatives to the detriment of its own schools.

CAROLE GOODWIN

*For your thoughts on these or any other issues you wish to raise about education, or to place reunion reports, notices of forthcoming events and articles of general interest please email:*

[carole9999@virginbroadband.com.au](mailto:carole9999@virginbroadband.com.au) or  
[dlcramsie@netspace.net.au](mailto:dlcramsie@netspace.net.au)

### **DIDN'T THEY HAVE A WONDERFUL TIME – 2015 REUNIONS**

**1958 – 1959 – 1960**

**ANNIVERSARY REUNION OF BATHURST TEACHERS' COLLEGE**

**27-28 FEBRUARY 2015**

Ask forty participants of any event, "What happened?" and you'll get forty different versions, but here goes!

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup>** – At around 6pm after a long day's travel for some and a short drive for others, about 40 "more mature" folk gathered at that ever popular watering hole, *The Knickerbocker*. There were delighted greetings and queries of: "Who's that over there, with 'so and so?'" and on no occasion did I hear it said, "You and I look OK, but isn't Harry Dale a train wreck!" So we settled into a lovely evening of camaraderie and reminiscence. When the noise level indoors reached 200 decibels we retreated into the courtyard to enjoy a hearty meal amongst old friends, who were more like family. A very happy first evening!

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>** – After a continental breakfast we took a leisurely stroll around town and marvelled at the growth and improvements. At around 10:30am we met at *The Acropole* for brunch. This haunt was famous for its hot jaffa milkshakes on cold, windy Bathurst evenings but on this occasion most of us settled for breakfast fare, with the more adventurous having waffles and ice cream or Greek salads. More old pals joined us and many tall and true tales were paraded, to great amusement of us all.



At 2:00pm we drove to CSU campus where we were welcomed into the foyer of Heffron House by Associate Professor Jane Mitchell. As a lecturer in Education, Jane appreciates the worth of BTC's contribution to the high quality of education of the children of NSW for the past more than sixty years. As a result she has managed to secure this foyer area as a historical tribute to us and many more like us, who were fortunate enough to be taught how to teach, i.e. *Doctus Doce*. Many lovely photos of our days are there, including one of the Principal – Mr Lionel J. Allen. Jane has set up a Memorabilia Cabinet and she would love to receive your contributions to the collection. I have put in two Program/Lesson Registers with timetables, my first for third grade in 1960, the second from 1970 post decimal currency. Remember how those timetables had to add up to 1425 minutes for the week? Later, in a nearby lecture room, Jane was able to show us how technology has broken down the tyranny of distance in modern education. CSU has about 38,000 students but two thirds of them receive lectures online by inter-campus video link to Dubbo, Wagga and Albury. Lack of face to face interaction is addressed by online discussion space with appointed tutors. The general consensus of our group was that low HSC scores required for entry of students to train as teachers, plus numerous ignored recommendations to both state and federal governments for improvements in Education, continue to frustrate progress for us all.

At 6:30pm we gathered at the Bathurst Motor Inn for a final shared meal. It was a lovely, serve yourself, smorgasbord and dessert was wickedly rich and truly scrumptious. Between courses there was a trivia quiz requiring a super memory of what happened 55 years ago. During the evening we toasted our many well loved and fondly remembered colleagues who have already "run their race". It's great to be part of a wonderful band of brothers and sisters, many of whom have achieved an extraordinary amount!

Next reunion is the first weekend in March 2018. See you there?

LEONE FAIRWEATHER (NÉE CURTIS 1958-59)

*Associate Professor, Jane Mitchell, at head of table, is shown memorabilia by Margaret Morrissey (née Mackenzie). Margaret had a full set of end of year examination papers which showed to those who saw them just how much we have forgotten since then.*

### **PIONEERS CATCH UP IN CANBERRA**

*The Pioneers had their 64<sup>th</sup> reunion in Canberra from 11-13 March. As Julia Noon points out, they try to have it as close to the anniversary of when they first arrived in college on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1951. Below is an address given by one of their members.*

This is a very special occasion for us all, to be standing on this hallowed ground, in this beautiful City of Canberra, to gather once again as Pioneers of Bathurst teachers' College, 64 years after we began as young, naive, wide-eyed students.

Life brings tears, smiles and memories; the tears dry, the smiles fade, but the memories last forever.

Little did we realise that with our entry into the College we were making history and making memories. We just knew that we were having fun!

Conditions at the College in those days were rather primitive with building taking place all around us and above us but we were oblivious and unquestioning, taking it all in our stride and accepting whatever came our way. It was character building for us to face adversities, to make the most of a new experience and when we felt comfortable, to give it our best.

And so after two years of training we were equipped to begin our teaching career. It is said that a teacher takes a hand, opens a mind and touches a heart. I am sure you could all look back today to a student of bygone days who began to flourish because you gave them your understanding and your support; you opened a mind and touched a heart.

The most beautiful discovery that friends can make is that they can grow separately without growing apart. It is with gratitude that we look back on the efforts of Alan Beggs, Lew Ford, Bruce Sergeant, Ralph Rawlinson, Julia Noon, Helen Egan and Royce Levi who have made sure

that we have not grown apart even though we have grown separately.

During the many reunions we have had there are special moments that have etched themselves into my memory and I would like to share them with you,

A day spent in the Blue Mountains at Helen Egan's home many years ago where we lazed in the bush setting of Helen's garden. A tree was planted by Shirley Bonner that day which still has the plaque made by Peter Connolly close by.

A reunion at the Hydro Majestic at Medlow Bath made complete with a picnic lunch. We still have a photo of our group standing behind a banner made by Brandy,

A reunion at Leura organised by Ted Shields and Alan Beggs. A reunion in Bathurst where we finally graduated with a certificate forty years after completing our course. On another occasion at Bathurst we visited Hill End and Sofala and on a third reunion at Bathurst we stayed at the Mt Panorama Circuit Hotel.

A reunion at Orange where we froze at a wine-tasting in the countryside and then enjoyed Jimmy Waddell at a dinner singing, *I am the very model of a Modern Major General* and Raymonde Coulson singing *Poor Wandering One*. Following on from a church service in our garden I received a letter from Carina Doyle, saying, "Never did God have such a beautiful chapel".

A reunion on the Tweed River aboard a beautiful boat which took us up the river admiring the lovely scenery of the northern hinterland.

A reunion at the Fairmont with visits to scenic spots in the Blue Mountains.

And then there was Coonabarabran where Woody's family showed us the true hospitality that only country folk can give, Etched in my mind forever is the memory of sitting in the dusk on the lawn at Woody's home in the bushland. Royce Levi, complete with guitar, had us gathered round him while he led us through an old *School Magazine*, telling us the stories, having us recite the poems and sing the songs; he had us in the palm of his hand.

Then came the masterpiece when Royce cast a play with the appropriate characters. Trevor Brew made the best Mopoke you have ever heard and if Oscars were handed out that night, Trevor would have won!

This reunion is shaping up to be so wonderful and we can't thank David, Betty and Elsa enough, for all they have done to create this amazing experience for us all.

It is with sadness that there are many of our group who have not made it thus far and each of us can remember and name pioneers who can no longer join our reunions.

We honour them today and remember their smiles and their laughter and although they are not here they are in our memories and shall remain forever.

As long as we have memories, yesterday remains.

As long as we have hope, tomorrow awaits.

As long as we have friendships, each day is never a waste.

PATRICIA WILLIAMS

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## MEMBERS OF THE

### CLASS OF 65/66

travelled from as far away as Perth to attend a reunion in Bathurst to celebrate 50 years since we commenced our teacher training at BTC in 1965.

Messages and apologies were received from many people including those based in Canada, New Zealand, China, Germany, Thailand and Vietnam.

Our lecturers were represented by Laurie Orchard who entertained us with his music skills. Laurie reminded us that he started as Music Lecturer at BTC at the same time as us 50 years ago.





We will celebrate 50 years since our graduation in Bathurst on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2016 while our annual gathering will be held in Sydney on 16<sup>th</sup> October this year.

Contact Greg Woods at [woods.greg@yahoo.com.au](mailto:woods.greg@yahoo.com.au) for more details.

### CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS

Following a very successful fifty year reunion at Charles Sturt University in February, 2014, the 1963-64 graduates of BTC continued with their annual get-together at the Kirribilli Club in Sydney on the 7<sup>th</sup> February this year. We had a record number for this lunch of twenty seven, many of whom travelled from country NSW to attend. For one ex-student the fiftieth reunion in 2014 had been her first. She enjoyed herself so much she was determined to continue meeting up with old friends on an annual basis.

We would encourage everyone who can to put the date down for 2016. It is always on the first Saturday in February so next year will be on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> February. It's an informal lunch and opportunity to reconnect with old friends.

Mary Lawson (nee Whitnall)  
[maryvlawson@iprimus.com.au](mailto:maryvlawson@iprimus.com.au)  
ph: 02 95704818  
mobile: 0414379076

### COMING REUNIONS

#### SOUTHERN REGION GET-TOGETHER

Annual Lunch  
Wednesday 29 July 12 noon for 12.30  
Narooma Golf Club opposite the Public School

Guest speaker on the performing arts at local school  
One member's odd and intriguing research results

Contact Julie Worlton: ph 0488 536 360 or  
Bill Thompson: ph 4421 4780  
[billnjune@shoalhaven.net.au](mailto:billnjune@shoalhaven.net.au)

#### ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE CLASS OF 65/66

16<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Contact Greg Woods at:

[woods.greg@yahoo.com.au](mailto:woods.greg@yahoo.com.au)

for all the details

Bathurst Teachers' College 1957/1958 intake  
Annual Reunion  
At The Epping Club for lunch.  
17<sup>th</sup> November 2015

#### 1960-61 55 YEAR REUNION

IS TO BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH

THE BTCAA ANNUAL LUNCH

FEB 20<sup>TH</sup> 2016

Contact: Tony Koop

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#### CLAIM THE DATE

Reunion of the 54/55 cohort will be held at

#### JERILDERIE

from 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2016

For further details please contact:  
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#### THE NSW SCHOOL MAGAZINE

*In the article by Patricia Williams, she mentions the NSW School Magazine. For many of us beginning teaching, this was the only available resource for teaching reading in the Primary School. We can probably recall how we made a story last a week, with introduction to new vocabulary, teacher modelling of reading, oral and written comprehension and oral reading around the class.*

The School Magazine, Australia's oldest literary magazine, is the oldest literary magazine for children anywhere in the world. It began in 1916 as a free publication for NSW primary school children, introducing them to Australian writers such as Patricia Wrightson, Lilith Norman, Duncan Ball, and more recently, Kath Hawke, Anna Fienberg and Tohby Riddle.

It has never gone out of print, even in the days of the Depression when the magazine was reduced to a quarter of its size because of printing costs and paper shortages.

It has provided a start to many writers who have discovered, as did E.B. White, author of *Charlotte's Web* and *Stuart Little*, that anyone writing down to children was wasting his time. Many illustrators also began their careers at the magazine.

At times it was mired in controversy; under the editorship of Noreen Shelley in the 1970s a

regular column called *You Be the Judge* dealt with the issue of legal and illegal drugs, creating a furore in the media and the Parliament, with editorial staff temporarily suspended and the entire issue of the magazine pulped.

Since the mid-1990s *The School Magazine* has been only available on subscription. More recently, to remain relevant, teaching units which are tailored to the curriculum are sent out in conjunction with the magazine,

A certain number of the magazine is now printed in a blown-up form for the partially sighted children in the schools, and each month each issue is printed in Braille. On the day of the first issue in Braille, photographers and reporters from all the newspapers and magazines, along with some blind children and an artist recording the event were present at the office. The next Saturday's issue of *The Sydney Morning Herald* had a photograph of a blind boy reading the magazine for the first time with his fingers, his face revealing his joy at being able to do so.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### SANDRA McDONALD

It is with sadness that we report the death of Sandra McDonald, BTC 1957/58.

Sandra was born in the small country town Mendooran on February 1<sup>st</sup> 1939. Her primary education was completed there and, having won a scholarship, she received her secondary education at Dubbo High School before going on to teacher training. After college, her first appointment was to Deniliquin where she worked out her bond before leaving for an adventurous year in England.

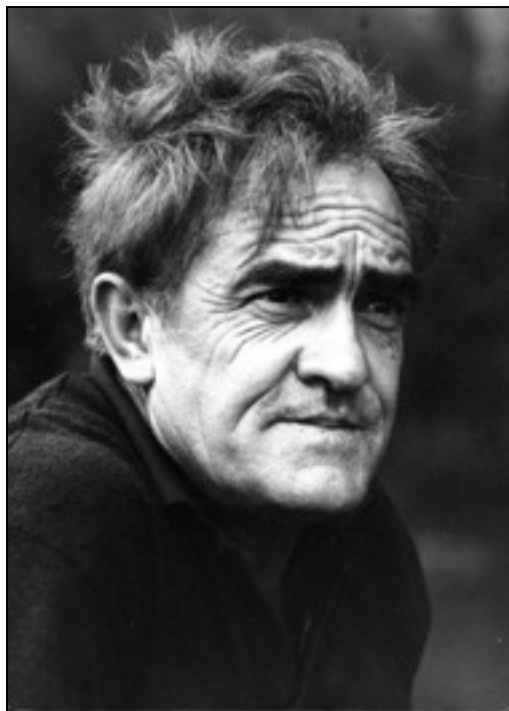
Returning to Australia she resumed teaching, this time at Narrandera, then deciding on a career change she moved to Armidale where she studied librarianship at the University of New England. Later she worked there as a librarian. In 1969 she was recruited from Armidale to the new College of Advanced Education (now Canberra University) mainly as a reference librarian, sometimes working part-time until she retired.

In 1971, Sandra married Brian Thorp and they had two sons, Chris and Phillip. Sandra was devoted to her family. They had many holidays at their beach house at Dalmeny and enjoyed several overseas trips. In the last few years much of her time was spent with her three grandchildren. As well she enjoyed reading, films, her lovingly tended garden and the company of her many friends.

Sadly, Sandra developed a serious illness in 2004 and, after a brave struggle she passed away in April 2014.

MARGARET HUXLEY (HOGAN)  
BARBARA ALEKNA (BYRNE)  
Roommates BTC

### VALE GARTH DIXON, 1924-2015



*Photo: G. Kempster*

Former students of Bathurst Teachers College in the late 1950s and 1960s would remember Garth Dixon as an inspirational art lecturer. Less well known is that he combined his lifelong passion for art with an equal commitment to the conservation of bushland and wildlife.

Born at Milthorpe near Orange on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1924, he grew up on the family farm, interested in the natural environment from a young age. During World War 2 he was a Lancaster pilot and captain in the Bomber Command. Returning to Australia after the war, he had a varied early career – opening a lending library in Forbes, running a milk bar at Glebe and working for the Forestry Commission. Married to Jean Levine whom he'd met at Forbes, he then attended the National Art School and Sydney Teachers College for four years, assisted by a serviceman's retraining scheme, to become an art teacher.

In 1953 he was appointed to teach art at Lithgow High School, and in 1957 joined Bathurst Teachers College as head of the art and craft department. Garth was a talented potter, printmaker and sculptor, but painting was his first love. As well as running the College art department, he taught children's art classes in Bathurst and became enthusiastically involved in various community arts activities. In the 1960s he became more widely known as an artist, winning 10 major art prizes between 1961 and 1969. However he was always overly critical about his own art, and although pursued by some of the top galleries he remained more committed to teaching art than becoming a celebrated artist.

At Bathurst he also became a keen member of the Naturalist Society, the Wildlife Land Trust (WLT) and the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) of NSW; an environmental interest that continued after he moved to Goulburn CAE in the 1970s as head of the Arts Faculty. In 1988 he married Rosalind (Ros) Stafford, a founding member and former executive of the NCC. Two years earlier he had bought *Warriwillah*, a beautiful, mostly bushland property of 121 hectares, an hour's drive south of Canberra, with the intention of retiring onto it. Under Garth and Ros's ownership *Warriwillah* became formally proclaimed as a wildlife refuge and throughout the 1990s they were active environmentalists, making regular submissions to Government ministers on land and wildlife conservation.

Ros died in 2004 and in 2006 Garth donated *Warriwillah* to the Humane Society International as a Wildlife Land Trust sanctuary, the management of which was overseen by his son Peter assisted by WLT staff. In recognition of his fine work in advancing environmental conservation, Garth was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 2007.

Into his 80s, Garth continued to paint with enormous zest and output. His exhibition at Canberra, *Garth Dixon: A Retrospective, 1961-2011*, attracted visitors from all round Australia. When asked what he would like as a headstone epigraph, he replied after some thought: 'Still working on it.' Garth died on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015, aged 90. He is survived by his first wife Jean, children Peter, Shelley and Christine, and his brother, Page.

KEITH AMOS (BTC STUDENT 1958-59)

*From a Sydney Morning Herald obituary by Peter Dixon, and other sources, with thanks for the photo from Christine Dixon.*

## **CSU EDUCATION STUDENTS ACQUIRE FOOTBALL COACHING SKILLS**

Teacher education students at Charles Sturt University (CSU) will have the opportunity to add football coaching to their skills through a new agreement with Football Wagga Wagga. CSU and [Football Wagga Wagga](#) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Wednesday 11 March to allow up to ten teacher education students a year to undertake a placement with the association as part of their four-year degree.

The [Bachelor of Education \(K-12\)](#) students from CSU's [School of Education](#) in Wagga Wagga will assist with Football Wagga Wagga's coaching programs and have the opportunity to undertake a range of Football NSW community coaching courses.

CSU Faculty of Education course director Ms Penny Stephens said, "Charles Sturt University places a high value on practical opportunities for its students as workplace learning is an important means of helping relate theory to practice.

"This placement will assist students in recognising that educational experiences are linked to wider social issues and contexts.

"It will also provide students with the opportunity to increase their familiarity with community organisations, resources, policies and strategies which will potentially improve their professional abilities as a teacher."

Football Wagga Wagga's President Mr Erwin Budde said, "By becoming involved in our coaching programs Charles Sturt University students will be able develop a range of coaching skills from grassroots skills training through to elite programs.

"In turn, we expect the students will be able to share the knowledge gained from their educational studies with our coaches.

"Many of the students involved will be playing in the local A grade competition and this agreement will give them the opportunity to contribute back into the sport while completing their studies.

"We hope these students will go on to be ambassadors for the game once they begin their teaching careers."

CSU MEDIA

### **INPUT APPRECIATED Have your say in the guest speaker for the 2016 AGM.**

Do you have a contact with someone who you think would make an interesting contribution to our 2016 AGM?

If so, please email your suggestion to our President,  
Wayne Bensley on:  
[wrbensley@hotmail.com](mailto:wrbensley@hotmail.com)

### *Where's Wayne?*

At the moment our President is touring in Europe, having attended the centenary of the Gallipoli Landings for Anzac Day. We look forward to including an article about his Anzac experience in the next edition of *Panorama*.

