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OF THE ALUMNI OF
WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

TALKABOUT



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30TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION A GREAT SUCCESS

Since the formation of the Wagga Wagga Teachers' College Alumni Association the Management Committee has endeavoured to achieve certain goals. We have resurrected Talkabout as the official journal of our organisation; we have successfully established our Scholarship Fund; we have produced "Teaching Memories"; we have encouraged session reunions and we are establishing in the Riverina Museum at Wagga Wagga a history of our College; but the one thing we desired above all was to have a unified membership reunion open to all sessions.

The 30th anniversary of the last Graduation of students from WWTC seemed to be an appropriate time to fulfil this desire. It has proved to have been a success. 106 ex-students plus some partners, fully participated, all but three of the twenty four sessions were represented, there were 38 apologies and many more wished us a successful reunion.

This is a great start to what we hope for in the future. It is not easy for such a diverse group of ages, scattered all over Australia and overseas, to meet. Many of our colleagues are still teaching but all should be eligible for retirement by 2012. It has been, we feel, through Talkabout, the great efforts of Ann Smith our Secretary and her untiring efforts in tracing ex-students, our increasing e-group and our regular luncheons that members are getting to know one another.

Members and their partners are most welcome to attend our luncheons which are advertised in Talkabout. Members are urged to attend our Association Meetings, these too are advertised in Talkabout. They are open to all alumni, we need your ideas and we warmly invite you to actively participate in our unique organisation.



President Bob watches as Ann Smith cuts the Reunion cake.

The Scholarship Fund is over \$36000.

REPORT OF WWTC REUNION 26-28th September, 2003

Compiled by John Riley (1948-50)

This function, the result of much planning and preparation on the part of CSU Alumni Office and of the WWTC Alumni Association, took place at CSU Bathurst on a freezing but friendly weekend. In terms of expectations the number attending was disappointing, with some 106 former students present at some stage of the weekend and 38 apologies. Best represented of later sessions were 59-60 with 6, 60-61 with 10, 61-62 with 6 and 63-64 with 6.

Michelle and Lisa of the CSU Alumni Office accepted the challenge of making necessary arrangements for the reunion, and were present much of the time over the weekend to greet new arrivals and ensure their needs in terms of refreshments were attended to. Our thanks to these tireless people and to the staff responsible for catering that helped make the weekend a great success.

An account of events as they took place would probably be of most interest to Talkabout readers.

FRIDAY

At 1.30 Michelle and Lisa were busily preparing name tags and greeting early arrivals, mainly members of the Alumni Committee whose task it was to prepare at one end of the James Hardie Room of



Professor Ian Goulter (Vice Chancellor), Blair O'Meara (2003 Scholarship recipient), Bob Collard (President WWTC Alumni Association)

the Centre for Professional Development a display of the memorabilia collected over past months. This involved the hanging of scores of old photographs using bluetack (old skills had to be re-learned by a couple of members), and the draping of a couple of new and old-style blazers and sports jackets, plus a number of sports pennants of earlier vintage (what happened to later vintage?).

Also displayed were graduation programs and some interesting documents. One student donated her final examination Attainments Certificate, in the form of a duplicated sheet of ordinary foolscap paper, with D, C or P results crudely inserted by typewriter, and the pencilled symbols not even deleted. This was one of numerous items of interest

retained for submission to either the Wagga Wagga Museum or the Riverina Archives. It is hoped that certificates in later years were a trifle more worthy of framing.

Attracting much interest were two folders of over 120 A4-sized photographs from early College days through to the 1960s, prepared with the intention of donating these to the above institutions in Wagga Wagga.

Three books of selected pages from the College's newsletter Talkabout from the years 1948-1950, with illustrated inserts, also drew some attention from arrivals anxious to compare notes on their respective experiences at College.

Our thanks go to the numerous people who donated photos and other documents that helped to make the display so popular.

There was an informal get-together at 6 p.m., after which refreshments in the form of finger food and drinks were available. After arrangements for the following day were confirmed, former students "batted on" at will until it was time to disperse.

SATURDAY

While further newcomers were registering in the James Hardie Room, catching up with former friends continued over morning tea till it was time for coaches to leave on two planned tours, one to Local Villages and the other to Historic Homes of the district. Some new arrivals for the first time had the chance to meet members of the WWTC Alumni Committee who till then had merely been names.



1960-61 Session

Jim Robertson, Gwenda Zappert, Beth Hudson, Bill Keast, Chris Martin, Norma Fowler, Margo Crofts, Kay Killick, Joan Hosking, Ross Hosking



1951-52 Session

Roy Parker, John Skene

Margaret Lock (Wardrop) Ruby Riach (Lecturer) Joan Gerard (Templeton)

The day was totally unpleasant for touring, with icy winds calling for thick jackets and scarves, and pity help those without! Nevertheless, former friends relished the chance to be together again and to enjoy the experience.

Those partaking in the VILLAGES tour were delighted (?) to hear we were heading for historic Carcoar, when it was already snowing at nearby Oberon. Snow actually fell during the trip, with ice seen running down the operating windscreen wiper. A former Bathurst boy did his part by offering an account of sites of interest in the city on departure.

The tour of Carcoar, the second oldest proclaimed village west of the mountains, included visits to or sighting of buildings pre-dating the 1850s, after which the village had gone into decline. Our guide gave an enlightening account of its history, after which the Court House and St Paul the Apostle church were inspected. At the war memorial a brief "exercise" was conducted, with former students performing creditably.

An enjoyable lunch was had at the Old Mill in Millthorpe, after which there was time to explore this tiny village. Because of the extreme cold, shops displaying a sign indicating "It's warm inside" did remarkably well, especially the Lolly Shop! One student who could no longer bear the cold splurged a princely sum on a sweater!

Stimulated by the cold, members of the party were very merry on the return journey to CSU, where hot drinks awaited us. Some took advantage of the vacant

hours before dinner in the Grand Dining Room by recuperating in their rooms.

The HISTORIC HOMES Tour was a most enjoyable outing:

1. ABERCROMBIE HOUSE is a must for all tourists. This "castle" has been and is being lovingly restored to its former glory by the present owners who have (grandfather, father and son) recovered much of the original furnishings which were sold off and disappeared at the clearing sale in 1934. It was built on an original granite outcrop from which the granite blocks were quarried and it took eight years to construct.

2. MISS TRAILL'S GARDEN HOME is an early Bathurst town dwelling made famous by its wonderfully early day gardens.

3. BEN CHIFLEY'S HOME seemed to be a modest but well equipped home of its day for a former engine driver. Some very interesting facts on our former Prime Minister were given by the guide.

The tour was concluded with a delightful drive around the Mount Panorama Racing Circuit. What a shame the speed limit was confined to 60 kpm!

REUNION DINNER

Alumni had been given the prior opportunity to choose their table companions for the night, in some cases newer graduates sitting with older ones. This seemed to work well. Square tables seating twelve allowed for easy communication among seated members. A feature of the décor at each was a gold box in the centre, containing a floral arrangement consisting of four magnificent gold gerberas set in green plastic. So the original College colours were well represented on the night. During a photographic session later in the evening, a couple of the more exuberant ladies amongst the party were seen promenading with gerberas in their hair!

After words of welcome from Lisa, entrée was served, followed by a brief address from Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Goulter. He spoke on the relationship between WWTC and the University, and went on to highlight the role of his institution in providing teaching and nursing staff for regional areas of the state.

Following the main course, President of WWTC Alumni Association Bob Collard gave a stirring address, highlighting our determination not to lose our identity. He made an appeal for younger alumni to take up the reins to ensure that WWTC did not disappear



Bill Keast and friends looking at old photos.



*Diane Grube, Julie Hughes, Lyn Kirby,
Margaret Crofts 1961-62*

from history. He also deplored the lack of recognition of the College today in Wagga Wagga itself, a failing the Committee is currently working to remedy.

Lew Morrell made an appeal for more people to contribute to Talkabout, both in the form of financial and of written material, before a raffle for a tapestry donated by Joan Gerard (Templeton – 1951-1952) was drawn.

The decision to have Ann Smith, Secretary and tireless worker of the Alumni Association, cut the special Reunion Cake was received with acclamation, in recognition of her devotion to the task. The cake was chocolate-iced, with the lettering “Wagga Wagga Teachers’ College Reunion” emblazoned on its surface. Slices were distributed during the rest of the evening.

Present at dinner as a guest of the Alumni Association were Blair O’Meara and his wife. Blair is the 2003 recipient of the WWTC Scholarship. He was unable to attend the Scholarship Presentation ceremony during May because of teaching commitments, but at dinner he made time to move among the audience and talk. Congratulations on your award, Blair, and best wishes for your future career in the profession.

There followed a logistical nightmare in the form of attempts to photograph in one group all graduates present. Various sessions were then photographed in turn, with 1948-1950 winning the unofficial award for attendance. Great good humour accompanied these efforts at photography.

During the meal, guests had been free to move around the hall to mix with former friends, so the event was a social success. It was near 11 before the gathering broke up after a most enjoyable evening, guests then having to brave the chill of the outside world again to head for their respective billets.

SUNDAY

First event for the day was an Ecumenical Service beginning in the Foundation Room of the CPD at 9.15, chaired by Bob Collard and assisted by members of the Alumni Committee. A pleasing crowd of over 60 people took part.

At 10 a tour was arranged for those wishing to see what this beautiful Campus has to offer. One can only draw contrasts with what early students at WWTC had to endure, and wish one had been born 50 years later (but would one be willing to change?). Those not taking part had a further opportunity to chat to friends over morning tea, and to , and to take more time to inspect the memorabilia display.

A gathering much looked forward to by members of the Alumni Association took place in the James Hardie Room at 11.30. President Bob addressed a large audience from across the years of WWTC on what the Association does and wishes to do. He introduced members of the Committee who have worked to carry out aims of the Association since its formation in 1997. Each member spoke on his/her role. Bob then speculated on the future of the Association when its members grow older and are unable to function. He repeated his dismay expressed at dinner that there is little recognition of WWTC in the city itself, and spent some time speaking on the relationship between the Association and the University, before concluding with an appeal for more alumni to become involved.

A number of questions were asked from the floor, and suggestions made, before the meeting was adjourned. A BBQ luncheon followed. Visitors were then free to leave at their leisure, many expressing appreciation of the weekend as a whole before departure.

All that remained for Committee members to do then was to take down the memorabilia display and to pack it into boxes for transport to the Museum at Wagga Wagga.

A last unofficial get-together of Committee members and other alumni who were staying overnight took place in

the lounge when all other guests had departed. A small party, equipped with impromptu refreshments in the form of cake, biscuits and drinks, whiled away the hours with much hilarity, telling tales of former teaching experiences that would have enhanced any collection of memories, e.g. a possum shot in the ceiling of a boarding house falling into a large bowl of separated cream standing below.

In conclusion, our thanks must go to the Alumni Office of CSU for the organization that made possible a most stimulating and enjoyable reunion. All those who took part in any way surely did EXCEL WITH HONOUR. One minor criticism that might be levelled at the University organizers was that the original WWTC badge did not appear on either of the two printed programs, though the later badge was placed on the two top corners of both. We students of early sessions took great pride in our badge, and regret its demise in later years.

P.S. A late message from Dr Henry Gardiner (alumnus and former lecturer at WWTC) has seemingly explained, in part at least, the change made to the WWTC badge in the late 1950s. With the building of new brick dormitories and the addition of new “houses”, the old four-house badge with its respective house symbols became outdated.



*Ken Little (1969-70) was the
“youngest” ex-student*

From the Secretary's Desk.

It has been very busy since the July Talkabout with planning and preparation for the Reunion on 27/28/29th September at Bathurst. Here is a list of the numbers in each session who attended.

1947 (14) 1948 (20) 1949 (9) 1950 (11) 1951 (4) 1952 (1) 1953 (nil) 1954 (1) 1955 (4)
1956 (3) 1957 (nil) 1958 (3) 1959 (6) 1960 (10) 1961 (6) 1962 (2) 1963 (6) 1964 (1) 1965 (nil) 1966 (2) 1967 (1) 1968 (1) 1969 (1) 1970 (nil) 1971 (nil)
Patricia Tunnicliffe and **Bill Keast** came from Canada to attend and **Diane Grube** from Oregon.

The numbers represent ex-students themselves and not spouses or friends who came along too. As you can see, half of those who attended were in the first four sessions.. If we want the Alumni to continue we need the help of later sessions.

Apologies were received from **Billy Andrew** (1947) **Trevor Broomfield** (1949), **Meg Byrne** (1947) **Sally Barnes-Cook** (1962) **Peter & Wendy Dobson** (1957). **Ted Fowler** (1951), **Arthur Fairey** (1950), **Graham Wright** (1963), **Rodney Bourke** (1958), **Noanie Cameron-Wood** (1952), **Don Smith** (1964), **John Corcoran** (1960)

Most reasons given were due to ill health. Peter and Wendy's grandson had been in a bad accident which was the reason for their cancellation.

Discussion took place about how many had **died since leaving college**. These are the numbers I am aware of, but there could be more that I do not know about:
(1947 (35) 1948 (32) 1949 (16) 1950 (20) 1951 (6) 1952 (9) 1953 (17) 1954 (15) 1955 (12) 1956 (15) 1957 (8) 1958 (6) 1959 (6) 1960 (7) 1961 (5) 1962 (4) 1963 (1) 1964 (5) 1965 (7) 1966 (1) 1967(1) 1968 (1) 1969 (2) 1970(1) 1971 (1)

(A list of those who I have been informed have died recently is on Page 15)

It is pleasing that we are finding people who have not received correspondence from the Charles Sturt University since they left college. Anyone who attended WWTC for the full course or any smaller amount of time is eligible to be

a member of WWTC Alumni. The number found are too many to mention by name in case I miss someone. .If you know of anyone please tell them that the reason they left after a short period is not important and to elect to receive Talkabout. I found five names in the Pioneers. One of these was **Warren Law** who went back to University and became a doctor and practices in the Mt Druitt area. One of the ladies at this reunion told me his name without a prompt.

The other five names are **Ada Faye Adams**, **Ross Clive Bree**, **Charles Barclay Chappel** and **Shirley Gladys Christiansen**. Do you know the whereabouts of any of them? Where are these Pioneers?
Mary Fealey, **Betty James** and **Alison Parsons**. Is **Norma Nielson** deceased?

On the other end of the scale 18 people entered WWTC in 1969 and chose to graduate early in 1973 under the name of WWTC. Can anyone find for me **Cheryl Beard**, **Lynette Cross**, **Janette Ann Smith**, **Margaret Tarran**, **Patricia Williams** and **Christine Wrecsycki**.

Thank you to all those who donated towards the Museum and Archives. We used them as a display at the reunion and now **Lew Morrell** is taking them to the Museum. There were lots of photos, the biggest one being the 1947 Pioneers donated by **Ron Jones**. Also there were graduation and musical programs, albums, newspaper cuttings, text books, college pockets, blazers (**John Riley** and **Alan Barnes**) college "blue" trophy (**Geoff Spiller**) and various other items. I wrote back to everyone who sent me something. Among these were **Murray Luke**, **Jenny Briggs**, **Jean Stanyer**, **Margaret Goulder Robyn McKinnon**, **Peter and Wendy Dobson**, **Bob and Olga Collard**, **John Riley**, **Ann Smith**, **Colline Cunningham**, **Sally Barnes-Cook**, **Paul Butz**, **Jim Walsh**, **Tony Skene** and **Brian Pettit**.

Brian donated his first novel "The **Weilmoringle Kid**" to the Riverina Archives.. Brian pioneered the school at Weilmoringle in 1961-building the school first before welcoming 57 pupils from the bi-cultural community. His autobiography is a heart-warming story that holds memories for many of us who were conscripted to the remote areas of

the state, and his work, recognized in western Canada, is expected to be distributed in Australia next year through JB Books
For copies of the book email Brian at **bpettit@island.net**.

Items were on display all over the weekend. I found the most unusual display was **Hazel Kay's** first tax return.

At the Saturday night dinner papers were distributed for everyone to write a short "story" about themselves (if they so desired). These will be published in later Talkabouts.

I have spoken to the following and have learnt that **Neville Betteridge** is in charge of boarders in a North Queensland school. **Jim Lewis** 1961-62 has a business in Mt Warragul, Vic. **Leigh Tobin** is walking much better since a knee operation, **Dr Alan Roberts** 1950-51 wants to receive Talkabout, **Arthur Paul Connor** 1963-64 has retired as principal of Ulladulla High School. **Rosemary McFarland** 1951-52 ended up doing office work. **Roger Bolton** 1971 was going to go across the Nullabor from west to east in a four wheel drive. He is also keen to attend a reunion. **Marion Greene nee Saunders** 1962-63 is keen to meet up with anyone from her session. **Ken Granger** 1959 sent a long letter recalling **Phil Johnston**, **Dick Rowling** and **Mick Redden**. **Jean Herlinger nee Herd** (lecturer) receives Talkabout again. **Ron Goodman** 1956, did one year at Wagga, graduated in Victoria. Taught there 17 years, then fifteen in Canberra and retired to North Coast. **Betty Dunn** 1951-52 goes opal mining every winter. **Leslie Gordon Denning** 1969 is glad to be found. **Martin Bowland** 1956 has worked for local government. **Helen Watson nee Cumes** retired in 2001. Could the Rev **Keith McIntosh** send me his correct address and year at college please.

Congratulations to **Gregory David Hotchkiss** 1952-53 who received an AOM from the governor.

Talkabout comes out three times per year, March, July and November. Please advise me if yours does not arrive.

Ann Smith

THE "DEMISE" OF WAGGA WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE



Admin Block from Gilmore gates 1960

since it commenced in 1947 in old unwanted buildings that had been a RAAF hospital.

At the closing ceremony Keith Swan, acting Vice Principal, gave a short history of the land. It had belonged to the Murrumbidgee Pastoral and Horticultural Society. During the war it was acquired for a RAAF hospital.. It then became WWTC. In 1971 the first building was still standing. There was a modern auditorium and other fine buildings. But buildings are not colleges. and this college has produced large numbers of teachers, all of whom bear the stamp of WWTC. The college first put an emphasis on the student in the school situation. There was an intense interest in the intellectual development of the student while demanding of each a loyalty to the college. Down the years this was achieved in a number of ways. Sometimes the principal had been the leader and sometimes he had been dragged protesting into innovation.

Prizes which were awarded were:

Dux:

Miss M Coleman of Goulburn
Highest Examination record in Second Year:

Miss Kaye Nicholls

Highest First year record in 3 year course:

Miss Brenda Taylor

Highest Second Year record:

Miss Ann Butterworth

Highest exam result Two Year course:

Miss Louise McCarthy

While going through the donations sent to me for use in the Wagga Wagga Museum or Archives and to use as a display at the Reunion for any ex-student on 27-28-29 September 2003 I found information on the closing of the Wagga Wagga Teachers' College. When I first started writing "From the Secretary's Desk" I had no idea just when we ceased to be Wagga Wagga Teachers' College and became the Riverina College of Advanced Education, known as R.C.A E. The following information was sent to me from various sources.

in 1972 with 500 students, which would increase to 1500 in five more years.

The WWTC ceased to exist as a separate entity in December 1971 but officially the change over did not occur until January 1st 1972. The campus was still to be used for Teacher Training. 240 first year students (1971) became part of the Advanced College of Education and took some of the spirit and views of the WWTC with them. The last Graduation ceremony was held on 11th December 1971. Moreen Coleman of Goulburn was Dux of the college.

Warren Poole sent along a copy of the last Talkabout, the cover of which stated:-

When the College opened in 1947 there were 150 students. In 1971 there were 450 .The College made many advances

"We regret to announce the death of the Wagga Wagga Teachers' College in childbirth.

Died December 1971

====Always in our memory====

The booklet consisted of 13 pages of pictures, mainly students, who unfortunately are not named.

The information was taken from the Wagga Wagga Daily Advertiser, which incorporated the Wagga Wagga Advertiser. It covers January 14th 1971 when Dr C. D. Blake, senior lecturer in Plant Pathology at the University of Sydney was appointed the Principal of the Riverina College of Advanced Education in March 1972.. It was anticipated that the RCAE would open



Ann Smith and Gladys Budd looking at where the Admin Block used to be (1991)

Leadership and Community Service:
Alan Baptist and Jennifer Clark

Former principals GW Muir and acting principal R.E.Wade were present as well as Mr Hale.

Mr Hale, principal from 1961 to 1971 stated that this was the first and last time there were two Graduation ceremonies in the one year. (*This was not entirely true as the 1948-1950 session and 1949-1950 sessions both graduated in 1950*) Official guests included dignitaries from Wagga. No other Teachers' College was represented but Mr. G H Duncan, the first vice president in 1947 said he would have liked to be present.

Mr Hale told those at the ceremony that the college had a great many members of staff, both academic and non academic. Mr Blakemore, first principal; set about creating gardens out of the lucerne patch. This policy of creating as pleasant an environment as possible demanded devotion from staff. These staff came from every continent. Now we find former students spread all over the world.

Mr Hale praised the Student Representative Council, library and office staffs, kitchen and dining staffs, gardeners, the schools who had a friendly relationship with the college and the people in organizations. He told the visitors that the centre of the college has been the students who have always considered the welfare of others in sporting, social and residential life. The students had never let themselves or the college down.

In 1971 a special group of 28 Third Year students, helped by the generosity and hard work of the lecturers were hand picked, mature, fine young people who graduated as the hopes of WWTC. A further 161 students were to be advised by post of their exam results.

The President of the Students Representation Council, Mr Alan Baptist expressed that most students were sorry to be leaving friends made there. Robert Hosking, (3rd year) and Bill Sheridan, a second year leaver expressed that the college had lost a lot of its spirit in its last year. It only seemed to be evident in the football season. Male students did not appear to be sorry that the college would no

longer exist. The girls seemed to view their college through different eyes. Bronwyn Yetfoy really thought it was sad. There would be no more people going out into this world who could say that they had been trained at the great WWT College. There had been a lot of communication between lecturers and students. Would it continue? Jan Malone really enjoyed the two years she had been there and hoped that the new RCAE did the same for its students. Bob Neich, president of the WWTC Ex-students Association, said that although the college was closing, students would carry memories of it for the rest of their lives. He told them that their Teachers' College days would be the good old days and the best old days. He hoped that reunions for former students would continue to be held.

The Wagga Wagga Teachers' College officially closed on Monday, 11th December 1971.

The college flag was lowered by Alan Baptist and Jennifer Clark..

The lecturers and staff walked out the gates and the gates were closed.

Thus started a new era of education.

I acknowledge the receipt of newspaper cuttings selected from the Wagga Wagga Advertiser, to Mr Wal Fife (member) for Wagga, and to students Beverley Raward and Ashlyn Miles nee Burgess for sending some cuttings to help me in my search for when the College closed

Ann Smith

Health Education & Promotion International Inc. The Schools Total Health Program



Editors' Note :Dr Colin Yarham (1948-50) attended the Reunion and spoke about his work with HEPI. We agreed to publish the following information which describes the work he does in this important area. Any person who feels

that they would like to help Dr Yarham in this field of work can contact him at the address or the phonenumber included in the article.

A number of requests have been received from organisations for information on HEPI, myself and the work we do in developing countries, especially after being honoured as a Life Member of the Australian College of Educators.

Children round the world have the right for a happy, healthy life. However, health statistics highlight the gross disparity that exists between this ideal and the reality. There is horrendous erosion of the well-being of young people through ignorance, substance abuse, starvation, malnutrition, violence, road deaths, abuse, maltreatment and diseases such as dengue fever, tuberculosis, malaria, polio, cholera, typhoid, and HIV/AIDS. In Tamilnadu, India the figures show that 26% of infant deaths in some areas are due to infanticide, euphemistically referred to as death due to social causes. Girls are often not wanted. Millions of children will die needlessly this year. The essential task is to address the needs of children. Through education children are empowered with the life skills essential for enhanced quality of life. In doing so, we may eliminate ignorance regarding health, confront negative attitudes and values and establish the foundation for healthy living for current and future generations. Despite television images, it is difficult for people living in better circumstances to really understand the depth of need of children and youth in many countries.

Most people declare that they love children.

“If you love don’t just talk about it, do something.” (1 John 3,18)

The *Schools' Total Health Program* (STHP) is an internationally developed health education and promotion model that utilises and strengthens the existing educational infrastructure. The aim is to locally develop and implement a culturally sensitive and intensely practical school health promotion syllabus adapted from the STHP model developed by our association,

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HISTORICAL MEMORIES

Submitted by Dawn Stewart 1950-51

ENNGONIA SCHOOL CENTENARY -6/05/1984.

From "The History of Bourke" Vol.
XII- 1992. Abridged version.

Prepared by the Teacher and the
Department of Education.

Enngonia, or Eringonia as it was commonly known in its early days, is an isolated township on the Warrego River, literally "at the back of Bourke", and only 40 kilometres from the Queensland border. It owed its existence to the river and the fact that it was on the travelling stock route for the large herds that moved down from places such as Cunnamulla in Queensland to the railhead at Dubbo, or to Bourke when the railway reached that town in 1885. The population of Enngonia rose and fell in accordance with the seasons and the fortunes of the pastoral industry. Bad seasons saw an inevitable decline, often enough to close the school: a run of good seasons brought renewed prosperity, an influx of population, and new hope for the school. Since 1884 Enngonia Public School had been closed one year out of every three: it has rarely had more than fifty pupils enrolled, and has more usually had between 20-30 pupils.

Establishing A School.

By the time the residents of Enngonia were ready for a school, the government school system was well established. When the Department of Education had taken over from the Council of Education (1867-1880) it had inherited nearly 1,200 government schools and in a flurry of activity in the early 1880's had established hundreds more, so that by the end of 1883 there were over 1,600 government schools scattered throughout New South Wales. None of these had so far, been "scattered" at Enngonia. The Public School at Bourke had been operating since 1866, (and until early 1883 when Barrington Public School opened) Bourke was the nearest school, being only about 60 miles away. Perhaps it was the knowledge that nearby Barrington had got a school that prompted residents at Enngonia to ask

for one of their own: however, it is just as likely that residents in 1883 believed that they finally had enough of school-age children to warrant a school, and applied for one.....

The first School Establishment.

The application for the school at Enngonia was immediately referred to the inspector of schools for the area, J. Alfred Fletcher. Fletcher could hardly drop everything and make the long trip to isolated Enngonia, so he planned to visit the township when he was inspecting his schools in the Bourke area. This he did in late November, and retired to the banks of the Darling River at Louth to write his report on the proposed school.

"Eringonia, (he consistently used this spelling though he acknowledged that the place was also known as Enngonia) is a small town, containing about 70 inhabitants, most of them being publicans, butchers, storekeepers, etc. and of only moderate means. There is now no school at all in the locality, and almost all the children are growing up in utter ignorance (and no doubt loving it). The parents are likely to send their children regularly, in the event of the Government establishing a school. There are about 27 children altogether that can be sent to school and I think the average attendance may reach 20. The population is surely to be permanent, and will increase, though perhaps slowly. The site, comprising one and a half acres and marked, as Church Reserve on the Topographic Map of the town, is available. It is suitable, and is no distant more than 600 yards from the homes of any of the children. No suitable, existing building is obtainable and if a school is to be established, a schoolroom must be erected, though the expense incurred may be greater than would be the case in many other parts of New South Wales".

Fletcher also explained that very few of the children had ever been to school in their lives, and most of them were, as their parents described them, "running wild", and by implication, the first teacher at the school would have an "interesting" time in taming such a wild lot. Fletcher also pointed out that Enngonia's climate was intensely hot in summer and, as there were no shade

trees on the proposed site, a weather shed was absolutely necessary; - for the same reason he recommended that the school be ceiled and lined, a practice not normally undertaken in small backcountry schools.

"On account of the frequent passing, at no great distance of mobs of travelling cattle, a fence should be erected to be immediately round the building, and to be about 50 rods in extent. The public houses (3) in the town are neither very quiet nor very comfortable, and, in the teacher's interests, a separate room, at the end of the schoolroom, should be provided, where he may study and sleep, whilst boarding at one of the hotels".

It takes only a little imagination and reading between the lines to see Enngonia as a fairly wild frontier town; a dusty town where thirsty drovers washed down the dust of the track, while enjoying themselves in a rowdy fashion at one of the local pubs. Fletcher completed his report thus- and recommended:

"...the erection of a wooden schoolroom, 20 feet by 30 feet, ceiled with calico, lined with hessian with paper pasted over it, and roofed with galvanised iron, with a room 20 feet by 8 feet at one end for the teacher to use as sleeping quarters- estimated cost two hundred and forty pounds".

(The Minister approved, but cut the cost to one hundred and fifty pounds to erect a 20 by 20 feet structure. It is interesting to note that the completed building measured 21 by 15 feet. As a temporary measure while the school was built, the Department rented a house to accommodate a teacher -one room being set aside as a classroom).

Mrs Ellen Johnson was appointed Enngonia's first teacher. To have a woman in charge of a school was not particularly unusual in 1883. She had no formal teacher training, but she had some very desirable characteristics- she was used to the country, was fully acclimatised and was willing to go to Enngonia.

Mrs Johnson, her husband, four children, two vehicles, six horses and a hired man, set off from Goodooga to travel the 170 miles to Enngonia. They had the advantage of cool weather, but

HISTORICAL MEMORIES

there was no feed along the way, as drought had greatly affected the outback country so much so, that the coach companies had had to reduce their services and put on smaller coaches, too small to carry the family's furniture and household goods. Thus the Johnsons had to provide their own transport during the three-week journey across country. On the way, they lost two horses through injury, so that all in all, getting to Enngonia for the Johnsons was more like a safari into the deepest darkest interior of New South Wales. To offset the cost of this, Mrs Johnson claimed Fifteen Pounds Ten Shillings from the Department, a claim supported by Inspector Fletcher, a sum that was reduced to Eight Pounds Fourteen Shillings when it was pointed out that "*the Department does not undertake to defray the cost of removing teachers' furniture etc*".

Mrs Johnson had been at the school for a short time when she became aware of a problem, which has faced people in Enngonia for all its existence. "*Provisions*" she noted in a letter to the Department "*are very dear here*". She wanted an allowance to compensate for this, a request the Department agreed to. Mrs Johnson's husband continued his business as a carrier until the terrible drought of 1887-89 wiped out his horses. Mrs Johnson kept having children- No 8 arriving when she was 46 years old- each confinement allowing her four weeks leave. She was highly esteemed as a teacher. However, one of her inspectors found that her scholastic ability was anything but impressive: he found that she could only barely do the normal teachers' examinations in Grammar, Arithmetic and Geography, while the other subjects she could not manage at all. Mrs Johnson was clearly only suitable for a small country school, a description which fitted the Enngonia school perfectly. At the conclusion of nine teaching years, Mrs Johnson and her successor, Emma Smith sent in a request for repairs. Consequently, at a cost of Twenty Five Pounds, the ceiling in the schoolroom was renewed with pine instead of calico, the boys' toilet, which had collapsed and was only held up by the aid of several logs on either side of it, was rebuilt and other minor

repairs were made. In addition, a new supply of long wooden desks and forms (each 8 feet 6 inches long) was supplied to replace the rickety old furniture.

The Turn of the Century.

The third teacher was a male- one Thomas Clothier- 1898-1901.

"I wish to explain that I am compelled to board at the hotel, in this place, since I cannot obtain private lodging; which I would much prefer. The amount I have to pay is One Pound a week. I also have to give out my washing which costs Six Pounds per year; and considering the small salary which I receive, and the amount I have to pay away for living, by the time I supply myself with a few clothes, and other necessities, I have nothing left. Also taking into consideration, that I have been teaching in this remote part, since January last; I should like very much to avail myself of the opportunity afforded during the Christmas Vacation to go home and see my parents; but the expense incurred by coach, by rail, is very great, and I cannot possibly do it while receiving such a small salary, Seventy Two Pounds per year. *I therefore have the honour to apply for a Climate Allowance, to enable me to support myself, while teaching in this remote part...if the allowance is granted to me I will be most happy to remain here as a teacher, and use my best endeavours to further the progress of the school*".

Clothier's application was successful and he was granted a living allowance of Twelve Pounds a year, which came to nearly 17% of his salary.

(A new building was provided in 1899 and the school closed in 1904. A subsidised school (one where the Department paid a subsidy for each pupil and parents paid the running costs of the school) and again run by Mrs Johnson, was in use until 1908. Itinerants burnt down the then unused public school in 1916.

Attempts to obtain the services of a teacher succeeded in 1919, when Mr. J.H.Daniels was appointed- but the school was closed again in 1920 and was not reopened until 1931, when Frank Vere received an appointment. There was a teacher but no building, so the proprietor of the hotel offered to erect a schoolroom if each family with

pupils at the school paid him two shillings and sixpence a week for its use. The building was a galvanised iron hut, 24 feet by 12 feet, unlined and unsealed, more like a camp oven on a large scale. Accommodation for the teacher was still at the hotel, and after two years Frank Vere was rewarded with a move to the cooler and greener hills of Bathurst, and two years later, his successor, Albert Godfrey received the same treatment. A Mr. Chick was transferred from Suntop, near Wellington, to reopen Enngonia School in 1935, but as it was closed again the following year he was transferred to Blossom Vale near Cowra. The school remained closed until near the end of the Second World War. However, its chequered history over sixty years was about to change. A local Stock and Station Agent recorded this account of the last years leading to the school's centenary.

Bert O'Donnell's Memoirs Re: Enngonia School 1945-1984.

"School recommenced in the Catholic hall due to the enterprise and hard work of the local policeman. Sgt. Solway had two children of school-age and was concerned that his children were receiving no education. At that time there was a major reshuffle in the Cunnamulla district, when "Tinnenburra" Station (a holding of over 1 million acres) was subdivided into 17 new blocks. The aboriginal tribe, which had inhabited that area since tribal times, was encouraged to leave its historical home and resettle on the Warrego River at Enngonia. Part of Sgt. Solway's lure was to guarantee the education of their children in a school which would be re-opened now that numbers would be sufficient. The school opened in May 1945, under Frank Milne, who was faced with the problems of overcrowding and lack of facilities. There was no blackboard and the teacher used chalk on the wall and rubbed it off with a damp cloth. The children in 1st Class ranged in age from 7-14 years due to their never having had the chance to go to school. In 1952, a portable school was brought to Enngonia and fixed into the present site. This school saw years of good service until the early 60's when the

TEACHING MEMORIES

“Where so e’re our schools may be”.

In the last Talkabout Malcolm Hanratty wrote about his first appointment to Forbes Public and his experiences in Mrs “Ockin’s” boarding house.

Marshall Johnson has contributed his memories of his appointment to the same school.

Ours was, as Malcolm Hanratty had written, Forbes Public, where I was assigned to the 54 shining faces in 3rd class.

We were indeed domiciled at “Ockin’s Boarding House. Mrs Hocking was a gentle, deeply religious soul, who, in a quiet moment, related to me how she had arrived, a young woman from a strict city family, betrothed and properly chaperoned, to be met at Forbes Railway Station by her future husband who was from a family on a well-known district property. The Station Master, by way of friendly welcome to the new arrival, said, “Ah, so ya goin’ tit pullin’ are ya?” She was mortified, burst into tears and sobbed uncontrollably until a kindly, concerned bystander assured her that the expression was common local usage for “Dairy Farming”. Golden Syrup (Cocky’s Joy) had remained a staple on the dining table when the couple retired from the farm to buy a large house “in town”.

Malcolm mentioned Larry O’Leary. He would also be able to attest to the many hair-raising rides we had in Larry’s pride and joy, the Mark IV Jaguar. If, on a trip to Parkes, we were not doing close to 100 mph (the ton) by the time we were abreast of the Doroobalgie Abattoir, Larry would shake his head and lament the lack of dedication on the part of the mechanic who was charged with fine-tuning the engine. On one occasion when we had barely raised 85 at this juncture, Malcolm, in jest, suggested that the Jag, or the driver, or both were losing their punch. Larry was somewhat affronted and shouted back above the roar that he didn’t think it prudent to speed when he had a crook tyre on the back which could blow at any moment. Mal and I became very quiet!

When the footy season was getting under way I lined up for training. After a Possibles/Probables match and a trial against Orange, I was taken aside and informed by some very serious faced officials that I would be the new first grade five eight. They asked where I came from and I said Tumut. To great rejoicing, the rumour quickly spread around town that a “selector’s dream” – a new 5/8 from a strong Group 9 Maher Cup side was to take over from the ex-Sydney first grade paid Captain/Coach who had moved on. When I confessed to the coach that I hadn’t played a serious game of League since the Tumut Intermediate High school side had won their division final at the Junee schoolboys carnival,* his face turned ashen and he had trouble speaking for several minutes. Nevertheless, when I was appointed the following week to the District relief staff (first stop Tullamore) he made representations to the DI to see if the decision could be reversed. Apparently the Inspector said he was responsible for staffing schools, not football teams, so my League career ceased before it started.

After a vagabond existence I was appointed Teacher-in-Charge at Jemalong about 20 miles from Forbes, replacing Frank Ley, a WWTC graduate from an earlier session. After WWII, and irrigated soldier settlement subdivision had been established down stream from Jemalong Weir. The school had been brought from a previous redundant site and set up on piers because the area was subject to flooding. The enrolment of 30 or so ranged from Kindy to 6th Class and was, as the Inspector enthused, “a challenge”.

There was nothing you could tell the country kids about manure. During on Poetry reading at the mention of “the moss and the sedges”, one called out “What’s sedges, Sir?” Well, I wasn’t sure, and wishing to press on I said it

**(Except for the notable occasion at College when the Small Schools section, which contained the majority of the WWTC first grade side, was challenged and beaten by a pick-up team, which included Mick Hayes, an exponent of Aussie Rules!)*

was that green stuff on ponds. A flash of recognition – “Ah, frogshit!”. As was common practice I was to board with alternate families for a set period. The first accommodation was on a dairy farm where the farmer’s wife served two duck eggs for breakfast every morning, I haven’t eaten one since!

One time after scratching myself on a nail in the cowshed the wound turned into an abscess. The farmer announced that he had para-veterinary experience and produced a large syringe of penicillin. It didn’t have a plunger so after inserting the needle into my arm he injected the contents with the aid of a suitable handy stick. I didn’t feel any discomfort and was healed in a day or two. On another occasion I badly strained my back. The farmer gave me a tablet that he said would relax the muscles. It did. I was so relaxed I couldn’t scratch myself. He later told me it was a tranquilizer that he gave to cattle to quieten them for transport. One of the settlers was given to bouts of alcoholic over-indulgence and at such times it was not uncommon for him to break out the shotgun and blast away at imaginary demons while his wife and kids cowered under the house. On at least one occasion he stood armed, and in a state of semi-undress, in the middle of the road demanding payment of a toll from the startled drivers of passing vehicles.

One day he rocked up at school in a belligerent mood. I happened to be in a non too tolerant mood myself, so I took up a posture as near as I could replicate to those I had seen painted on the side of Jimmy Sharman’s boxing tent at the show. The attitude changed. A hand was extended: “You’re a mate of Frank Ley’s aren’t you?” “Any mate of Frank’s.....”,..... and he left. Phew! At about this time, that new found College drinking and rose garden destroying friend – who shall be nameless – (it was Bill Heap), was appointed TIC of a little hamlet about 20 miles from Cudal on the Orange road. On a subsequent social visit to Cudal I was regaled in the bar of the local pub by a gaggle of local young men who were bursting to relate the tale of “The night of terror”.

TEACHING MEMORIES

It transpired that on a particular Sunday night William had attended an extended party that went well into the wee small hours. There had apparently been much hilarity and good-humored banter as Bill fired up the trusty canvas hooded Chev and set off for home. The effects of the chill winter air combined with the generous amount of good cheer that had been enjoyed made for dubious navigation. Having almost achieved his destination, fate, in the form of a narrow bridge stepped in. Taking out a panel or two of bridge railing, the vehicle then cannoned across the road and demolished a clump of small trees. The steering became uncommonly difficult, but Bill ploughed on – literally, because the impact had shredded the front tyres, and the rims were now at odd angles to the chassis. Oblivious to the cacophony, he strove masterfully on. (They don't make cars today, like they did in the thirties!). Arriving at his destination he was puzzled to see all the inhabitants of the little knot of houses huddled outside – women in nightgowns, men holding aloft kerosene lanterns – and all looking in fearful apprehension of a catastrophic event which was about to overtake them.

At a loss to comprehend this scene, Bill, with commendable concern, struggled, all arms and legs, from the machine, seized the nearest citizen and demanded "What happened?"

Next year, tiring of the Small Schools existence, Bill and I took ship to England. Thence to Canada. But that's another story.

Marshall Johnson 1950-51

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 11 am on Tuesday 3rd February, 2004 at the Teachers Credit Union, Homebush, 1st Floor.

All Alumni are invited to attend.

Snack lunch available plus tea and biscuits.

ENNGONIA SCHOOL CENTENARY

Continued from page 9

school enrolments began to rise dramatically and the projected school population could be seen to be beyond the little school's capacity. As it was, a bough shed had already been erected to accommodate the lower division, some distance from the school to reduce fire risk. This situation was becoming intolerable, as a rainstorm usually caused damage to the infants' books. Deputations to Mr. Jack Renshaw (then the NSW Premier) saw immediate action and a new school was built, and opened by Mr W. Fife. This school was a two-storey structure and was suited to the harsh summer climate. The school was tragically gutted by fire in 1975 and was in demountable buildings until 1979 when the present modern amenities were opened by Mr Renshaw - a fitting tribute to a man who did a lot for his electorate during his years in NSW politics".

WWTC REUNION

1956-57 Session

Our biennial reunion will be held on 20th and 21st March 2004 at Ranelagh House, Robertson (Southern Highlands).

Reunion includes Saturday lunch, Saturday dinner, Overnight stay and Sunday breakfast.

Session members are invited to attend any or all of the above.

Bookings can be made directly with Ranelagh House. 02 4885 1111.

Keith and Irene Crittenden (organizers).

WWTC REUNION 1963-64 SESSION

40TH ANNIVERSARY

We are planning a reunion of 63-64 ex-students to be held in Canberra during the October Long Weekend in 2004

Come along and recreate the fantastic atmosphere of our last get together!!

Contact Persons for "Expressions of Interest"

Grahame Keast (Dubbo) keasty446@telstra.com 68816575
Sue (Upton) King (Canberra) sue@kingsprint.com 0411 046347
John Cassidy (Sydney) 02 9635 6446
Marion (Smith) Giddy (Sydney) mlgiddy@yahoo.com.au 02 9654 9776

IN MEMORIAM

Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Thomas Alcorn

The following is taken from the Tribute presented at the service to celebrate the life of Geoff Alcorn on 1st September 2003. by Dr Neil Sainsbury, who was Geoff's room-mate at College in 1955-56.

Geoff commenced study at Wagga Teachers' College a couple of weeks after the rest of us as he had originally started Manual Arts teacher training in Sydney, because of his interest in technical things and because a vocational guidance test had said that was the most appropriate career for him. In recent years we have laughed about that, because I had been advised to enter into a trade such as window-dressing because of my artistic skills. In point of fact, Geoff and I attained 7 degrees between us including each becoming a PhD graduate. Geoff later attained the immense honour and distinction of being made an Emeritus Professor of the University of Western Sydney.

Geoff's late arrival at Wagga Teachers' College appears to have been a serendipitous event in his life because most of the Options courses were already full. Another student, Ken Paine, consequently talked him into taking the Biology Option course. That chance event led to Geoff developing a passion for biology, and he was consequently dubbed "Star Scientist" by the others in the course. They were right, because Geoff later returned to that same laboratory as a lecturer in science.

Until that success, Geoff did not seem to recognize his own latent intellectual abilities. Thereafter, he became more focused and studious and set himself the high goal of gaining one of the College's esteemed "hand-painted Certificates" at Graduation.

Geoff was the College's star Rugby hooker. I know all about that because I was a hooker too but he always hooked in the grade above me, including his being the First Grade hooker in our second year. Our room was often the scene of pitched hooking battles with each of us swinging from 2 chairs while someone else threw the ball in.

Actually, in one First Grade game he had his nose broken so badly that he had to have surgery. When a group of us

went to visit him at the Calgary Hospital we were so shocked by his black eyes and cheeks and his pumpkin nose, we agreed his dating life had probably finished. Unfortunately, things only became worse for him when he returned to our dormitory. The following morning, Geoff heard Ken Paine calling for help after he had fallen down the back stairs, and he rushed from his sick-bed to help him, only to have Ken stand up under his new nose. Geoff was a very forgiving person but he has often spoken of the pain of that encounter.

I am wearing my Australian National Servicemen's Association tie today because the studies of many of us, including Geoff, were interrupted by our being conscripted into National Service in the Army at the start of 1956 - our second College year. Whilst a private at Ingleburn Army Barracks, Geoff learned a number of skills that were to help him in his later life. For instance, he learned about meagre training budgets from our being prepared for mortal combat by each being given the experience of throwing our budgeted two hand-grenades and of firing our budgeted two mortar bombs. He also learned about teamwork, strategy and tactics, and of not complaining when every bone in his body ached from a long march with a full pack and rifle.

When we returned to College from National Service, Geoff was more assertive, more adventurous, and knew a lot about getting around the system. Although we both knew that the College would continue to feed us bromide in the milk to suppress our primitive sexual urges, we joined with our close friends to form the 'Garbage Guts Club' to see if we could get more food at each meal. We placed ourselves strategically at the point where all food entered the College dining room and our previously shy friend Geoff joined us in charming second and third helpings from the waitresses. Geoff's handsome face and winning smile were real assets in that battle, and our strategy worked.

Geoff's other post-National Service adventures included hitch-hiking with his friends on a goods train from The Rock back to Wagga, and jumping from it when the driver slowed it down whilst passing the Teachers' College, and a night manoeuvre where we climbed the

tall fence surrounding the Wagga Showground because we were too broke to pay the entry fee to the Wagga Show. Unfortunately, when we merged unnoticed into the crowd as only trained soldiers are able to do, we learned that entry was free for College students that night.

Geoff was proud to receive his National Service Medal from the Australian Government last year. Unfortunately, he was prevented by illness from marching with us in the National Service and Anzac Day marches in Sydney, but was pleased to hear that we had toasted him and our other ill and departed National Service friends at the end of each march.

Geoff's early entry into University studies in science after graduating from Wagga, and his subsequent move from Primary teaching to High School Science, motivated a number of his other Ipai dormitory friends including myself, to commence part-time studies at university. He was our role model but was the only one to study science.

At our College reunions in recent years, Geoff and his friends have agreed that Wagga Wagga Teachers' College remains our Alma Mater even though we have studied many more years at other colleges and universities. We recognize that what we had there was special. We consider we were very privileged because the culture and shared activities of Wagga Teachers' College enabled our 1955-56 Session to grow from a group of strangers, into a College community and close fraternity, and in the succeeding years into a caring family. The College had an ethos and motto "Excel with Honour" which Geoff so obviously practised at Wagga and in his subsequent life. As his Wagga family, we are both proud of our brother Geoff's life and achievements, and saddened by his untimely death after he had at last succeeded in living without a dialysis machine. That new-found freedom had enabled Geoff and Dianne to confidently book accommodation in Cootamundra for this year's College reunion. Even though he will no longer be able to be there in person, I can assure you now that Geoff will be there in our thoughts and hearts and prayers, and we know that he will be there with us in spirit.

Health Education and Promotion International Inc.

Continued from page 7

Health Education & Promotion International Inc. The ensuing syllabus will be incorporated within the state curriculum, with full government support. It will be implemented in all government schools within each of the states of the Indian subcontinent.

The *Schools Total Health Program* is a well-planned, sequentially developed health program for 5-18 year old children and youth. It is effective and sustainable and has been created to empower young people with the knowledge, attitudes and skills of healthful living. It encompasses critical issues. e.g., AIDS, Drugs, Tuberculosis. It focuses on the significance of personal decisions and behaviours, human relationships, community structures and practices that promote health. The program forges essential links between school and wider community. As a result, the promotion and improvement of the overall health of children, their families and their community is enhanced.

The Schools Total Health Program is a health equity program currently in progress in Tamilnadu State, India to reach 11.4 million children and youth. It has been introduced in co-operation with the Government of Tamilnadu by Government Order as a required, examinable health, lifeskills and social development syllabus for two periods per week in grades 1 to 12 of the 46,000 government schools. The strategy to sensitise administrators at all level and to set up cascade programs to train both pre-service and inservice teachers is difficult. The ensuing syllabus is incorporated within the state curriculum, with full government support and where introduced has been shown to improve student attendance, retention and performance in all subjects.

This program is an integrated, comprehensive approach to dealing with health, lifeskills and social development issues such as:

- population education,
- HIV/AIDS,
- child health
- life skills,
- substance abuse/drugs,

- social health
- values education,
- safety education
- maternal health,
- nutrition education,
- adolescent health,
- violence
- safety education,
- growth and development
- disease prevention,
- malaria,
- disaster management
- community health
- mental health,
- risk behaviour,
- family life education
- values education
- education of girl-child,
- malaria
- parenting,
- consumer health
- environmental health
- water /sanitation

all

organised into eight key areas of curriculum to cover all critical issues in the one required comprehensive syllabus.

The methodology of Life Skills involving critical thinking, communicating, interacting, decision-making, planning, negotiating, problem solving, valuing, analysing and listening, applied to each area of the health curriculum are essential parts of the teaching/learning processes.

The syllabus is thus recognised as relevant education for a real and useful life for each child, and was developed by professionals from every part of the state, in the culture and language of the state for the love and care of children of each state. A critical factor is ownership.

It is hard to imagine the years of constant effort required to negotiate with the politicians, Secretaries to Government, Directors of Education and Joint Directors and down the hierarchical line to 364,000 teachers. The negotiations to influence statutory National Council of Educational Research and Training which advises on all curriculum and the National Council for Teacher Education are endless. The latter is working with us to produce CD-ROMs on the STHP to go to all colleges and universities training teachers throughout India. The persistence needed to develop working

relationships with people from varying states who speak 29 different languages is legion.

It is noted that, apart from our work for street children, the various international manuals and our emphasis on education of the girl child, we are also in negotiations re STHP with governments of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka, have started in Pondicherry Union Territory as well as the scheduled beginning on 4th November to reach the 16 million children in Delhi State. The work has commenced in the Russian Federation after two professors visited. At invitation of the Minister of Education, I visited as adviser to the World Health Organisation. (a role filled for some 30 years in many countries as well as at HQ in Geneva.) Discussions with influential of five African countries is being arranged by WHO Afro-office, the initiative is being discussed by a group with the education officials in Iraq and a group in the Kimberleys in WA. The Web site gives more ideas. It is just for the love and care of children.

I am absent from Sydney for about 10 months each year but times at home never seem to coincide with alumni meetings. It is interesting to see the reactions and involvement of volunteers who have joined us for a year. We have one subject master from NSW Education who is with us this year with his wife who has MPH.

With good wishes.

Colin Yarham

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HALL OF FAME



PETER HERDEN

“ONE MAN’S STAND FOR JUSTICE”

Peter Herden attended WWTC in 1950-51. In 1954 he married Cecile Wakeling (1950-51).

In January 1997 he died after a short illness.

For more than thirty five years Peter devoted his time and energy to the Cowra community. He was admired and respected as a teacher, cricketer, golfer, rugby league manager, an member of the Royal Blind Society, Lions International, Festival of the Lachlan Valley committee, and the Cowra Tourist and Development corporation.

Peter has also been recognized as an outstanding personage in his fight for justice for Aboriginal people – Reconciliation.

The follow up to Peter’s death was the dedication of one of the painted pylons under Cowra’s bridge over the Lachlan River. Cowra Council had commissioned a renowned Aboriginal artist , Kym Freeman, to paint the pylons. This was a huge project which has become a significant tourist attraction to the town.

Council requested Kym to paint one pylon to be dedicated to Peter in recognition of his contribution to the town in the area of Reconciliation and the fostering of a harmonious co-existence of aboriginal and non-aboriginal citizens.

Cecile has given permission to publish in Talkabout the following which is taken from the eulogy by Father Pat Ruane, Parish Priest of St Raphael’s, Cowra.

When Peter Herden entered the Cowra education system more than thirty years ago he found Aboriginal children pushed to the margins of school life. Ignorance and prejudice had pushed them out of the main stream.

Peter understood the impact western culture had made on Aboriginal children with their nomadic, hunter, and non-hoarding mentality.

Western sophistication seemed to drive the Aboriginal children to fatalism, and caused them to be non-achievers intellectually and socially.

The average Aboriginal child of thirty years ago had little hope in the education system.

Peter sought an answer, and his search placed him into uncharted waters. The Department of Education had no answers. Aboriginal studies weren’t even thought of thirty years ago.

To find a ‘fair go’ for the Aboriginal children Peter creatively turned to archaeology with a passion. He developed the skills and discipline of archaeological science. He would say to family and friends, “A rise with an easterly aspect and water close by at hand is where you will find a hidden Aboriginal dwelling”. Cecile and family could tell us of the countless walks through the bush in search of “the rise with the easterly aspect”. They could tell us too of the digging and fossicking and excitement of the finds as happened on the day they found a left handed Waradjurie stone axe. The result of all the searching over the years is the legacy to Australia of one of the finest collections of Aboriginal artifacts in the country – a collection which Peter had bequeathed to the Aboriginal people.

What had all this archaeological search got to do with a “fair go” for Aboriginal children?

Peter used his collected artifacts as teaching aids. He illustrated to aboriginal and non-aboriginal children that Aboriginal civilization was old and

ingenious; and Aboriginal technology even if old was comparable to western technology. He gave white children an appreciation of Aboriginal culture, and dispelled their ignorance. To Aboriginal children he instilled pride in their heritage, and mutual respect was born.

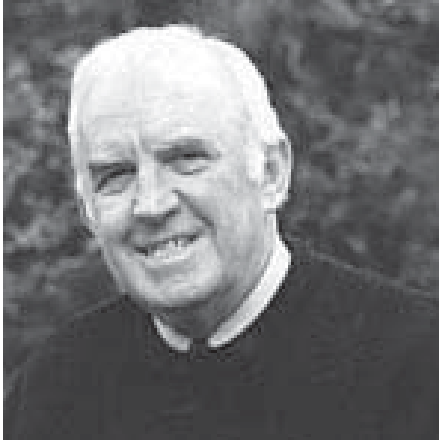
To further promote the rich Aboriginal civilization, Peter invited Aboriginal performing artists to his school and his home, where they were entertained and accommodated. Indeed Peter’s home was always open to Aboriginal people with whom he formed great friendships and espoused their cause. He facilitated, advised, and all but directed a Department of Education documentary on the Waradjurie tribe, which is still being used in the State’s High Schools.

Shortly before his illness, Peter helped organise a reconciliation event inviting the Professor of Military History from Canberra as guest speaker. The Professor discussed the contribution of Aboriginal people to Australian defence in the two World Wars. St Raphael’s Church was crowded with Aboriginal and non Aboriginal members of the community. Prayers were offered., forgiveness was sought, tears were shed, songs were sung, hands were shaken and plaques to commemorate the event were exchanged. The plaque present to us by the Aboriginal people of Cowra will soon be a permanent fixture in the Church.

Today, thank God, the Aboriginal people are finding their rightful place in society. Aboriginal study is part of the school curriculum. Peter Herden has made his contribution to this progress. The presence of Aboriginal people at Peter’s funeral is evidence that they saw Peter as a liberator. For Aboriginal people he was a Freedom fighter with all the passion and creativity of a Nelson Mandela or a Fred Hollows.

*May this man who hungered
for justice, Peter Herden,
rest in peace.*

HALL OF FAME



**Professor Terry Burke, TCert
CSU, BA UNE, MStudEd,
MEd(Hons), PhD(Oregon,
U.S.A.), FACE.**

Terry Burke's early career was in primary and secondary teaching. He was Deputy Principal at Ashford and Barraba Central Schools before taking up the position of principal at Hillston and then Lalor Park.

He was District Inspector of Schools, Nowra District from 1975 to 1978. Following a period as regional Inspector South Coast Region he obtained a scholarship to complete his PhD at the University of Oregon, USA. Upon his return to Australia he was appointed as Assistant Director in the Policy Research Unit of the NSW Department of Education. Appointments followed to

the positions of Director, Schools Directorate; Assistant Director General, Operations; Assistant Director General, South Coast Region; Deputy Director General, Teaching and Learning; Deputy Director General, Operations. He relieved on a number of occasions as Director General, NSW Department of Education and Training.

Dr Burke has held a number of positions during this period including Chairman, State Literacy Committee; Chairman, Promotional Appeals Committees; Member, Board of Studies; Chair, Education Department Research and Evaluation Committee; Chair, State Aboriginal Education Committee; Chair, State Schools Sports Council. He is currently a member of the Advisory Board for the National Arts School.

He has worked in a number of overseas countries on education projects, notably in Indonesia and Kenya.

Dr Burke retired from the Department of Education and Training in August 2000 and accepted a Professorial Fellowship at the University of Wollongong in Educational Leadership. (and Director of the Centre for Education Leadership).

Dr Burke's academic qualifications include: Teachers Certificate, Wagga Wagga Teachers College; Bachelor of

Arts, New England University; Master of Studies (Education), Wollongong University; Master of Education (Honours), Wollongong University; Doctor of Philosophy, University of Oregon, USA. He had been made a Fellow of the Australian College of Education.

He was awarded an A.M. in the Queen's Birthday (2002) Order of Australia Awards for services to Education.

He is a non judicial member of the NSW State Decisions Tribunal and a member of the Advisory Board of the National Art School.

Teaching Career.

Wagga Wagga Teachers College	1958-59
Connells Point Primary School	1960 – 62
Fairy Meadow Dem School	1963-67
Ashford Central School	Asst Principal 1967-68
Barraba Central School	Deputy Principal 1969-70
Hillston Central School	Principal 1971-74
Lalor Park	Principal 1975

WWTC ALUMNI SYDNEY LUNCHEONS

2004 DATES

WHERE – Masonic Club, 169 Castlereagh St., Sydney
Complete a Temporary Member's card at the Ground Floor, before proceeding to the 2nd Floor Lounge to socialize any time from 11, for 12 o'clock luncheon in 4th Floor Dining Room.

WHEN – Friday 21st November 2003
Tuesday 17th February 2004
Wednesday 19th May 2004
Thursday 19th August 2004
Friday 19th November 2004

COST – Up to \$27; pay for your own drinks.

MENU – Select 2 of 3 courses, with choices available in each.

WHO – WWTC Alumni from any session, partners & friends.

HOW – Phone Ann Smith (9635-0449) or John Riley (9525-5304) at least one week in advance so that numbers can be made known at the Club.

We look forward to renewing friendships and to making new ones.



REST IN PEACE

May our fellow friends rest in peace:-

- Geoffrey Thomas Alcorn 1955-56 died 25th August 2003
- Russell Edwards' wife
- Robyn Bennett nee McDonald 1/1/95
- Roy Hudson's wife Joan in July 2003
- Pam English's mother in July 2003. (Pam works in Alumni Office)
- Lawrence Deasey 1956 died about 2001
- Jean Vane nee Marshall died July 2003
- Trixie Collard (Bob's mother) died 4th July 2003
- John Cameron Whiteside 53-54 died 7th August 2003.

BACK PAGE BACK DATES



We are printing some extracts from Talkabouts of long ago. Send us a short piece from Talkabout of your era, preferably humorous or representative of the time.

AMATEURS ALL (7th June, 1948)

(Were any of you men ever in the habit of repairing the leather-soled and heeled shoes you wore, to save a few pounds? The family of this typist did so, and could appreciate what the writer of this article had to say.)

Our once quiet neighbourhood, which till recently only knew such comparatively innocent forms of post-adolescent delinquency as breaking windows and playing practical jokes, is now experiencing a rather serious outbreak of amateur bootmaking; and from tea-time to bed-time the tap of its hammers is like the noise of a shipyard. As a result, the whole social life of the College (the life that counts, anyway) has become disorganised. Study is looked upon as a waste of time; and our only song is the Anvil Chorus. All this has been brought about by the exigencies of the football season (you can't play in sandshoes) and also the monetary position, which forces us to be gentlemen of independent means - independent of money, that is. Let us consider for a few moments what this leprechaun business entails. You begin by trying to put a new pair of heels on your best shoes - that is, your only shoes. You select a blunt screwdriver and remove the worn layer or layers from the heel. The first thing you will remove, of course, will be a layer of skin from your own wrist; this is why you use a blunt screwdriver. When you get back from the chemists, you set to work again, and after an

hour's gouging, you expose a tank-trap of twisted nails. If you hammer these in, you will wreck the inside of the heel, and if you try to haul them out, the whole chassis will come with them. The right thing to do is to file the nails off, one by one, with a hacksaw, and as near to the leather as possible. The butts then should be hammered flat. The whole operation will take two evenings; one for the actual work, and one spent in the room of the obliging individual who lends you the hacksaw. In the meantime, someone has worn your best shoes - your only shoes - through molasses-like mud, and you are sure of fairly regular employment.

Next you seek a piece of leather for twenty minutes or so, and cut two heels from it with your bootmaker's knife (come at last into its own). Actually, you will cut out six pairs of heels; two in the leather, two in your towel, and two in your examination table, an error which will cause much concern, and correspondence with the Public Service. Having thus shaped the new heels, and your destiny, you proceed to attach the aforesaid heels to the prepared foundations, with small blunt-headed bouncing nails which are allergic to leather and have to be retrieved at intervals from the window sill or the anatomies of your long-suffering associates. Thirty percent of them will buckle under your vulcan blows, and most of the others will go in crooked and have to be dug out with the blunt screwdriver. However, you should be able to get at least one heel on before closing time.

We come at last to the parink (sic!) of the working edges. One method of paring is to use your fist as a last, and snick at the edges of the heel, whilst you are holding it above your head, but you will find it much quicker, though a little more dangerous, to grip the boot between your knees. Then take a razor blade, and making sure that your conscience is clear and your insurance premiums paid, you go to it, praying that you may get away with slashed pants and slight flesh wounds. When the heels have been trimmed, they should be blackened or browned; it is preferable to start with a pair of brown boots - blood leaves a distinctive indelible stain.

Finally, it is worth remembering that there is only one almost insuperable difficulty connected with this business of amateur bootmaking - you may be a great man of craft, you may have a wonderful pair of hands, and you may have unlimited time and unlimited patience (as have you, dear reader), but it is most unlikely that you will acquire the ability to talk, smoke or swallow saliva whilst your mouth is full of nails.

“TACITUS”

Ed: For “nails”, read “tacks”. One wonders if Tacitus brought a last (the bootmaker's tool to hold the shoe while he works on it) to College with him!

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