

A PUBLICATION
OF THE ALUMNI OF
WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

TALKABOUT



Volume 3: No 1

March 2000

ALUMNI EXECUTIVE RETURNED FOR 2000

At the Annual General Meeting held on 8th February, 2000, the President, Bob Collard thanked the members, the executive and the editors of Talkabout for their work this past year. He welcomed Michelle Fawkes, CSU Alumni Relations Officer, and expressed appreciation for the support received from CSU. He recognised the contribution made by our late patron Vic Couch and called for a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

The election of Office Bearers for 2000 resulted as follows:

President: Bob Collard,
Vice President: John Riley
Secretary: Ann Smith
Treasurer: Lindsay Budd
Talkabout Editors: Lew Crabtree and Lew Morrell.
Committee: June Hadley, Phil Bastick, Col Crittenden,
Dorothy Tanner, Nigel Tanner, Roy Parker, Bill Grant,
Graeme Wilson.



Left to right: Lew Morrell, Col Crittenden, Graeme Wilson, Bob Collard, Ann Smith, Phil Bastick, Lindsay Budd, John Riley.

Michelle Fawkes addressed the meeting and congratulated the members on the progress that they had made in establishing a functioning Association. The production of Talkabout had provided contact with the great majority of Alumni and many alumni who had been temporarily lost have now been found. The Scholarship Fund has received good support was on target at the end of 1999. She suggested that at the next meeting we discuss guidelines for the awarding of scholarships.

The Spirit of Giving is Alive and Well

1999 Gifts Target Reached

Congratulations! The target amount of \$10,000 by the end of 1999 has been reached. We are well on the way to reaching our target of \$25,000 over five years. So far contributions have been received from only a small proportion of the total WWTC Alumni who have been contacted. If the rate of giving is maintained it is possible to consider the awarding of a scholarship to commence in the year 2001. Discussion on the guidelines for the awarding of scholarships will be discussed at the Alumni meeting on 9th May 2000.

REMEMBER any gift over \$2 is TAX DEDUCTIBLE

From the Editors' Desks



It is most encouraging to be receiving letters and contributions. Please keep them rolling in. We are, however, not receiving article contributions from sessions of the sixties or early seventies. We are now appealing to those sessions to contribute articles of interest. We would like someone from each of the sessions of these periods to volunteer their services as contact persons to let Talkabout know of their doings and to encourage their colleagues to submit articles of interest.

TALKABOUT DOES NOT BELONG TO THE PIONEERS – IT'S YOUR PAPER TOO

There is a fascinating collection of archival material from the Department of Education (as we knew it). Some of this material is contained in a book entitled "It Happened at School" edited by Mary McPherson who has given permission to extract some of these pieces for the interest of Talkabout readers.

Mary, an archivist with the Department, has drawn on documents from the public education systems beginning in 1848. She uses reports, reminiscences, photographs, diaries, letters and even poems.

The collection reflects the day-to-day experiences of inspectors, teachers, pupils and parents through its century and a half of existence. Some of these are hilarious but all of them give us an insight into how eccentric some of our forebears were and of how human values have changed over time.

These are two examples:

1. The Man Who Opened Schools

Alfred Mills aged 31, an untrained teacher, started his career at the beginning of 1887 by opening a school at Nanama (later Griffiths Flats) near Murrumbateman without the Department's authority.

He was subsequently appointed officially as the teacher at Nanama in March, but fell out with parents. He handed in his resignation but kept on teaching.

He spent the next twelve months moving about the State opening schools or attempting to do so even after his resignation had been accepted in July.

Places touched by Mills were Wantabadgery, Mundarlo, Victoria Park (near Corowa), Margunna (out of Tocumwal), Mathoura (near Deniliquin), Hill Plain and Narraburra. His ability to travel was remarkable.

In February 1888 a warrant for his arrest was issued, while on 12th May he wrote to the Department from Goulburn Gaol saying "I won't apologise for my writing as I have been breaking stones."

The exchange of letters between Mills and his inspector provides wonderful reading for anyone who has taught in N.S.W. schools.

2. Teacher Tries To Fool Inspector

John Crimmings was the teacher at Run of Water (later Yarra) Public School near Goulburn for the first five months of 1890. On 13th March that year Inspector David Cooper arrived unannounced at the school at 9.30 am and found thirteen pupils waiting outside the school building, which was locked. Cooper reported "The teacher who lodges at a Public House about 300 yards distant did not arrive until 10 minutes to 10. When he unlocked the door and entered the school he hastily turned back the school clock to 9.30 and having his back turned, and being pretty smart in his movements, he evidently thought he had performed the trick without me seeing what he was doing. The clock is a small American one, easily altered by turning a screw on the outside of the case."

Crimmings was cautioned by the Department in May of that year.

The book "It Happened at School", and its companion, "Telling Tales out of School" are available from Mary McPherson, 31 Paine Street, Maroubra 2033. Phone (02) 93496180. Price is \$19.95 each. Add \$5 for postage and packing.

TEACHING MEMORIES OF WWTC GRADUATES

John Riley has been compiling a collection of teaching memories specifically from WWTC graduates for several years. Although he regularly appeals for more contributions he is disappointed at the small number of responses – he has very few from years later than 1955. With a view to having the book published early next year he makes an appeal for more anecdotes.

He has a tentative format in mind with chapter headings as follows:

1. Where it all began - Life at Wagga Wagga Teachers' College
2. First Appointments - the stern reality
3. Probationary Days
4. Travel to Distant Schools
5. Boarding and Flatting Days
6. Memorable (and Forgettable) Pupils
7. Memorable (and Forgettable) Parents
8. Encounters with the Inspectorial System
9. Brushes with the Bureaucracy
10. Extra-curricular Activities
11. Hazards of Professional Development
12. Favourite Schools
13. Retirement Joys, ETC.

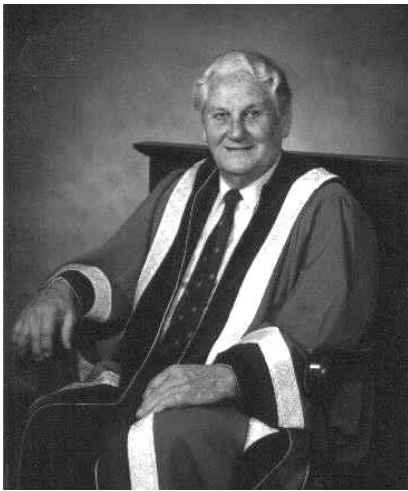
All teaching memories that have been published in Talkabout are forwarded to John to be included in the book. Everyone has had unique experiences; it is a matter of putting pen to paper. If you wish your story to be included in the anthology of the exploits of all those teachers trained at WWTC start writing now.

If you have a photo to illustrate the story, please send it in. All photos will be returned.

Contributions can be sent to the Editors of Talkabout or directly to:

John Riley
2 Woorak Crescent
Miranda NSW 2228
02 9525 5304

VALE VIC COUCH



Alumni of the first four sessions of Wagga Wagga Teachers' College were saddened to hear in November of the death of their former highly esteemed Lecturer in Education and more recently co-Patron of their Alumni Association, Dr Victor James Couch, A.M., K.S.G.G., B.A., M.Ed., Ph.D., F.A.C.E.

Vic, as we have become accustomed to addressing him more familiarly in recent years, passed away on Tuesday 23rd November after a period in hospital. Numerous College alumni attended the Requiem Mass held for him at St Mary's North Sydney, on Monday 29th November.

Vic began at Wagga Wagga College in 1947 a long and distinguished career in teacher education which did not end even after his retirement as Deputy Principal of Sydney Teachers' College in 1976. Following this he began his work for Catholic Education, resulting in formation of the Catholic Teachers' College and the Catholic University.

During his years at Wagga, Vic was highly respected by his students. There he was one to experiment with alternative forms of lecturing which on one occasion at least had comical repercussions.

He also took a keen interest in College sporting teams, including the rugby league team when it participated in the group competition. He was heard to tell of one encounter with three or four angry looking locals at Tumbarumba who tried to gain access to the College dressing room (a tin shed). Vic, who happened to be standing near the door, barred their entrance, saying, "You'll

only get in over my dead body." He was very glad that they did not take him literally.

Vic's love of cricket persisted over the years, a point not lost on Dr Brian Croke during his tribute at the funeral. Dr Croke drew attention to Vic's age at his passing - 87 - cricket's "Devil's number" — saying that Vic would probably not be surprised at having reached that nemesis, but not passed it. Vic had a fund of stories to tell about cricket.

Vic had a keen sense of humour, another quality touched on by Dr Croke, who recalled the occasion at the Victor Couch Lecture at Catholic University when a speaker referred to it as "the Victor Couch Memorial Lecture". Vic was not backward in reminding the speaker that he was still here.

Those of us who were privileged to be able to visit Vic in his last years at Lourdes Village could appreciate his love of family. He spoke often of his late wife Evelyn, and of their children. Despite the heights to which he had risen in the field of education, Vic was a humble person, not afraid to tell of his origins in Junee and of his early teaching years. He acknowledged in a Preface recorded on tape for our Teaching Memories two years ago that at College "we were all rookies — students coming to learn to teach, everyone on the staff from the Principal down. . . .".

Nevertheless he was proud of the awards he had been granted and was happy to show the visitor a video of the ceremony where he was awarded his highly prized Doctorate of the Catholic University.

Vic was appointed a co-Patron of Wagga Wagga Teachers' College Alumni Association at its formation at the Wagga Campus of Charles Sturt University in June 1997. It was his willingness to participate in our reunions over the years, despite some physical difficulties, which will stay in the hearts of alumni forever.

Dr Croke, at the beginning of his tribute, aptly quoted George Bernard Shaw's often heard — "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches. He who cannot teach, teaches teachers" — saying that there could not be a more outstanding rebuttal of the aphorism than was the case of Dr Vic Couch.

Compiled by John Riley (1948-50)

TRIBUTE FROM GWEN FERGUSON

On Tuesday, 30th November, it was my sad privilege to attend the Requiem Mass for Dr. Victor Couch at North Sydney.

The size of the congregation was testimony to the number of people who had been touched by his qualities as a friend, teacher, lecturer and man of faith.

Probably everyone present could give an example of this and they would vary considerably from simple memories of his large prescience to the meaningful and lasting *changes* in the course of a life. On a personal level, I can give an example of each.

In an education lecture at W.W.T.C. I recall him saying, "If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything".

Fifty years on and I can still hear him.

Vic Couch changed the course of my life by insisting that my first posting to a north coast small school was entirely unsuitable for me and arranging that I should go to a primary school in Sydney - the intention being that I was to enrol at Sydney University to take a degree course. Instead, I met my husband, married and had four children in quick succession.

Helping my husband in the administration of his business and my return to teaching after twelve years meant that I never did the degree but I have lived a happy and fulfilling life in Sydney where he arranged for me to be. His intervention was a small thing but it had a huge impact on the course of my life.

During the two years at W.W.T.C. we were fortunate to have some outstanding lecturers. Dr. Couch went on to serve teacher education at Sydney Teachers' College and in the Catholic education of teachers and the Catholic University in Sydney.

He stood for something.

Gwen (Roberts) Ferguson (1947—49)

Gwen was the Dux of the Pioneer Session — Ed.

TEACHING MEMORIES

35 Leeds Street,
TOWNSVILLE 4812
15th Nov, 1999.

Dear Lew,

After reading the recent Talkabout and seeing the request for more contributions, here is mine, which you are welcome to use or discard as you see fit.

Having lived in North Queensland for the past thirty-five years, I'm rather removed from N.S.W. education matters and College life seems eons ago. However I must admit I do get quite a lift when I get the Talkabout magazine. I'm enclosing a cheque for \$50 as a contribution towards the cost of producing Talkabout, with thanks for all the hard work put in by the committee.

Best Wishes

*Helen (Manwaring) Edwards
(1951-52.*

TEACHING MEMORIES

I began my teaching life in 1953 at a small country town called Tarcutta. As the school had been burnt down we had to make use of the local hall until the new school was built.

I had 63 pupils consisting of Kindergarten, First and Second Classes in the main part of the hall and the other teachers had the stage and the supper room. There was a total lack of equipment apart from readers, writing books, pencils and plasticene as well as desks and blackboard. Each afternoon the furniture had to be all stacked away so the hall could be used for meetings or the once weekly travelling picture show, and of course put back in place the next morning. The conditions were not very inspiring for anyone.

Nine months later our lovely new school was ready and with the addition of another teacher my class load dropped to 35.

Some new equipment arrived; I had use of coloured chalk for the first time and a big felt board but there were no story books, and there was no money in the P.& C. to buy any, so each holiday I would buy a heap of

books including "Little Golden Books" which the children loved.

Holidays were a bit disappointing as the only public transport in and out of Tarcutta was the rail motor which ran a couple of times during the week. This meant one could not leave for home as soon as the holidays started and also had to return a few days before school commenced.

I loved the children and my job but was not very happy with the accommodation. The two male teachers and I had tiny rooms, which were partitions on the verandah of a private house. After the evening meal the door to the main part of the house was locked so in the winter we had no access to things like a warm fire.

The landlady was fearful her violent husband might return so had a ten feet high fence around her place and the gates on it were locked as soon as night fell. Unfortunately the "down the back" toilet was outside the locked area. To my dismay I was given a chamber pot to use when the gates were locked. Oh the embarrassment of trying to empty it without the male teachers seeing me with it.

To wash with, I only had a jug of cold water and a basin in my room. A bath was allowed once a week using half a kerosene tin of hot water carried in from a neighbour's place where water was heated by a slow combustion stove.

Perhaps worse off was a teacher I read about recently. The Inspector's reply to his third request for a bathtub for the "way out west" school residence was: "Request definitely denied. As you spend your annual holiday by the sea that is quite sufficient for bathing purposes".

Helen Manwaring (Edwards) 1951-52

MY FIRST APPOINTMENT

My first posting was to a little village on the Cobar line. Previously it had been a one-teacher school; so I was sent as the first assistant teacher, having a lower division (K/1/2/3) of 23 youngsters.

A Lodge hall had been rented as my classroom, and each day we would line up with the others in the school ground, then walk (in an orderly fashion, of course!) the three hundred or so metres to the hall.

Because the hall was used at weekends, Monday mornings were taken up with getting the classroom set up, and Friday afternoons with getting packed away again. The classroom furniture consisted of old style long desks, with long stools; so that if anyone happened to bump a desk too hard, the domino effect produced a floor covered with overturned desks, stools, books pencils and kids (Thank God, no ink!)

Starting with me that year, in kindergarten, were twin sisters. One dark haired and shy, the other a real little blonde witch (with a capital B!)

At the end of the first couple of weeks trying to win the battle of wills with this little demon, together with coping with the chaos of falling desks, I finally grabbed her in one hand, smacked her bottom with the other (wouldn't dare these days!) and put her outside the door.

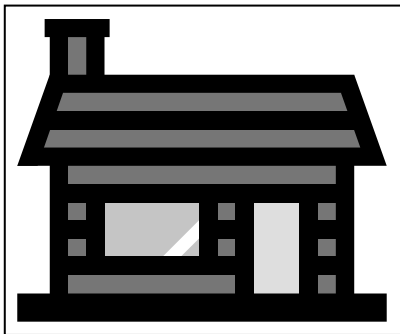
As I closed the door, my ears (and those of everyone in the village, I felt) were battered by a strident "You f... 'n old bastard!"

So began, I guess, my real education.

Gordon Bruton (1949-50)

TEACHING MEMORIES

A tale (with a twist) of AN OLD BUSH SCHOOL



Farm 80
COLEAMBALLY 2707.

Dear Lew and Lew,

I am in receipt of the latest TALKABOUT. Thank you – like John Laws, you are attempting to “keep the dream alive” but without his financial perks, eh! I have written a yarn re TEACHING MEMORIES, which you may (or may not) include in a future issue of Talkabout. Forty years ago is a long, long time ago.

Here’s hoping I am not the only one to respond to the call and that you will have heaps of articles for the next issue.

Best wishes.

Jeanette (Jenny) Briggs (Mould)
1957-58

This one was set in the middle of grazing land in the Monaro district where rabbits, rocks and remoteness constituted the “three R’s”. It was the usual little one room demountable of departmental dirty yellow weatherboard and galvanised iron roof. It came under the heading of a subsidised school, situated between Jindabyne and Berridale, and appropriately named Townsend. The only time I can recall having a legitimate excuse for not attending school was following a mammoth snowfall one winter. Otherwise, rain, hail or shine, attendance was imperative, whether by horseback, bicycle or on foot via the thin tracks cut by the plodding of many sheep as they followed each other across the paddocks. The person living closest to the school was the teacher, a prim spinster who walked her country mile to and from school each day. We, the ten, or sometimes a dozen pupils, all considered her to be terribly old

(the age of our parents!), and I very much doubt that her credentials would have allowed her a teaching position in today’s education system. In those days such things were not questioned and none of us were academically disadvantaged as she put us through the learning paces to the click of her knitting needles. In 1950, my last year at this little bush school, this wonderful little lady guided me (and another “big” girl) through the first year of our secondary education by the Blackfriars Correspondence course.

From then it was on the boarding away from home system where, in a large high school, I found I had not been totally prepared as an “A” student, and opted to repeat first year so French and Science could become part of my curriculum. Why, I don’t know because oral French was a failure for me, and a scientific brain I do not have. This additional trivia, plus the fact that I was employed as an assistant librarian throughout my first year out of school, is only to explain why I did not commence my two years training at Wagga Wagga Teachers’ College until 1957.

So I became a 1957-58 graduate of the W.W.T.C., haunted by the dreaded question - where will the “powers that be” send me to test my endurance as a teacher on her first appointment? Certainly not within any one of my first three choices (I wonder why we were even asked to make these choices unless it was simply to make certain that they were not to be made available to the choice-ee!), and what a numbing feeling it was to open THAT envelope containing the information I was to be the assistant at the two-teacher school of Bredbo, between Cooma and Canberra. Not far from home except that car ownership was a much bigger deal in those days, an impossibility in fact, and what a sense of isolation prevailed as I was deposited by my father at what was to be my boarding house for the ensuing months. Still innocent at the age of 20, I later discovered why the transport drivers en route to Sydney from the Snowy Mountains dropped in at any hour of the day or night when the “master of the house” was away, either shearing sheep or trapping rabbits in order to provide his family’s daily bread.

Bredbo must have had some attractions however, as I was one of the first female appointees to escape the place after only one year – lonely graziers were only too happy to take the new school teacher as his bride. One of these ladies watched me from her window as I walked to school in that first nervous morning and later told

me how she chuckled to see me all primped up in high heels and gloves. Luckily she was not able to see the way my stomach was churning, and continued to do so all day.

And she would have laughed out loud had she been there to see me make numerous treks out of the class to take the long walk up hill to the old pit dunny. I learned early that sometimes it is necessary to leave a “responsible” person in charge – in the case of a Lower Division, that person would have to be in the senior grade, i.e. 2nd Class.

Things could only improve, and soon I was in control of the situation, utilising all the aids and skills learned at W.W.T.C. Were we as students, instructed on how to apply a clothes peg to one’s nose when supervising the work of pupils whose home amenities did not include soap and water? Or how to react to the shy little girl in Kindergarten who wet her pants during the Inspector’s visit? I don’t think he noticed!

So many experiences that first year, too numerous to recall. So many mistakes best forgotten. AND ALL WITHIN THE WALLS OF THAT SAME LITTLE DEPARTMENTAL DEMOUNTABLE DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH ONE. Hardly a twist of fate, but definitely a coincidence that the old bush school of one’s learning should become the small village school of one’s first year of teaching.

With the advent of the Snowy Mountains Scheme and the availability of school bus routes to Jindabyne, Berridale and Cooma, the subsidised school of Townsend became redundant, was closed sometime between 1951 and 1958, and the building transported to Bredbo by population demand. The only architectural change I could detect was in the heating system, from open fireplace to pot-bellied stove. Whether the old pit dunny had also been relocated with the school I have no idea, but it certainly seemed familiar. Like the old one at Townsend, it was surrounded by rabbit burrows as well as giving out that aura of the possible presence of spiders and snakes.

Jenny Briggs (Mould) (1957-58)

Many of you must have a story of your own to tell. How about sending us one.

Ed

INITIATION BASTARDISATION OR BASTARDRY?

In June 1949 the third session entered Wagga Wagga Teachers' College. Within a matter of days the male students were subjected to an initiation which required them to be escorted singly, late at night to one of the Second Year huts, arraigned before a mock court and judged in short order to be guilty of some mock offence. The offence was punishable by having to take a cold shower there and then. It was a bitterly cold night in Wagga and the shower felt as if you were being peppered with needles.

A small group of the forty-niners brooded over this abomination and vowed to do something more civilised when and if we carried on the initiation tradition. One of the freshers had suffered a dislocated shoulder when he objected to the sentence. The result of this brooding was something quite novel as initiations went -- though as to its being more civilised, readers will have to judge.

The whole thing received the approval of George Blakemore and the other staff members who had to co-operate for it to be a success.

We had to announce at breakfast that all new first year male students were required to assemble at Hut 9 which had a conveniently large ante room at one end with a sink and a tap screened from view.

Outside this room the students duly arrived and arranged themselves into a long queue. At this point they were informed that they were to undergo a few formal tests including a final medical examination, which would verify their acceptance as students.

Inside the room were the main actors in the drama. Lew Crabtree wearing a white coat, borrowed from Norm Donnison or Arthur Cornell, with a stethoscope around his neck, was the doctor. Adjacent to him was Trevor Broomfield - also in a white coat -- having a kidney basin at the ready with spatulas dipped in dettol; he was the dentist. Ted O'Brien, once a seminarian had put on a "dog collar" to play the College Chaplain.

The student would enter the room, go to the doctor, bare his chest for the stethoscope, cough when asked, open his mouth and say "aaah" and then proceed to give a urine specimen in the screened off section in a beaker supplied by the bio lab.

After this he went to the dentist who peered thoughtfully into his mouth and muttered things like, "Hello, what have we got here?" and when the body tensed would say, "Oh it's nothing to worry about I don't think."

The Chaplain was there to give the feeling of spirituality and comfort that chaplains were supposed to provide.

There were other helpers in this charade who helped make it work.

One new student in the queue outside was heard to boast that he had been on the grog all the way down in the train. Armed with this information, one of the 'lab' assistants when supervising the urine test slipped some Condy' Crystals into this fellow's sample. He was shortly confronted with the deep purple solution with the question "Have you consumed a lot of liquor recently?" He was aghast at our omniscience.

The students were then photographed singly for Departmental Records -- "Look serious, this is for your Departmental file." The student sat in the chair and the photographer's assistant held a card denoting his "file number" above his head. On the back of the number was "SUCKER!" which was shown for the photograph.

At the conclusion of these tests Eric Corrigan, who was to be the P.E. Instructor, confronted the students. Ever a man of few words that usually emerged gruffly from the side of his mouth, Eric was an imposing figure. He was about six feet tall with the trunk of a wrestler and had the habit of stamping his feet for emphasis. Eric announced, "You'll hear a bell at five a.m. tomorrow. Get up, get dressed in your gym gear and report to me at the gym. DON'T BE LATE"

So while most of us slept Eric was out in the dark cold air stamping his feet, breathing condensed vapour and rallying his squad. They set off to

only God knew where for their constitutional run.

At breakfast the next morning we called a meeting of all freshers in the hall and with all the actors in the farce on stage, announced that as a result of all yesterday's procedures plus the morning's run they had been successfully initiated as students of Wagga T.C. The hoax was revealed.

The individual photographs taken were displayed in the locked glass notice cases in the covered way for all to see.

Having just explained all this and with the benefit of fifty years of hindsight I now wonder if the mock court and the cold shower were as uncivilised as I thought at the time.

Lew Crabtree.

Some readers may feel that the freshers should have been able to recognise other students. The actors in the main were Ex-Servicemen and were in the same age group as some of the lecturers.

Editor

Letter to the Editor

56 Barnett Close

Phillip

Dear Lew,

Having read each Talkabout with keen interest, I am writing to forward a couple of anecdotes, plus a donation that may help to keep the publication alive.

Attending the 1952-53 session reunion in Sydney in the 80's, I was pleased to see Brock Rowe talking to a group of students. Imagine my surprise and pride when he turned and said, "Colin Byfield, I've still got your essay on the coal mining industry of your home town Muswellbrook!"

In early 1965 at Afternoon Tea when the new Dem School teachers from Turvey Park met the WWTC lecturing staff, Keith Swan walked up to me and said, "I remember you -- you came here in the 50's to study golf!"

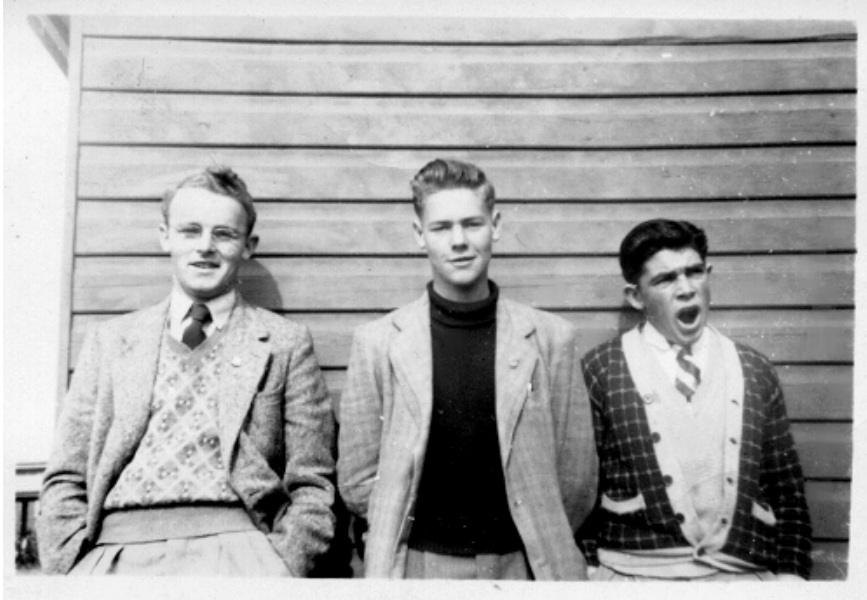
Best wishes.

May Talkabout prosper.

Col Byfield (1952 53)

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

This is a photo of roommates Terry Holt, Lindsay Budd and Phil Bastick who were in the 1950-51 session. The photo was taken outside Dorm 4 on a lazy Sunday afternoon in the winter of 1951. Bill Brien took the photo and it took so long for him to get the camera set up and focussed that Phil was becoming bored with the proceedings.

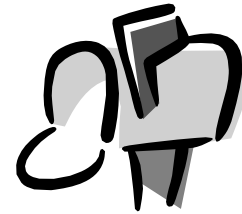


The three roommates went their own ways and did not have the opportunity to get together until the reunion of the 1950-51 session, which Frank Meaney organised in 1986. Another photo of the three was taken and the result showed the wear and tear that 35 years of service with the Education Department had wreaked.



The editors of Talkabout would welcome similar “before and after” photos of what the intervening years have done to the students of WWTC.

Letter to the Editor



“Wandjina”
Berwick Park Road
Wilton 2571

Dear Lew,

I have enclosed a cheque for \$50 to assist with Talkabout publication. As Thel and I met at Wagga (and are not too far off our Golden Wedding Anniversary!) our memories of the college are very special. Two points:

1. The July issue has a misprint in that our years were 1947 49.
2. At the Canberra re-union I spoke to a number of the pioneer session we were in and they all agreed that, as we were “maturing”, some form of yearly meetings would be good if they could be arranged. Suggested venues could be Wollongong, Katoomba and Newcastle, thus giving a balance of venues, depending on where members live.

Whether it is possible to arrange this is questionable, but the feelings seemed to be that in another 10 years or so we won't be worrying too much about it anyway!

Best wishes,

Don Davis (1947-49)

Interested in having a Reunion?

The Alumni Team
Is here to help you.
Just give us a call and we will
be able to advise and assist in
the organisation of your
special event.

Phone: (02) 63384629

THAT LONG-PLANNED GET-TOGETHER ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

Seventeen WWTC alumni, relatives and friends, after nearly twelve months of planning, joined the ferry *Collaroy* for the 8 a.m. departure to Port Kembla on Sunday, 7th November. Three members of the party, unfortunately, were prevented from being with us because of last minute circumstances.

We were lucky – after a number of consecutive weekends of very inclement weather the day was magnificent, with temperatures between 23 and 25 predicted.

The “Harbourfest” tour, arranged every year by the Australian Railway Historical Society, began with the regular offer - “If you suffer from sea-sickness, our nurse on the lower deck has sea-sick pills in rum, raspberry and cola flavours!” The offer was probably taken up by very few, as *Collaroy* sailed through Sydney Heads into relatively calm seas.

The Wagga group were free to select their places of vantage, and to move around and talk to others as they desired. I enjoyed listening to Barry Hubbard’s account of his experiences finding his way to his one-teacher school at Bunnaloo, located on the VR railway line from Echuca to Moulamein. I’m sure we would all love to hear some more of those anecdotes.

A slight diversion on the trip south occurred when the ferry became part of an Olympic terrorist exercise. Passengers sitting forward were asked to move to the after part of the ship while a Westpac helicopter landed a doctor and returned later to hoist him and a “patient” on board for conveyance to hospital. Lucky people with cameras who had access to a window were able to capture the event on film.

Passengers were treated to a “Cook’s Tour” of the coastline as we proceeded past the eastern suburbs, Royal National Park and the Illawarra to Port Kembla. There were even two sightings of whales and another of a large shoal of fish swarming on the surface. Members of our group were given the privilege of a visit to the rear

bridge, where they were able to inspect controls used by the captain as he navigates the vessel to Manly and back.

Disembarkation at Port Kembla began at 11.35, taking some time because of a single lane gangway in use. Buses were lined up waiting to take the hundreds of passengers to Berry where there would be two hours available to explore this interesting town. Many of our group spent time checking out the monthly Country Markets at the nearby showground.

When the train pulled into Berry station from the south at 3.05, heritage diesel-electric locomotive 4401 was at the front. This took us to Wollongong where steam locomotive 3801 in its current black livery took over for the run to Sydney Central.

Our party had been assigned the first 19 seats in the front carriage, so passengers were treated to a marvellous hearing of the classic staccato beat of 3801’s exhaust as it coped with the grade up to Stanwell Park and onwards through the tunnels preceding Helensburgh.

The young granddaughter of Kevin and Winifred Wilcox was especially appreciative of (apprehensive about!) these sounds, and also of 3801’s whistle which was given plenty of rein by the driver.

During the trip it was possible to move around and chat to other members of our party and to expend some film catching alumni for the archives. I, for one, made a mess of this when removing my completed film from the camera, accidentally causing it to wind forward and spoil about half of my shots.

The train pulled into Sutherland station only a few minutes late at 5.45, and there I left the rest of the group to proceed to Central where Kevin and Winifred hoped to show 3801 to Yolande from close-up.

Many thanks to Barry Hubbard (1949-1950) and to June Hadley (1948-1950) for helping to boost our numbers by arranging parties. Commiserations to Malcolm, Maureen and Christel for missing what it is hoped was an enjoyable day for all. Why don’t we all think about forming a BIGGER party for a similar function next year!

JOHN RILEY (1948-1950)

ALUMNI – STILL LOST.

Many lost alumni have been found and are now on the mailing list. These students from the first three sessions are still lost. If you have any information about these alumni please contact:

Mrs Ann Smith,
24 Whitworth St. Westmead, 2145
Phone: (02) 96350449

Session 1

The Pioneers

Adams,	Margaret Mary
Collins	Jack Maitland
Fealy,	Mary
Neilson,	Norma Ingali
Smyth,	Moir
Taylor,	Colin Thomas
Wilkinson,	Margaret
Williams,	Keith
Wiseman,	Audrey Joyce
Fisher,	Margaret Ellis

Session 2

May 1948 to May 1950

Bool,	Patricia Ann
Boughton,	Dora Keitha
Davies,	Maurice Sydney
Dawes,	Helen Marie
Forman,	Joan
James,	Betty Beryl
Morton,	Edith Pearl
Olive,	Margaret
Parsons,	Alison Ruth
Ramsay,	Dorothea Elizabeth
Vine,	Una Esther
Wold,	Elizabeth Clare

Session 3

May 1949 to December 1950

Angave,	Shirley Mary
Badcock,	Barbara Mary
Britten,	Gloria
Bourke,	John Henry
Duschke,	Ona Morna
Edmonds,	Ann Therese
Fitzgibbon,	Robert James
Giles,	Geoffrey William
Hennings,	Barbara Ann
Jackson,	Elsie May
Jackson,	Paticia Clare
Kellert,	Mary Evelyn
King,	Betty Ann
Lashbrook,	Elaine Mary
Lawson,	William Alexander
Matheson,	June Helen
Milne,	Dorothy
Robbins,	Gladys Maude