



A PUBLICATION
OF THE ALUMNI OF
WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

TALK ABOUT



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SUGGESTED FUNDRAISING PROJECT

When we were at College part of our course involved practice teaching. We were bussed to and from surrounding schools and were provided with a cut lunch. As this was part of our scholarship it did not cost us anything. Nowadays the students have to find their own placements and fund any expenses incurred.

Education students at Wagga Wagga have prac placements as follows:

- 1st year: 2 week supervised placement
- 2nd year: 4 week supervised placement
- 3rd year: 5 week supervised placement
- 4th year: 5 week supervised placement followed by a 5 week internship (80% teaching load on their own)

There is no stipulation as to where the students complete these placements (e.g., large/small school, rural/metropolitan) - it is simply a matter of where there is a vacancy with adequate supervision. So, some students might be able to do their placement in Wagga Wagga while others may have to travel to Hillston, Broken Hill or wherever.

Those students who do the placement in Wagga Wagga do not suffer financially whereas those who have to travel definitely do. Some of the expenses can be as follows:

- Having to keep paying rent in Wagga Wagga and also paying rent wherever they do the placement;
- If they have a part-time job in Wagga Wagga they will not be able to do any shifts while they are on placement (unless the placement is close by, e.g. Junee);
- For students who do not qualify for Austudy and, consequently, rely on their part-time work to survive, the placement can be particularly stressful, especially if it is not within driving distance of Wagga Wagga;
- For some students the placement is not quite far enough away from Wagga Wagga to warrant paying two lots of rent. However, they may be required to drive an hour each way to reach the school, and with the current cost of fuel and car maintenance the placement can become very expensive.

In some cases a little financial help could be the difference between a student graduating or dropping out.

At the last Alumni meeting it was suggested that our fundraising be applied to Wagga Wagga Education students to assist them with expenses incurred in their Practicum.

We have \$17,230 in our fundraising account at present and at the August meeting we will discuss the best way to disburse these funds to assist needy students.

2011 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Caleb Willis, Lew Morrell, Tamara Hope, Lisa Hulands

CALEB WILLIS

I was born in Wagga Wagga and have lived there all my life, going through Wagga Wagga Christian College for my secondary schooling. During school I found my passion to be in science based subjects. This passion for science led me into study of a degree in Science, majoring in Analytical Chemistry and minoring in Physics, Biology and Mathematics at Charles Sturt University.

Throughout this 3 year course I realised my true passion in science was in teaching it to others and seeing those I helped come to new understandings in this area, and so, after completing my Science degree with distinction, began a Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary), with the aim of becoming a secondary science teacher. Currently, I am in my last semester of this degree, finishing off the final practical component of the degree in a 5 week placement at Wagga Wagga High School. Upon completion of this final part of my degree, I will be eligible to apply for teaching as an accredited science teacher.

Being raised in Wagga Wagga, I have an appreciation for both rural and regional schooling and these are the areas that I hope to pursue in forging my own teaching career. I believe that it is often the country areas of Australia that are forgotten in terms of quality education and quality teachers and thus,

I wish to spend the majority of my teaching career in non-metropolitan areas. I also believe that in being part of school, teachers are part of a wider community, and thus should be involved within the communities whose children they are educating, a belief I hope to put into practice when I find a stable workplace.

I would like to thank the Wagga Wagga Teachers' College Alumni Association for the scholarship that they have chosen to award me with, as it has helped me to deal with the everyday costs of living, allowing me to more fully concentrate on my studies.

TAMARA HOPE

I was born and raised in Wagga Wagga. I have attended all my education in Wagga Wagga and will be completing my University Degree at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Campus at the end of this year. I have enjoyed my University Course of a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and feel I now have the confidence and right qualities to be a graduate Teacher from Charles Sturt University.

This month (July) I start my final practicum and Internship at Saint Josephs Catholic Primary School in the town of Junee. I am looking forward to this experience, having a class for ten

weeks, learning to program, manage behaviour in the classroom and gain a sense of belonging as a teacher of a classroom and as a staff member of a school. I hope such an experience will build up more confidence in my teaching ability for my future career.

I am interested in moving to Sydney for a year after completing my degree to casual teach and experience a different lifestyle. As I have been in Wagga Wagga all my life, thus far I feel a change will open my eyes to what the world has to offer a young graduate teacher. I am very interested in moving to the United Kingdom to teach at some stage in the next few years also, for experience of another country and culture.

Thank you for the opportunity you have given me with the support of monetary funds to further myself in my degree.

LISA HULANDS

I am a 21 year old final year university student studying Bachelor of Education (primary) at Wagga's Charles Sturt University campus. I have lived on a farm at Wakool, in the south western Riverina of New South Wales. The farm produces rice, sheep and beef, and is situated around 5 kilometres outside of Wakool, a small country town with about 200 residents. I attended Wakool Public School and then Barham High School.

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My ambition to be a primary school teacher was then made possible through being accepted into the course at CSU Wagga. I then moved to Wagga, sharing a house with other university students. Whilst attending university in Wagga, I have actively participated in the variety of opportunities made available to me, including participating in sports coaching courses, playing netball, and working at a before and after school care centre. All of which will further develop my ability to teach and nurture children.

My desire to be a primary school teacher has been evident since I was a student at school. I am not entirely certain of what provoked this dream, or goal, however I am certain that I will endeavour to achieve equity and equality in schools for all students. As a result of attending a small primary and high school, I feel that small rural school students are often disadvantaged in terms of opportunities at a sporting, academic and social level.

I hope to gain employment as a primary school teacher at a primary school in a small rural town. I hope to continue developing my knowledge and skills in education and teaching through experience as well as updating and gaining knowledge through further courses and training. In the future this will be particularly important as technology becomes increasingly prevalent in our everyday lives, as well as being a common part of today's classrooms.

I feel that an important role of teaching in small rural schools is providing students with a vast array of opportunities to further themselves. Encouragement and constructive feedback is also important, which reinforces the need for teachers to communicate with parents, as small towns are often like a big family. Literacy and numeracy will also be a key focus of my teaching, as it is vital that students develop these skills in the early years, as they are essential life skills.

I am honoured to be a 2011 Wagga Wagga Teachers College Alumni Association Scholarship recipient, and would like to take this opportunity to thank the association for this privilege. This will financially assist me in completing my internship.

Dear Lindsay,
I was aghast and ashamed at reading that so many WWTC graduates have been receiving free Talkabouts for years. How can they be so irresponsible! I usually send my subscription in March but I don't think I did this year as I had a lot on my plate so I'm sending it now.

In late December, out of the blue, I discovered that I had breast cancer. This led to a mastectomy and Radiation from which I am still recovering.

This leads me to refer to my accompanying letter which I really hope you will print in Talkabout. A number of female readers will now be over seventy and I feel so strongly that they be encouraged to continue having mammograms. Incidentally, I've been in communication with BreastScreen NSW, hoping, as you will see in my letter, that they will change the wording on their brochures.

Now there's another suggestion I would like to make to you for Talkabout. I have recently read a book called "Friend and Philosopher" by Noel Braun. It is a very interesting fictional story based on the experiences of the author in a one-teacher school in outback Victoria. It reminds me of the accounts by teachers that you have published in Talkabout about their experiences and it's a good read. The book is only available from the author whose email is noelbraun@bigpond.com, or his website www.noelbraun.com.au.

The main purpose of my letter, however, is to ask you to publish my letter.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Kidd (Yabsley) 1954-55

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Are you over 70 and a woman? If so, have you been having a mammogram regularly? At almost 77 years of age, I've just had a mastectomy. With no breast cancer in my family, this came as a real shock to me.

I had been having two-yearly mammograms until I reached 70. Then I was given a brochure which reads as follows: "*The BreastScreen NSW programme targets women aged 50-69 as a priority, however, all women over 40 years are eligible for free screening mammograms.*"

The wording "*are eligible*" and another brochure says "*Are also welcome*" implied to me that they are not really necessary after 70 but if you are paranoid about breast cancer you will be having them. I am not paranoid so I didn't. My surgeon was up in arms when I told her that because of the wording on the brochures, I thought that after 70, mammograms were no longer necessary. She said, "So many women tell me that."

I would recommend that the wording on the brochures be changed to, "We strongly advise that after 70, you continue to have mammograms" or words to that effect.

I'm a strong believer in things happening for a purpose so I'm making it my personal crusade to send this letter to as many newspapers as I can, so that as many women as possible will read it and be warned. If my letter means that even one woman will be spared what I've been through, I'll feel that my writing has been worthwhile.

Helen Kidd.

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REUNION PAGE

WWTC 1961-62 50 YEAR REUNION



Ray Petts presenting a gift to the Reunion organisers, Terry and Heather Dwyer and Mick and Robyn McGrath

Early March 2011, all roads led to Forster on the beautiful Mid North Coast. And what a wonderful place to meet old friends, relax and enjoy a great few days together without the curfews and restrictions of 50 years ago at WWTC.

Forster locals, Terry Dwyer and Mick McGrath were fantastic event organisers and magnificent hosts! The venues and activities they chose were superb!

We met on the Tuesday evening at Club Forster where we were made very welcome. Everyone was so friendly and enthusiastically greeted everyone as long lost friends. Between talking and more talking we all enjoyed a great Barbecue, cooked to perfection by Terry's mates! And of course a few drinks! And a few more! No one was counting!

We had to get up early on

Wednesday for a cruise on Wallis Lake. We boarded "Free Spirit" for a great morning to learn how "Wallis Lake became the cleanest estuarine waterway in NSW." It certainly was pristine. The weather was beautiful and the cruise was both relaxing and pleasant, and I suspect we were quite noisy! And it was environmentally educational!

The afternoon was free, so some of us, in urgent need of some retail therapy hit the shops! We had to support the local economy before dressing up for the Dinner and group photo upstairs at Club Forster. We were pleased to welcome our special guests Frank and Jean Aitchison. Frank was our English lecturer at WWTC. He delighted us with some of his experiences there including some hilarious tales from the Gilbert and Sullivan productions.

Ray Petts presented Terry and Heather and Mick and Robyn with a gift on our behalf in appreciation of all their work.

An ideal way of saying "au revoir and safe travelling" was at the delightful breakfast venue, Paradise Marina, on the waterfront. My breakfast was as good as I have ever had and we were all sad to say our farewells.

How lucky we were to have had the opportunity to have gone to WWTC where we all got to know each other so well and we were lucky to be well prepared to face our future classes. As a result we had a lot of catching up to do ... catching up with those in our section, our dorm, on prac, those we shared the dining table (!), the sporting field, the long train trips etc We celebrated it all in Forster!

REUNION PAGE



The Group



Audrey (Smith) Young, Warwick Murray, Julie (Gibbes) Hughes, Margaret (Stuckey) Crofts, Maggie (Schubert) Hamilton



Maggie (Schubert) Hamilton, Denis Simond, Margaret (Stucky) Crofts



Erika (Wirth) Mullaney, Barbara (Campbell) Otterman, Marilyn (Quinn) Rumble, Julie (Gibbes) Hughes, Louise (Scott) Clements

LETTERS PAGE

Dear Lindsay,

It does concern me that Talkabout is reaching the end of its life. The editors have been wonderful in keeping alive over the years the spirit of Education and of the Wagga Teachers College. I do hope that a solution can/will be found.

I also want to sincerely thank those contributors to Talkabout who responded to my appeal for their stories regarding their experiences in rural schools back in the 1950s and 60s. The response was great and I was able to compose a worthwhile Doctoral Thesis on the schools and the conditions under which these young teachers were expected to work and the spirit that they brought to their small schools. The study deals with the advantages and challenges of education in remote and rural areas and tells of the ways in which the young teachers brought education to the children in remote areas. Thus the title is "Tyranny of Distance".

My thesis is now in the hands of the university examiners, the "feed-back" has been positive and I should receive a final decision on it within the next three months. It is due to the responses of the contributors to my appeal that the study, "Tyranny of Distance," was made possible.

Unfortunately, I am one of those people who have been lax by neglecting to make a regular contribution to the editions of Talkabout. Under a different cover I am forwarding a contribution that may partly make amends.

All the best for the future,

Sincerely,

Elaine Dunn (Graham) 1950-51

Hi Lindsay,

Please find enclosed our annual subscriptions. We have also forwarded a cheque for the WWTAA Fundraising to Bathurst.

I have also included a photocopy of an article written by H. Smith, a federation organiser, in the NSW Federation paper in 1968. This is an article written about my first appointment in 1967 as a "Smalls Schools Trained Teacher" from WWTC. I thought it might be of some interest to publish in Talkabout.

My entertainment was to keep fit, so each afternoon I would take hold of the Sherrin or the Faulkner and head off down the road towards Hay or Booligal and bounce it along until I came upon some clay pan about the size of an Australian football field and kick and chase. On the way home I would aim up at various telephone poles or cattle grids and have my shots at goal on the run. Come Spring there was always the odd snake to make you increase your pace/heart rate or practise a dodge and a weave. I used to play Australian Football back at Narrandera each weekend and this was my training/entertainment. My car was a trusty two-tone green Zephyr which I bought with a loan for \$340.

The next appointment as referred to in the footnote was at Wilcannia. Now there was another challenge as I was given a class of 24 secondary age students (12 - 16 years) and taught non-stop from 9.00am to 3.30am. I was still a pioneer in my next year. I actually lived underground for six months before getting a Council Flat with a fellow teacher. At least at Wilcannia there was some water in the Darling where I learned to water ski. I headed to Broken Hill for football each weekend about 120 miles down the Cobb Highway. You have to love that footy!

Some 42 years later (how time does fly), Les and I are now on the wind down to retirement. Les finished her thirteen years at Abbotsleigh Anglican School for Girls in 2010 but has been called back for some extended casual work over the next six months. I have been the Aquatic Centre Director at Barker College for the last ten years having left teaching in 1992 as Head Teacher of Social Sciences from Koorringal High (Wagga Wagga) and pursued life as a Swim Coach in WA and then the Central Coast.

Lesley and I met when we were on the executive of the WWTC Social Committee in 1966 and now we are hoping to become of some assistance to the Talkabout cause when we fully retire in 2012. Specifically we have in mind the fifty year re-union in 2015-2017. You may wish to advise us of a good starting point especially when meeting times occur of your committee.

Regards,

Bruce and Lesley Forbes 1966-67

PIONEERS ALL! 1817-1967

H. SMITH, Federation Organiser

His exertions in the public service have been unwearied, as has been proved by his several expeditions to explore the interior. The Public have reaped the benefit, while it is to be apprehended that the event which they cannot fail to lament, has been accelerated by the privations and fatigues of these arduous services ..

These words are an extract from the Government Gazette of May 27, 1828. The first of John Oxley's expeditions in 1817 was along the Lachlan River; however, it is now recognised that his name would have ranked foremost among that gallant band if he had persevered in his trials and tribulations, and found the junction of the Lachlan-Murrumbidgee River. However, be that as it may, he has been remembered. Among the many places named in his honour is the small township of Oxley, 52 miles west of Hay.

A Small Town

This township has a post office, a hotel, some houses, derelict cars and trucks, a school and caravans. At present the population is 17, whilst 9 pupils attend the public school.

The previous teacher had to endure privations and tribulations slightly more favourable than John Oxley experienced. Instead of an explorer's campfire and tent, he lived in a caravan, borrowed temporarily from the Balranald shire. Illumination was supplied by a small 12 volt car battery, or moonlight.

For the use of this caravan the teacher was truly thankful, as previously he boarded, paying \$9.00 per week, washing extra. When this board was no longer available, accommodation was found 30 miles away from the school. A 60 mile journey each day over the desolate salt-bush covered country which Oxley so aptly described!

Needless to say he had to purchase a motor car, in order to travel these

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distances.

Washing and bathing could only be done at week-ends when the teacher travelled to his home-town 156 miles away. Drinking water was available from the school tank but the water from the Lachlan River needed to be boiled before it was fit for drinking.

Excitement Galore

Entertainment for a young person in Oxley is limited to the pleasures of the bar at the hotel, or perhaps a rousing game of “solo” – sorry, solitaire, or fast and furious correspondence chess matches. All this is highly conducive to the fostering of good social relationships within the community.

Not all the problems at this school concern the private life of the teacher. His professional duties are discharged in a flat-roofed building, 30 feet long by 15 feet wide with louvred windows. There are no writing books, few records or documents, no programmes or timetables. Last year such luxuries had to be borrowed from schools in the district, some of them considerable distances from Oxley.

Teachers undoubtedly are trained to take and control all such mundane matters.

Note: The teacher about whom this article was written late last year has been moved. The conditions described remain for his successor.

Dear Lindsay,

I'm sending an “optimistic” amount to cover three subscriptions. Even though none of us know much about other years and generations, it's always good to remember the old days. The -years I spent there were quite important to me. It gave one an honest profession, capable of expansion. I accumulated two degrees and three certificates in teaching thirty five years, plus further casual and migrant English teaching. So, general knowledge and world and current affairs remain important areas to consider. The old college life seems so far away, with such change having made it a different world and teaching a different profession. I'm not sure I'd like to do it now; the game was tough and even

threatening when I left it.

Just three years ago, the old Ipai mob had a more meaningful reunion at Wagga Wagga. We have met many times over the years, though not as regularly as now, but few of us can and do make it. We are no longer a fit and keen footy or swimming or cricket lot as in the past. But, it is nice to rise up, stand vertically and smile every day. Our grandchildren are our hope; they deserve our efforts to seek the better world that our teaching pursued. I started a serious interest in music at college, thanks to friendly, effective influences from Laurie and Jess, plus the Saturday night dances with Viv Littlewood's group. So, music has taken me to other countries, and local TV, clubs, dances, festivals, cruises, even New Year's Eve flights to the Antarctic. So, memories of WWTC and its role in life and achievement leave me thinking it was all worthwhile.

Remember saving for that first car, putting down a lay-by, hitching rides up and down the highway to college and back, eking out the coins, sneaking into the movies at half time, sneaking drinks at pubs, having sessions of excess occasionally, sneaking out a little food, say, bread under the jumper, doing washing in primitive conditions, lacking any modern transport, etc., etc.?

I've rarely been as cold since college days; once it was minus three or four in our room at dawn. Our room, surely a broom cupboard, was for two. We went back, my old roommate, John Bevan and I, in 2008, marveling at our survival and persistence. We all tried to persist and survive of course, and, the old college days saw a flow of very good people grow up and go out. Years of required study, to be someone and earn some money, made for a life of some strain. My first roll class had 49; if they all came, one sat with me out front, for we only had 48 desks. There was no heating, cooling, lighting, supply of texts and support equipment, printing or copying, - nothing... except chalk and talk. Yet Bankstown Central's buildings are there still, quite unchanged. (The “oppo” classes of slow learners were 33 each) Things must be better nowadays..?

Finally it's good to reflect, recall and tell stories, if you still can. The old college

site is rather sad now, but it was home for hundreds of trainees for so long and to such good effect.

My best wishes to all concerned and connected with WWTC.

Sincerely,

Phil Pryor 1958-59



Dear Lindsay,

I would just like to let you know Audrey Lang (Plant) passed away on 24-5-11. She had had a stroke some years ago and had been in indifferent health ever after. Her husband Ken Lang cared for her until she became too frail and was admitted in Ulupna Lodge Nursing Home in Finley.

Audrey was an exceptional person, a wonderful friend, a great teacher and an absolutely superb cook and cake maker. She will always be remembered for her kindness and compassion to so many people.

She was an outgoing person serving the community in many ways; playing bowls and golf, and earlier in her life, tennis. She always had a smile on her face and a kind word and cakes for those people who were down or who had lost loved ones. It would be hard to find anything to say about Audrey that was not good. She was a wonderful wife to Ken and mother to her four children.

I will personally miss Audrey very much. She was almost exactly a year older than me and we easily remembered each other birthdays. She was the only 1951-52 student near Finley so we always went together to the reunions while she was well. She will long be remembered with love and gratitude.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Taylor (Thompson) 1951-52

COLLEGE MEMORIES

BILL STEWART REMEMBERS WWTC

Bill Stewart (1955-56) died in July 2010. Before he died he wrote his life story and devoted a few pages to WWTC. His sister Mavis (1953-54) has submitted the relevant pages and says that although she had been at WWTC she did not know much of this and found it fascinating.

Bill realised that he was not suited to classroom teaching and resigned in 1958. He took up a training position in Metallurgy.

He completed a BSc at Wollongong in 1964 and a Graduate Diploma of Applied Science in 1993, for which he won one of the Dean's medals for academic excellence.

My sister Mavis had attended Wagga Wagga Teachers College in 1953 - 1954, so I had a fair idea what to expect. I was enrolled in 1955 in Section 555 and allocated to Room 5 in Kambu Dormitory. My room mates were Ray Hanlon and Gary Cook both from Wollongong. Gary left after a couple of days and was replaced by Peter Spartalis. Room 4 was occupied by Harry Anable, Wayne Shaw and Roy Williams. In Room 3 were Leo Tobin, Barry Ruskin and George Veicharts. Room 2 was occupied by John Spenceley, Bruce Wells and Bob Ingram. Lastly Room 1 had Kevin Riolo, Nick Best and Ian Clacker.

Heating in the rooms was nonexistent and most of us bought a one bar radiator but there was a steam heater in the Common Room at the end of the dormitory where there were some tables and chairs. Each room was swept out by the occupants every morning, and the Common Room and corridor swept on a roster system. We had to make our beds before leaving for the day and each room was inspected by our warden after breakfast. Our warden was Laurie Orchard who was the music lecturer. He owned a black MGTC and later a lovely old Jaguar.

Sections were arranged alphabetically with surnames at the start of the alphabet in Section 1 and those towards the end in Section 5.

Naturally, it was all coeducational.

We did about 16 subjects in our first year ranging from Psychology to Art. We could choose one optional subject and I chose Mathematics. Each was taken by a different lecturer. Each class had an alphabetic code comprising the lecturers name plus the subject. For example, Psychology from Pearson was PSY and Art taken by Gaynor was GAR. Lectures were 5 days a week and it was a pretty full program.

There were many other activities to occupy our spare time. There were clubs for just about any hobby you could think of and we were encouraged to participate in as many of these as we could. I joined the Golf Club. There were male and female choirs and each year the whole college put on a Gilbert and Sullivan musical. Our musical in 1955 was Yeoman of the Guard and I sang in the chorus. I also sang in the college choir. The singing bits for Gilbert and Sullivan were taken by Laurie Orchard who also conducted the college choir. In 1956 the Gilbert and Sullivan musical was The Gondoliers. I did not participate this time but I stayed a member of the college choir.

We ate all our meals in the dining room where the staff sat at a long table at one end of the room and the students sat at separate tables comprising 4 boys and 4 girls. Each table had 4 students in their second year and 4 in their first. It was all quite well organised. At our table, the second years were John "Cactus" Rawlinson, Peter Schulz, Pam Ayers and Wendy Petroni. Our first years were Ray Hanlon and I plus two girls whose names I seem to have forgotten.

Attendance at meals was compulsory during the week but optional at weekends. Most students ate in the dining room every day but had an occasional meal down town. We occasionally ate out at the Paragon Cafe, where you could get a good mixed grill and there was a Chinese restaurant which served pretty good food.

There was a list of Rules for each sex to be followed for dress and behavior. For example, at lectures male dress code was long trousers, shirt with collar and tie, shoes and socks and a jacket (sports coat or blazer). I'm not sure about the females but they wore

stockings and dresses and definitely no trousers. The same dress code applied to lunch and dinner but breakfast was more informal although males were supposed to wear a tie and socks. No-one was game to turn up wearing just a tie and a pair of socks. Mornings in the winter were very cold with frequent frosts. Breakfast was at 8 am and most boys still had their PJs on under a polo neck jumper with no tie and some warm boots or slippers. So the only items that were rarely worn to breakfast were the compulsory tie and socks.

The behavior code was more complex and included things such as going into girls dorms and a ban on alcohol on the premises and no going into hotel bars. I think we had a copy of the code posted on our dorm notice board. I seemed to recall that we took delight in ticking off the ones that we had broken.

Participation in team sports was encouraged and the college entered teams in the local sporting competitions. We had rugby and hockey teams in the winter and cricket and basketball teams in the summer. I played hockey in my first year and some golf in my second. The college had its own sporting grounds and there was an informal 3-hole golf course.

In my second year at Wagga Wagga, there were some changes of personnel in our dorm and we only had 2 guys to a room.

The makeup of our dorm was now as follows:

Room 5: Peter Spartalis, Bill Stewart
Room 4: Wayne Shaw, Darry Anable
Room 3: Leo Tobin, Barry Ruskin
Room 2: Bruce Wells, Bob Ingram
Room 1: Kevin Riolo, Nick Best

We occasionally went out for dinner at the local Chinese restaurant. Kevin Riolo would sneak into the nearby hotel and buy a couple of bottles of beer. We would get glasses and drink this with our meal. Lecturers from the college were sometimes eating at a nearby table and saw us drinking the beer. We actually weren't technically breaking any of the rules because we weren't in a hotel and we weren't drinking it at college.

COLLEGE MEMORIES

In our second year the table arrangements in the dining room were changed and seating was at three long tables rather than individual tables of eight with 4 boys and four girls. It was never as good but it was decided democratically. We were given two choices - alternate boy, girl along the table or higgedy piggedly. The later won the vote easily.

I wrote a song 'Much Trouble in the Dorm' which was based on the Goon Show song 'Much Binding in the Marsh'. It was published in one of the issues of Talkabout, the monthly student magazine edited by Ted Bolton. I've since lost my copy of it but can still remember some of the verses.

*"There's much trouble in the dorm,
Last year the Kambu boys were getting bo-ored.
There's much trouble in the dorm,
The car they bought they tell me is a Ford.
You've heard the rumour that there is no engine in the car,
And other people say it runs on kerosene and tar,
But we are game to match it against Orchard's Jaguar.
There's much trouble in the dorm."*

Couples used to cuddle up on the Back Path behind the girls' dormitories after dark and the authorities decided to install flood lights to keep an eye on this activity. Naturally, this wasn't appreciated by the students and Peter Schultz and some of his friends scaled the posts at night and removed the globes on several occasions but they just kept putting them back. I don't think many people knew who was responsible for the deed.

We staged a raid on the other dorms one night with some rotten egg gas and got into a bit of trouble over that. The gas was made by Wayne Shaw. I think he brought the chemicals from home.

Lights out was at 10.30 pm every night except Saturday, when it was later, and a warden would come around sometime between 10.30 and 11 pm to make sure we were actually there. Some students were known to stuff their bed with pillows and then go out on the town. We resented having a bright light shone in our faces and decided to take some retaliatory action by removing our

door knobs so that the warden wouldn't be able to open the door. We didn't realise that the Head warden, Maurice Hale, simply went and got his own knob, opened our doors and then confiscated all the knobs which we had just left inside. He wheeled a trolley full of them up to breakfast and there was an announcement that it would cost us each 10/- to get them back but we eventually got them back for nothing.

In our first year, seven of the Kambu boys banded together and bought a 1928 Chev utility. It had bench seats on the sides in the back and so we could all sit down but we much preferred to ride around standing up. Wayne was the only one of us who had a licence and it was him who looked after the purchase. It cost £50. The boys who jointly owned it were Wayne Shaw, Bruce Wells, Roy Williams, Darry Anable, John Spenceley Leo Tobin and me.

We had great fun in that car and enjoyed driving it along the old stock route at the back of the college. This was the first car that I had actually driven and it was very exciting. It was a bit of a wreck and frequently broke down, so we swapped it for a 1929 A Model Ford which cost us £80. This was a much nicer car and we used it to get everyone's licence from the local cop shop. The sergeant used to say that anyone who could drive this car deserved a licence.

We kept this car until near the end of our second year and had lots of fun in it. We used it to get down town at the weekends and to go to the movies on Saturday nights. On one occasion we brought ten people home from the movies when the bus broke down. We also went for picnics in the countryside in the weekends and drove it to Albury on one occasion. Most of the time we left the hood up but it was nice to fold it down in the summer.

We weren't allowed to drive it into the college grounds so had to park it outside in the street. It had no ignition key so we removed the high tension lead between the coil and the distributor. It also had no self starter and you had to crank it into life. The technique was to pull out the choke, retard the spark and give it two compressions. Then push the choke in half way and wind the handle.

Even on the coldest frosty mornings, it hardly ever failed to start. Wayne was a pretty good mechanic and managed to fix anything that went wrong.

I actually got my licence on Dad's 1937 Chevrolet in Wollongong in the Spring holidays. At that time, it was almost unheard of to get it on your first attempt, but I had no trouble at all because I had been driving the Chev and the Ford for a while.

In 1956, six of us went to Melbourne to see one day of the Olympic Games. We left on the Friday evening, went to the athletics at the MCG on Saturday, stayed at someone's relative's house on Saturday night and then drove back to Wagga Wagga on the Sunday. We hired a Peugeot 203 from a Wagga hire car company and it was crowded with 6 people and a bit of luggage. Wayne Shaw, Kevin Riolo, Leo Tobin, Ian Clacker, Barry Ruskin and I were squashed into the car. The starter motor failed in Melbourne and then the brakes failed on the way home. We took turns driving on the way down because some of the others had their driver's licences and others used L plates but Wayne and I drove most of the way home nursing the brakes. One of the rubber boots had split on the hydraulic line and we kept having to pour in more brake fluid. Even so, the brakes were pretty well nonexistent.

Bill's WWTC memories stopped abruptly here.

In Memoriam

*Years go by, memories stay
As near and dear as yesterday.*

Raymond Poole 1947-49 March 2010
Ronald Paul Rees 1947-49 Aug 2010
Murray Millar 1947-49 June 2011
Warwick Munday 1949-50 April 2011.
Leslie James Shore 1949-50 June 2011
Ruth Chiswell (Kerr) 1950-51 August 2010
Wilma Kentwell (Worland) 1950-51 April 2011
Audrey Lang (Plant) 1951-52 May 2011
William Harvey Stewart 1955-56 July 2010

TEACHING MEMORIES

A PIONEER REMINISCES

Having commented recently, when paying my overdue subs, on the dwindling number of stories by pioneers of W.W.T.C., I decided as one of the survivors to have a go at recounting some of the experiences of an “ordinary bloke.”

My introduction to Wagga Teachers College was not a very pleasant one.

Taxi drivers had been instructed to take students arriving on the early train to the taxi depot, where they had easy-chairs and heaters, for a couple of hours before taking them up to the college. However the driver of the taxi we hired must not have received these instructions as I was dumped along with a female student (I think it was Margot Mc INERNY), in the freezing cold outside the Admin Block at about 4.00am. There we waited until about 6.30am when Joyce WYLIE noticed us and took us in to one of the heated Girls Dorms.

Apart from this my memories of College Days are mostly happy ones, although (like Blake LEWIN in an earlier article) I was much more interested in the Sporting than the Academic side of life. This led to disagreements with some of the lecturers-mainly Miss MOORE who gave up on trying to change my “Broad Australian” into “Educated Australian” and Gordon YOUNG (no further comment). The other lecturers were all friendly and helpful, particularly Ron HOLLAND and Norm DONNISON.

Fortunately, in the eyes of George BLAKEMORE (who I believe had no idea what really was happening at the College) I could do no wrong, as my cousin Lois DEBENHAM (who was to become the State’s first female Inspector of Schools) had been on his staff at Lismore, and George, quite wrongly, believed I was possessed of the same qualities.

My biggest disappointment at College was being beaten 18-17 by Balmain T.C. in our first Inter-Collegiate at Birchgrove Oval, where we were forced to play Rugby Union (most of us for the first time). However on a happier note we did win the local Blake Cup League Competition that year (1948).

The most anticipated day of the month was pay-day. On the following Saturday a group of us would go down to the Duke of Kent for a couple of hours, have a steak, eggs and chips at one of the cafes, then off to the movies.

I wonder if any old timers can remember the names of all the hotels in Wagga at that time. I revisited Wagga about 1980 and was surprised by the number that had disappeared. By the way, I did not sample all these pubs, but I am sure there were a few who did.

I vividly recall waiting expectantly on Graduation Day as George read out our first appointments. Mine was Assistant, Ulong Public School, via Glenreagh (North Coast). When I arrived back home at Frederickton a few days later, a letter was waiting informing me I was appointed as Teacher-In-Charge, Provisional School Lloyds Siding via Coramba. (I wonder how many others had a similar experience).

Lloyds Siding was a mill settlement on the Glenreagh-Dorrigo branch line (about 40 km up the line from Ulong). Travelling instructions accompanying the Appointment Notice read – (Train, North Coast Line to Glenreagh; Dorrigo Branch Line to Brooklana (which was about 30 km from Lloyds Siding). Fortunately my parents drove me up from Frederickton, otherwise I don’t know how I would have got on.

The school, which doubled as the local hall, had been built by A.C.I. (the mill owners) alongside the log yard. Fortunately this was pre chain saw days, so the noise wasn’t too bad. The teacher’s accommodation was a single room next to the school, with showers taken at the mill. Families were to take it week about providing meals, but when I got to the third family they must have thought I wasn’t a bad sort of bloke, as they fed me for the rest of my three year stay.

As luck would have it a fellow Wagga-ite, Arthur SMITH was appointed to Ulong. We played together for the Ulong Rugby League Team for 2 years in the Orara Valley bush competition (no training). Arthur wasn’t available every week however as his college sweetheart, Beth DENTON (later to become his wife) was in

Newcastle and Arthur took every opportunity he could get to go down there for the weekend. Fred STANWELL, from the second College intake also played in the team in the second year. As the majority of the players in this competition were mill or bush workers many took great delight (legally of course) in showing us schoolies how tough we really were.

Our first game with the team was at Coramba. After the game there were the mandatory couple of hours at the Coramba pub then up the mountain in the bus, with bottles of wine being handed around. Being my first time I didn’t like to refuse a swig, (but how, later, I wish I had).

After being dropped off the bus I had to walk about 200 yards along the railway line, then up through the mill to my hut, which I reached about an hour later. As it was about 1 am and pitch black, none of the locals were any the wiser. It was years before I was able to make myself try wine again.

This was the time of Residential Qualifications in League and the powers-to-be decided that Lloyds Siding and Cascade were within the Dorrigo boundaries, so I played 1951 with them in the Group Competition. Getting to training meant a 5 km walk along the railway line to Cascade then a 30 km trip standing up in the back of an open truck to Dorrigo. I made it to training once that year, but they must have been short of players as I still made first grade every week.

Even though I had been in the Small Schools Section I soon realised that there was plenty I didn’t know, so it was mainly a matter of trial and error as the District Inspector Norman NEY, was stationed at Grafton and it had taken him three attempts to locate Lloyds Siding on his first visit. However I battled through and I believe I became a better teacher because of it.

During his last lecture before we left college, Norm DONNISON (who had taught in small schools) said, “to survive in a One-Teacher School you have to be able to play tennis, play a good hand of euchre and it would help if you could fight”.

I certainly found being able to play

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tennis and euchre a great help. However, due mainly to not attending any of the neighborhood dances, I never had to find out if I could fight or not. (Vic COUCH's final words of advice were: "Don't do it on your own dunghill", but, innocent youth that I was, at the time, I didn't know what he meant.

While at Lloyds Siding I was amazed at how few worldly possessions many of the mill families (good people) had. Beds, a table, chairs and fruit boxes to sit on, nails for hanging clothes on and a shelf in the kitchen. The mill provided a fuel stove, and a copper, wash tubs and bath tub in the laundry. I also learned how many things you could do with a tin of Camp Pie.

My next two years were spent at Pembroke, a one-teacher school in a dairy farming community, off the Pacific Highway between Telegraph Point and Wauchope. As Pembroke was only about 50 km from Kempsey, and on the railway line, I was able to travel home every weekend. During the first year I boarded at a farm house not far from the school. However during the 1952 Christmas Holidays I met my future wife, Bernice, and, as five days was a long time to be apart, I decided to buy a second hand B.S.A. motor bike and do the 100 km round trip, over then unsealed roads, every day, rain, hail or shine.

On many of these trips I was accompanied by Ed KEOGH who was in a similar situation, teaching in a one-teacher school near Telegraph Point, and his wife-to-be, Mary, living at Smithtown.

After being married in January 1954 I was appointed to Fredrickton, a 3 teacher school, where I had spent all my primary school years. There I took over classes 3 and 4 from "BIG" Graeme WILSON (I have known both Graeme WILSONS).

During 1960-61 I had the pleasure of having Carol ROBERTS (now BAKER), fresh from W.T.C., on the infants' classes.

Carol would travel with me from Kempsey every day in my old 1939 Ford Prefect. One morning when it wouldn't start, Carol stood out at the side of the highway (she was better

looking than me) to thumb a lift. When a car eventually stopped I appeared on the scene. Although the driver didn't seem too impressed with the tactics, he did agree to give us a lift.

At this time Carol had, in her kindergarten class, little Kevin, who was slightly deformed, and always had a runny nose. Some of the bigger boys, behind our backs (so they thought) referred to him as "Little Snotsucker".

I felt sorry for Little Kev, and would go out of my way to speak to him every day, in the playground. As a result of this, when Key first sighted me of a morning he would rush up and throw his arms around me. As he reached about mid-thigh height, I would finish up with his "snot" on my trousers. After a quick sponge with a wet hanky, then a clean with "Murlex" when I got home, they were ready for another bout the next day.

During my ten years living in Kempsey, in a low-lying area, I had lifted the furniture about ten times out of reach of the Macleay River's regular floods. When in 1963, the floodwaters finally entered the house, and got to within about two inches of the raised furniture, we decided it was time to move on.

During my two years at Pembroke and first year at Frederickton, I played Rugby League with Smithtown in the Group 3 competition, and then at the ripe old age of 24, when our first child was on the way, I decided to retire from the game. As I had started to play against the "big boys" at the age of 15, I had had a pretty good innings and managed to come through unscathed.

After the 1963 flood I put in for a 4th Class School with residence anywhere, but preferably on the North Coast.

I was lucky enough to be appointed to Marom Creek, a one-teacher school in a dairy farming district, just, south of the Bruxner Highway between Ballina and Lismore, and here I was to spend the most rewarding 12 years of my teaching career.

The school didn't have a Departmental residence but the farmer who owned the surrounding farm had built a house next to the school grounds

just for the teacher, for which he charged an unbelievably reasonable rent.

The only drawback was that it had an empty-it-yourself toilet. However, I quickly mastered this operation without splashing it all over my legs, and the area where I did the burying, eventually produced the best tomatoes in the "Creek" (I don't eat tomatoes).

We were immediately welcomed into the community, although this did involve the privilege of preparing the school tennis court for the Saturday competition, while the farmers were doing the morning milking. The competition was held between milkings, from 10.00 am to about 3.30 pm, and it was the home team's duty to provide the lunch. As each group of ladies tried to outdo the others, with their scones, cakes, tarts etc, and it was compulsory to sample each one for fear of insulting the cooks, the morning's tennis was invariably of a higher standard than the afternoon's.

During my early years at Marom Creek I was awarded my First List, without applying, by the Inspector, Cliff JOHNSON, who made it clear that I wouldn't be considered for a Second List, until I had taken a position with my First. The following Inspector Joyce STAINES, had the same philosophy, but any faint ambitions I may have had of striving for promotion were easily outweighed by the desire to remain where we were all happy and appreciated, a decision I have never regretted.

The area around Alstonville at that time had a cluster of One-Teacher Schools, so that the gatherings at the "local", after P.S.S.A. meetings etc often went well into the night, but we did manage to solve most of the Department's problems.

The School at Marom Creek was the centre of the community, as it was with most of these similar schools, and any event held at the school was attended by all families, whether they had children attending school or not.

These included:

a) P & C Meetings, where we had a larger attendance than Lismore High could muster. These meetings would be

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followed by euchre tournaments, which went to the late hours.

b) Open Days, these were held in the morning and would be followed by a picnic lunch, then a Games Afternoon with all the old-time games such as 3-legged, sack and egg and spoon races.

c) Christmas Tree. This would be followed by a picnic and then a concert.

I often wonder what happens in these communities now that the schools have gone.

The school was also used as a Polling Booth on Election Day, but I had nothing to do with these, except to clean up afterwards. (Two of the old time residents had the jobs sewn up).

Anyway, I had more important things to do of a Saturday, such as taking some of the boys into Ballina to play in the morning Junior Cricket Competition, and playing Cricket, Tennis or Golf myself.

Incidentally, playing in the same Ballina Cricket Competition as me, were two other ex Wagga-ites, Mac YABSLEY (a fellow pioneer) and Laurie SPARGO.

One of my lasting memories of Marom Creek was the conducting of the Ten Day Intensive Swimming Programme, in the local creek. Here my wife Bernice, and I battled the eels and catfish, and although we didn't produce any champions, we did get all the children to a reasonable standard. As I said earlier we had 12 happy, rewarding years at Marom Creek.

The satisfaction gained from being accepted into a community, of taking a child from Kindergarten through to year 6, then seeing them go on to High School and, later on, being invited back to their weddings, is something that only those who have experienced it can fully appreciate.

I am often saddened, these days, by the reluctance of many teachers to live in the community where they teach, but I guess that's a sign of the times.

At this time both Bernice's and my parents were experiencing failing health so I reluctantly applied for a transfer to the Kempsey Area. On the Wednesday following the October long weekend I

received a phone call from Lismore Regional Office saying, that if I was prepared to start the following Monday, I could have the position of Teacher-In-Charge Bellimbopinni Public School. The previous teacher had "shot-through" under unusual circumstances, but I wouldn't be able to have the departmental residence until the teacher's wife had time to arrange other accommodation for herself and her children.

As, by this time, our two sons had left home, and Bernice and I would be able to live temporarily, with my parents at Frederickton which was only about 5 km away, I decided to accept the offer. Then began a hectic couple of days during which Regional Office couldn't have been more supportive, arranging for Furniture Removalists (no competitive quotes required) and for the storage of our furniture until the Residence became available. These couple of incidents show that the Department does have a heart after all.

During my early years at Bellimbopinni the District Inspector, Geoff SCHUMACHER (whom I thought was a friend) had, quite unknown to me, volunteered me for the position of "Contact Person, Small Schools, North Coast Region". Despite the grand sounding name, the position really involved very little (not even an allowance), but I was able to help a few young teachers, who had been sent to one-teacher schools, totally unprepared, particularly in the skills of records and filling out of returns.

During this time I also had a visit (for a day) from Joel PAPETTE, a young Papuan who had been given the job of setting up Small-Schools in the New Guinea Highlands, and had been sent out to N.S.W. to observe our system. He was a charming young man who had the kids in stitches with his demonstration of Pidgin English.

After three years on my own, with increasing pupil numbers, I was given an assistant. After six years of this "paradise" the Department decided the school should be reclassified to class Three.

Despite petitions from the parents I realised I had no chance of keeping the

school, in such a sought after area, so I accepted the newly created position of Support Teacher-Learning difficulties at East Kempsey, South Kempsey and Crescent Head Schools.

To take up this position I had to overcome my aversion to larger staffed schools, brought on mainly by my disastrous practice teaching sessions on third class girls at South Wagga (and I was in the small school section).

Despite missing my small schools, I had a mostly pleasant and fulfilling five years in the Resource Teachers Position, where I had the privilege of working with many fine, conscientious teachers.

On retiring at the end of 1989 we decided to remain living in Kempsey, in the house we had purchased on leaving Bellimbopinni.

Unfortunately, Bernice's deteriorating health meant that we had to abort the modest travel plans that we had made. However we still managed to lead a happy and reasonably active life until Bernice was finally forced to enter a Nursing Home, where she passed away in 2008.

Fortunately I am still in fairly good health and able to look after my one acre block, (which stretches from the Pacific Highway to the Macleay River and is only about 200 metres from the Shopping Centre), do minor house repairs and do my own cooking and housework.

As you can see, I reached no lofty heights in the teaching profession nor went on any exotic tours, but I did have 40.5 satisfying years, doing the best I could for the children I taught. During this time we also met some wonderful country people, many of whom remain life-long friends. I would like to think that the following extract, taken from an article in the local newspaper on my retirement was correct:-

"Any child who has come under the influence of Peter Debenham can consider him/her self very fortunate indeed".

Peter DEBENHAM (1947-49)

HALL OF FAME

DIAMOND WEDDING FOR WWTC PIONEERS.



WWTC Pioneers, Winifred (Walshaw) and Kevin Wilcox celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary on 5th may 2011. When they met on the first day of WWTC there was an immediate attraction. Kevin was delighted to discover that because Winifred's maiden name also started with W they would be seated at the same table for dinner. This continued for the duration of their studies.

They attended that night's dance in the High School hall on their first date.

Winifred took Literature Option and was active in the Original Creative Writing Group. She was a member of the editorial staff that founded the weekly College paper, "Talkabout", and later the annual College Magazine.

Kevin took Dramatic Art option. He acted in the College drama production of "Pygmalion" and "Quiet Night", did the make-up for "The Gondoliers" and was in the chorus for "Trial by Jury" and "HMS Pinafore".

They both represented the College in hockey and were in the first Intercollegiate team to play Balmain TC in 1948.

They were given their own category in Talkabout, in the section that documented the trials and tribulations of relationships. Winifred recalls, "There was 'who's on' and who's off' and then there was us, 'the hardy perennials'".

They became engaged before leaving College and married at St John's Cathedral Parramatta in 1951. They honeymooned in Wagga, Albury and Melbourne before settling down to their teaching careers in Bathurst. There they found the time to start a drama group called The Young Players. Their first son, Matthew, was born at Eugowra in 1957, and second son, Nathan, at Bathurst in 1961. Their granddaughter, Iolanda, is now in her first year at University.

After years of country service they moved to Oatley at Christmas 1966. Winifred taught at Kogarah Primary School and Kevin was deputy principal at Moorefield Girls High School.

They joined the Art Gallery Society, Friends of the State Library, Bennelong Club at the Opera House, Royal Agricultural Society and the Royal Australian Historical Society where Kevin was elected to its council for ten years and they organised ten excursions each year for twelve years.

Since retirement Retired Teachers Association, Oatley Heritage Group, and Leisure Learning classes in Oatley have been added to these interests. At present Winifred is studying Advanced French, and is the tutor for 'Beginners German' and a literature class 'Pleasure from Books'.

Kevin is studying Advanced and Intermediate French and Oil Painting. A knowledge of French and German had been a great asset on their lengthy overseas trips.

They are keen Alumni members; they still live in Oatley, and would be pleased to be in contact with early ex-students of WWTC.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The WWTC Alumni extend to John Skene (1951-52) their congratulations on the award of a Medal (OAM) in the General Division of the 2011 Queen's Birthday Honours.

The citation read as follows:

John Crawford SKENE, Dickson ACT. Swimming in the Canberra region through technical and administrative roles.

Well done, John!

COMING EVENTS

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

The next quarterly meeting of the Alumni Association will be held at 11 am on:

Tuesday 9th August, 2011.

The meeting will be held at: NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre.

37 Reservoir Street
Surry Hills.

All welcome.

ALUMNI LUNCHEONS

The next Alumni luncheon will be held at the Icons Restaurant in the Marriott Hotel, Pitt Street Sydney (near the Quay) on Tuesday 16th August, 2011.

For bookings contact Lindsay Budd on 9601 3003 a week before.

NEWS FROM CSU

Doctors4theBush Website Launch

The Community Consultative Committee for Charles Sturt University's planned medical school launched a new web site on Thursday 16 June called **Doctors4theBush** at the Orange Campus.

The web site will provide information to the community about the scale of the rural doctor crisis, and details of CSU's plans to develop a new model of integrated medical and health education to increase the number of doctors in rural areas. The web site can be viewed at

www.doctors4thebush.org.au.

The site includes an online petition.

The Committee also launched an associated Facebook site at

www.facebook.com/doctors4thebush

where community members, including

staff and students, can post their comments and sign up to receive information and updates.



The launch was held in the ECL Building on the Orange Campus at 5.30pm – 7pm and was very well attended. Staff and students were also welcome to attend.

Speakers included Mrs Audrey Hardman, OAM, Chair of the Committee; Ms Sonia Muir, Coordinator of the Rural Women's Network; Mr Sandy Morrison, Chair, Regional Development Australia Committee; Emeritus Professor John Dwyer, former Head of School of UNSW's Medical School and consultant to CSU's medical program development; and Professor Ross Chambers, Acting Vice-Chancellor, Charles Sturt University.

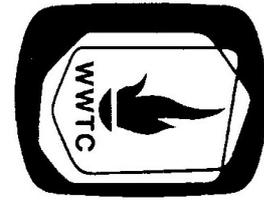
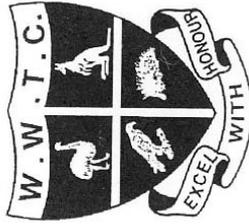
The Committee aims to engage the broader community with this issue and staff and students and friends of Charles Sturt University should feel free to send this notice to members of the community and others who may be interested in this initiative.

Alumni Information

There are two new Faculty Advancement Officer's (FAO) at CSU. They are Justin Williams and Julie Brouggy. Julie is the Officer for Education and you can contact her at any time on 02 6338 4832 or via email at jbrougg@csu.edu.au

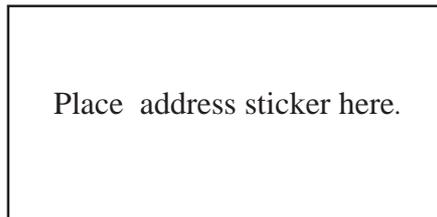
Julie Brouggy

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