



A PUBLICATION  
OF THE ALUMNI OF  
WAGGA TEACHERS

# TALK ABOUT



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## OUR FUTURE

If students were sixteen when they entered College, the last graduating session of Wagga Wagga Teachers' College in 1971 will probably turn fifty five this year which is the earliest retiring age for teachers.

Our Alumni Association will close off our Scholarship Fund at \$60,000 and many of us feel that we should not become extinct for some time yet and in order to rejuvenate our membership the following letter has been forwarded to Professor David Green, who is head of the Wagga Wagga Campus of Charles Sturt University.

The purpose of future endeavours is to help in the planning of accommodation for student teachers in the Faculty of Education. The erection of a student cottage will be a lasting tribute to all teachers graduating from the Wagga Wagga Campus

*Professor David Green,  
Charles Sturt University,  
Wagga Wagga Campus.*

*Dear Sir,*

*The Wagga Wagga Teachers' College Alumni Association was formed in 1997. The aim of this Association was to form a bond with all graduates from Wagga Wagga Teachers' College to hold reunions etc and to aid our original Wagga Wagga Campus which had become Charles Sturt University even though our College officially closed down in 1971.*

*Our original aim was to establish a Scholarship Fund to enable us to award annual scholarships to final year primary school teacher students in the Faculty of Education. In the past seven years we have awarded approximately \$27,000 in such scholarships. It has been decided that our Association close off the Scholarship Fund at \$60,000 and concentrate on raising funds for the construction of an accommodation cottage to house eight primary education teacher students at a proposed cost of \$400,000.*

*With this in mind, our aim is to increase our Alumni numbers by inviting all teachers that have trained at the Wagga Wagga Campus to join a newly named Wagga Wagga Teachers' Alumni Association.*

*As there are over 12,000 primary teaching graduates from the Wagga Wagga Campus since Wagga Wagga Teachers' College closed in 1971, and we have approximately 3,000 members at present, we would be looking at a membership of at least 10,000 prospective members.*

*If each member contributed \$4 per year for ten years that is one accommodation cottage.*

*It is anticipated that members would contribute at a much more rapid rate.*

*At present our Association is in no position to approach prospective members and would like the Wagga Wagga Campus of Charles Sturt University to :-*

*Communicate with prospective members.*

*Collect and hold all fees, subscriptions etc.*

*Our Association would continue to function with the additional growth of a necessary committee decided by Campus and our Association.*

*We look forward to your thoughts concerning this proposal.*

It is to be hoped that this letter receives approval and the increased membership will allow our Alumni Association to carry out our wishes.

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# WAGGA WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 12th FEBRUARY, 2008

(Summary of the AGM held at the Teachers Credit Union Building at 28-38 Powell Street Homebush.)

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This assessment of our activities not only examines the past twelve months but also serves to evaluate a decade of achievement and decision time as to the future.

The highlight of all this was the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of Wagga Wagga Teachers' College at the reunion held in Wagga Wagga during the September-October long weekend.

At this most successful gathering we presented to the attendees, at a special meeting, an overview of the past, present and possible future of our alumni.

Most of the past year has been aimed at ensuring that the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion would be a worthy vehicle for this important time.

Because of the already submitted document I will not dwell on the detail already expressed but simply state that this coming year will herald a new era with probable changes in direction and different emphases on certain aspects of our charter.

Charles Sturt University is to be congratulated on the contribution made at this reunion.

In particular the honour paid to Ann Smith and the presentation of medals to alumni served as an indicator that the attitudes first discerned ten years ago have changed.

Ann is no longer able to continue with her invaluable contribution and this contribution has been acknowledged by this committee in the past and is acknowledged here again.

At the appropriate time I will present my personal assessment as to future directions for our alumni.

Enough to say that the work of this committee particularly in the areas of finance, *Talkabout*, secretarial duties, Scholarship Awards and luncheons has demonstrated the professional expertise and commitment that were once

displayed during our teaching careers and are, at least in part, the result of our training and bonding as students at Wagga Wagga Teachers' College.

Michelle Fawkes as an understanding friend and major link between WWTC alumni and Charles Sturt University over the years has been and will be always recognised as a valued asset to our alumni.

Once again I must express our gratitude to the Teachers' Credit Union for their co-operation in attending to our requirements for these meetings.

We have excelled and will ***Excel with Honour!*** (WWTC Motto)

Bob Collard MBE

### TREASURER'S REPORT

The Auditor, Margaret Easterbrook, has examined the accounts of the Association and found them to be in order. The balance sheet shows a credit at the end of the year of \$14,581.08. Contributions were lower this year: 2006 \$12,432; 2007 \$5,225. *Talkabout* cost \$7,252.20.

The balance of the investment account is now \$6,267.08 and has been reinvested for a further three months.

### RESEARCH & RECORDS OFFICER'S REPORT

Ann wished the Alumni every success and said how much she appreciated the Distinguished Alumnus Award she received at the Reunion. She advised that she has been diagnosed with Shy-Drager Syndrome also known as Multiple System Atrophy so is unable to continue in this position. She will help where she can.

### ADDRESS BY THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION, CSU, PROFESSOR TONI DOWNES

Toni gave a visual and written outline of "CSU – University for Inland Australia".

There is a need for financial assistance to help students with travel and accommodation costs during practice teaching periods.

It was decided to consider the matter at the May Quarterly Meeting.

In moving that this address be received Mal Hanratty thanked Toni for the care she had taken in presenting the appeal on behalf of the students. The motion was seconded by Lew Morrell.

### CSU REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Michelle Fawkes presented a written report. She thanked Lew and Lindsay for the wonderful work they do with the publication of *Talkabout*. She suggested that the Scholarship Fund be tied off at \$60,000.

Over 300 alumni and friends attended the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion. The Reunion provided the opportunity for the Committee to present plans for the integration of teacher education alumni from what is now the CSU Wagga Wagga Campus, i.e. teacher education alumni of WWTC, RCAE, RMIHE and CSU, into the Wagga Wagga Teachers' Alumni Association.

Michelle introduced Hannah Hogan who, under the proposed restructure of the Office of Corporate Affairs, will take over the responsibility for the Education Portfolio. Michelle said it has been a privilege to work with the WWTCAA for the last ten years. She wished the Committee well for 2008.

### ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

Michelle Fawkes conducted the election of officers for the ensuing year. Elected were:

President	Bob Collard
Vice President	Graeme Wilson ('47)
Secretary	Dot Tanner
Treasurer	Lindsay Budd
Auditor	Margaret Easterbrook
<i>Talkabout</i> Editors	{Lindsay Budd} {Lew Morrell }

Other Committee Members:

Mal Hanratty, John Orange, Ann Smith, Nigel Tanner, Kevin & Win Wilcox, Graeme Wilson. (WWTCAA has the option to add to its Committee.)

### NEXT AGM:

Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2009.

## NEW AWARD TO 2004 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Kristil-Rae Mobbs was one of two 2004 Scholarship recipients.

She has been recognised for her countless hours of work in the community by being named as Wagga's Young Citizen of the Year.

She has lived in Wagga for 18 years and has built up an impressive list of accomplishments.

Kristil-Rae's Achievements:

- Koorringal High School 2002 Young Citizen of the Year.
- Secretary of Wagga Youth Voice.
- Charles Sturt University Orientation Week leader.
- Volunteer committee member of the Re-generate Youth Festival
- Short listed for volunteer for the Foundation for Young People.
- Successful applicant and tutor for outreach program.
- Co-ordinator of Riverina Young People's Theatre.

With a passion for drama and the performing arts, Kristil-Rae has done extensive tutoring and has been a valuable contributor to the Riverina Young People's Theatre (RYPT).

"I have had a great time helping out RYPT and it's been very rewarding," she said.

She has also been prominent on stage, performing in the plays The Twits, Summer Rain and Out Of The Box.

Her talents were acknowledged when she was named best female actress for her role in Out Of The Box at the 10-Minute Play Festival.

She has recently commenced her teaching career by accepted a teaching appointment to Michelago, near Canberra, as a Primary Teacher. We wish her well in her chosen career.

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## SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS 2008

There were nine applicants of whom six were eligible for consideration. All eligible applicants were worthy of consideration and one unfortunately was not granted leave by her employer to be interviewed.

After a discussion the interview panel decided that three Scholarships to the value of \$2,000 each would be awarded this year.

The three Scholarship recipients are Sheree Chadderton, Alicia McNab and Amy Worsfold.

It would seem that all students were concerned about their ten weeks internship particularly if they were placed beyond Wagga. Those who don't live at home in Wagga but have to board, would have to find board and lodging at the place of internship; those who live at home in Wagga but don't own a car would have to do likewise. This could mean further hardship.

Those of us who went through W.W.T.C. had board and lodging, plus an allowance and transport to and from practice teaching locations. It would appear that the majority of students have to seek part time employment in order to survive. Perhaps the W.W.T.C. students of yesteryear had it much easier than today's students.

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### CONTACTS

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# LETTERS PAGE

a21 Highway Ave,  
West Wollongong. 2500.  
Ph: (02) 4227 3137.

Dear Lindsay,

Lovely to hear from you, it has been a long time since WWTC.

I hope that there will be members of Talkabout who can help me out. I completed a BA through Charles Sturt after I retired and found it so interesting that I have just continued. Completed a BA Hons. in History and Politics and then continued on to a Masters. For this I recorded the history of Kiama, 1901 to the end of the depression years.

I have now commenced a PhD. dealing with Education. The years following the war saw many changes in our education system and in peoples' attitudes. There is little or no officially recorded material, but I am finding a wealth of information in such as Centenary publications and Talkabout. My supervisor wants me to include a narrative inquiry approach by recording the 'stories' of teachers and students in NSW Public Schools in the 1950s. I propose about 5 teachers and students.

The study will describe the advantages and challenges of rural education, its distance and isolation. I am also interested in Blackfriars Correspondence system and the place it played in student's lives.

This outline is rather brief but if anyone in the category is willing to discuss the 'old days' with me I would be most grateful.

A little more about my background and interest in the subject - I grew up in the country in a semi - isolated area west of Wagga and through Correspondence lessons gained my Leaving certificate and with it entry to WWTC, 1950-51.

My first school was Tumut Central. (Gained my 1<sup>st</sup> List, Infants, at

Tumut). Appointed as Deputy to Lalor Park. (It was an experience). Returned to Gurwood St. School, Wagga, gained List 2 and appointed to Canberra (Scullin Primary), back to Turvey Park, Wagga and a List 3 and an appointment to Jasper Road School in Baulkham Hills.

Here in 1982 I gained my 4<sup>th</sup> List Primary, and was appointed to Seven Hills West Primary, from which I retired.

In addition I spent approximately two years at WWTC seconded as a Lecturer in Infant method, and later for a short time lecturing on Cuisenaire Maths.

The student Prac. Teaching times enabled me to appreciate some of the smaller schools. When I retired my husband and I moved to the South Coast.

Hope this information is helpful.

All the best and again many thanks

Elaine Dunn (Graham) (1950-51).

Dear Lindsay,

Please find herewith a contribution towards costs for production of Talkabout.

I enjoy reading about many of the students who went through Wagga while I was on the staff there, and the stories they tell. I can still put a face to many of the names that come into print.

Last year I was able to renew friendship with one of my fellow lecturers from my years at Wagga TC and we have had many interesting reminiscences about students and staff.

Other students have continued to make annual contact with me, and it is great to keep in touch. Unfortunately my husband and I were travelling overseas at the time of the reunion, I was not able to be

there, but I would like to pass on to those who attended my very best wishes.

Thank you for all your hard work with the publication.

Betty Robertson (Keech).

Dear Lindsay,

It is with great pleasure and a great deal of nostalgia that I read "Talkabout". I keep it and do quite a bit of re-reading until the next one arrives.

We have a group of 12 ex "Kabi" girls who meet annually and another smaller group of 5 who meet every 2 months and "Talkabout" is frequently discussed.

Thanks to the committee.

Elizabeth Morrow (1957-58).

Dear Lindsay,

Contribution enclosed.

I have fond memories of our time at Wagga Wagga and can recall many of the names that appear in Talkabout from time to time.

You had a wonderful team of lecturers – none better. Lew reminded us that one of them was Doug Swan who became Director General - and a very good one. He was my D-G when I retired in May 1958 as Deputy Secretary.

Regards,

Athol Verdon.

*Doug Swan was not a lecturer at WWTC but a teacher at the Wagga Dem School. I remember him as being an excellent teacher.*

*Lew.*



# TEACHING MEMORIES

## THE TYRANNY OF DISTANCE

Dear Ann,

I was greatly encouraged by our conversation last week and am writing to make my story clearer. As I stated I proposed a study of Rural Schools in the 1950s when there were so many problems and changes. Nothing much has been written on this and the University is very enthusiastic. The aim is to attempt to discuss the 'advantages and disadvantages of Rural Education for students and teachers in isolated and remote areas, and to discuss the methods to ensure a satisfactory level of education.' The study will take the best part of two years. I want to commence work on it early in the new year and will result from interviews (narrative inquiry) with teachers and students. I have particularly chosen Rural Schools as I believe the education there was as effective, if not better, than that provided in the large city schools.

I do hope that this makes the position clearer as the phone connection was really poor when we were trying to talk. Thank you for your interest and I hope that Talkabout can help. In a few days I will get in touch with other executives.

All the best to you and take care,  
Elaine (Dunn).

P.S.

I am including a copy of the questions proposed for the interviews for your information and for anyone else who may be interested.

### Draft. Proposed Questions: for

### Teachers who taught in Rural Schools between 1950 and 1960.

1. Tell me about your life before entering Teacher Training. In

Teacher's College what training and practical experiences did you receive in preparation for Rural Schools and in the management and teaching of composite classes or in Small Schools.

2. Tell me about your first teaching appointment - was it in the country or city? What was your class like, for example number of children, boys and girls, and what were their backgrounds. If it was a large school tell me about the other teachers. (For school classifications see Ch.3). Were these teachers male or female, married or single? (See table in Appendix, 3).

3. In the 1950s there were many young teachers filling gaps in the teacher shortage and receiving appointments to country centres. How were you accommodated? Were your living conditions particularly isolated and divorced from urban activities? Did you feel teaching in the rural environment particularly rewarding and in what way? Was your home close to the school? Did you experience difficulties in your early teaching years. (e.g., discipline, transport, social, accommodation, and opportunities for professional development).

4. Can you describe the school buildings and grounds at your 1950s School? What provisions were there to cope with the changing weather and climate conditions? Tell me about the kind of educational supplies that your school received. What was the policy regarding any children with mental or physical difficulties - were they eligible for additional support and what did this constitute?

5. The School community was an important element in the country regions and particularly in the smaller schools. Tell me about your community - was it co-operative and supportive? The P. and C. Organization and local ministers. How long did you remain at the

school - did you apply for a transfer, and for what reason?

6. Is there anything else you can add about your experiences as a teacher during the 1950s?

### Students - 1950-60 Rural Schools

1. What are your first memories of school? When was that? Was your school big? Tell me about the buildings and playground and what you liked doing best, the games you played and the friends you made - did you have favorite games? Did girls and boys play different playground games? Was your school in the town or the country?

2. How did you travel to school each day - was the school far from your home? Do you have any favorite memories of your primary school days? What did you enjoy most?

3. Tell me about your teachers. How many were at your school and did you have a favorite one? What set him/her apart from the others?

4. Most schools celebrated 'special' days and 'special visitors' would also come to the school. (e.g., Inspector) Can you remember what form these 'special' events took and did the students enjoy them - have fun.

5. What were the more formal lessons like (3Rs)? Did you have a favorite subject - tell me about it?

6. If the children 'got into trouble' what kinds of things did they do. Were the teachers really strict and what kind of punishment was meted out? Did you or many children 'get into trouble'?

7. When you left Y6 Primary where did you go and what did you do? Did you attend a High School, if so where was it? What opportunities did you have?

8. Is there anything else you can add about your experiences as a student during the 1950s?

# COLLEGE MEMORIES



*Ann has been experiencing problems with her health and this has persuaded her to retire from her position as Research and Records Officer of the WWTC Alumni Association.*

*She would still like to hear from alumni and would be happy to pass on any information to the editors of Talkabout or to the Secretary, Dorothy Tanner.*

*She recently found amongst her documents the letter advising her of her acceptance at Wagga Wagga Teachers College in 1948. Attached was information from the Department about Travel Expenses and Teachers Salaries. Ann thought it might be interesting for people to remember how things were when WWTC was young. Ed.*

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, SYDNEY

Memorandum to:  
Miss Ann R. Broadhead,  
"Glengairn",  
BUNGONIA.

### ENTRANCE TO TEACHERS' COLLEGE, WAGGA WAGGA.

Following upon tests undergone by you in connection with your application for a Teachers' College Scholarship, I desire to advise that

you have been awarded a scholarship tenable at the Teachers' College, Wagga Wagga, with a view to undergoing a two years' course of training to qualify you for appointment as a primary school teacher.

Your scholarship allowance will be payable at the rate of £116 per annum. You will be required to reside in the hostel attached to the College. A charge of £1.12.6 to cover board and lodgings will be deducted from your scholarship allowance.

It is proposed that you should commence your training on or about 7<sup>th</sup> June next. In this connection, a further communication will be addressed to you at a later date. Should you not now desire to proceed with your training for the Teaching Service, please advise me as soon as possible.

N. L. SALMON,  
Secretary.

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. SYDNEY.

### TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

Directions for Teachers' Training College Students.

Refund of actual expenses incurred by students in travelling by the most direct and economical route from their homes to commence training at a departmental Teachers' Training College is allowed to students, as hereunder :-

(1) First-class rail fare to female students, second-class rail fare to male students; provided the number and the ticket in each case is furnished for departmental

reference. On presentation of the enclosed concession rail certificate, fares at reduced rates are available to students travelling to enrol at a Teachers' College. Students must avail themselves of this concession. Where train travel is available the Department will not refund expenses incurred by using alternate methods of travel, such as bus, service car, etc. Students on the Far North Coast using the service car from Casino to Tenterfield must, if it is available and requisite, use the train to travel to Casino for which a second form for concession rail fare is enclosed.

(2) The cost of necessary conveyance by the most economical route from the student's home to the nearest railway station, where the home is situated at a distance from the rail; provided a receipt is furnished for the service.

Non-observance of any of the above instructions may lead to reduction or disallowance of the claim for refund. Students from far distant centres may, if desired, obtain orders for rail tickets in advance, on application in sufficient time to the Department of Education.

Application for refund of fares incurred should be made to the Principal of the College immediately after enrolment.

N. L. SALMON,  
Secretary.

### NOTE:

Students must travel by train wherever possible. The Department will not defray the cost of travelling by any other mode of conveyance on journeys, or any portions thereof, that can be undertaken by rail. Exception may be made in the case of Armidale Teachers' College students, who reside at Kempsey or north thereof along the North Coast line. Travel by service car from appropriate points subject to the

# COLLEGE MEMORIES

provision in paragraph (1) above will be permitted in these cases to obviate the long rail journey via West Maitland. Receipts for service car fares will be essential when claiming refund.

Students travelling to Armidale from the Western area of the State on the main Western line and the branches as far as Cowra and Forbes must proceed via Binnaway; refund of fare via Sydney will not be allowed on the Western Line from centres beyond Lithgow.

## SALARIES

The commencing salary of a teacher upon appointment to the Teaching Service of the Department depends upon two main factors:

Length of training: two, three, four or five years;

Academic attainments upon completion of the course of training and the consequent degree of certification namely:

- (a) Certificated;
- (b) Conditionally Certificated.

Irrespective of the length of training the salary of a Conditionally Certificated Assistant shall be £359 per annum for males and £287 per annum for females in the first two years of service rising by regular increments to £459 per annum and £367 per annum in the sixth year of service.

A two years trained Certificated Assistant shall commence at a salary of £359 per annum for males and £287 per annum for females and progress by regular increments to £534 per annum and £427 per annum respectively, in the eighth year of service.

A three years trained Certificated Assistant shall commence at a salary of £384 per annum and £307 per annum and shall thereafter proceed

in accordance with the scale for two years trained Assistants.

A four years trained Certificated Assistant shall commence at a salary of £409 per annum (males) and £327 per annum (females) and may progress to £63.4 per annum (males) and £507 per annum (females) in the ninth year of service.

A five years trained Certificated Assistant shall commence at a salary of £434 per annum (male) and £347 per annum (female) and shall thereafter proceed in accordance with the scale for four years trained Assistants.

Progress beyond the eighth and ninth years of service shall be subject to the placement of the teachers on the appropriate promotions list as governed by regulations which is dependent upon the efficiency of the teacher. In addition, there are good prospects of promotions, and in this regard it is possible for the two, three, four and five years trained teacher to qualify for appointment to Infants, Primary, Central and Secondary Schools, as Deputy Headmaster or Deputy Headmistress, Master or Mistress, Headmaster or Headmistress, at salaries ranging from £609 per annum (males) and £487 per annum (females) to £934 per annum (males) and £687 per annum (females). Such promotion being governed by the position of the teacher on the appropriate promotions list, qualifications and efficiency.

Teachers appointed as Teachers-in-charge of Class 6 schools shall be paid in addition to the amount provided in the scale for assistants, an allowance of £52 per annum (males) and £42 per annum (females).

Four and five years trained teachers may qualify for promotion to such positions as Master or Mistress, Deputy Headmaster or Deputy

Headmistress and Headmaster or Headmistress in a High, Central or Secondary School with salaries ranging from £759 per annum (males) and £607 per annum (females) to £1,034 per annum and £827 per annum respectively, subject to the position of the teacher on the appropriate promotions list, efficiency and academic qualifications such as a University degree with honours.

Those salaries have been made under agreement between the Public Service Board, N.S.W., and the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Federation and shall be effective for a period of three years from 1st April, 1946, and shall be adjusted from time to time according to any variation of the basic wage.

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## THESE SHOES WERE MADE FOR DANCING

*(An excerpt from "Teaching Memories")*

I can't remember whether it was at the beginning of our two years at College or towards the end, but it was Saturday, dance night. When the boys returned to their rooms to prepare for the dance, they found every pair of shoes they owned had been thrown onto the nearby tennis courts. And they were not in pairs either!

Imagine their predicament - most shoes then were black; most were about the same size; and very few landed conveniently in pairs when they were thrown.

There was dancing in some very odd shoes that evening.

Ann Smith (Broadhead) 1948-50



# REUNION PAGE

## FROM THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION



*Bob and Olga Collard (1948-50), Miss Ruby Riach (Lecturer), Les Davey (1949-50), Roy Parker (1951-52)*

### WWTC 63-64 REUNION.

There will be about 21 people gathering at Cudmirrah (Sussex Inlet) just up the road from Broulee on 7, 8 & 9 March 2008. While the majority went through WWTC in 63-64, there are various other possibilities including older and younger ex students and of course spouses as well. Yes, there are 62-63 folk and 64-65 folk and maybe even a 60-61 bloke!

Unfortunately this issue of Talkabout could not be printed before the event, but to most folk from that era keep an eye on the blogsite HYPERLINK "<http://www.wwtc6364.blogspot.com>" to keep up to date with happenings.

We will be staying at Swan Lake Tourist Village – cnr Collier and Goonawarra Drives, Cudmirrah.

Email HYPERLINK "<mailto:swanlake@shoalhavennsw.gov.au>"

Website HYPERLINK "<http://www.wanlaketouristvillage.com.au>"

Phone 02 4441 2219

Other events/gatherings in 2008 COULD include another Bastille Day celebration in Sydney (July?) and possibly even a visit to the Hunter (October?) to sample some of the wines there. For more information check the blog – HYPERLINK "<http://www.wwtc6364.blogspot.com>"

We'd love to hear from more folk from that era and learn what you are up to.

Graham Keast (1962-64)

### 1955-56 REUNION OCTOBER 2008

Early notice for members of the 1955-56 Session.

**Date:** Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

(This is the weekend after the Bathurst car races so traffic should not be a huge problem.

**Venue:** Imperial Hotel, Mt Victoria.

**Format:** Luncheon.

Mail outs to all interested members will commence in the near future with all details, including accommodation venues for those interested in staying overnight.

Peter Sparkes (1955-56)



# TEACHING MEMORIES

## MUNGOOLA PUBLIC SCHOOL 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY



On Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> September my wife and I drove the 60 km west from Tenterfield along the Bruxner Highway seeing little habitation then descending into a picturesque valley and there was the school and village hall.

It was strange after fifty years to be greeted by old students and parents, some with whom I had boarded and then to meet present parents and students, dignitaries and locals about one hundred and sixty in total.

Some of my students took me across the road to the village hall to see where we had started rather primitively in 1956 before the school was finished and opened in 1957.

Two senior girls began the proceedings by reading the history of the school, followed by speeches from Richard Torbay, the State Member for the Northern Tablelands, Tony Windsor the Independent Federal Member for New England and Des Gorman the Regional Director of Education for New England.

A minute silence was observed for students and teachers who had passed away and then, as the first principal I was asked to give a speech. Following this I cut the anniversary cake and the youngest student told me I had to kiss a girl because I had reached the bottom of

the cake, so I obliged by kissing my wife.

We were entertained with a wonderful musical presentation from students using xylophones and other instruments made up from corrugated pipe, most of which were made by the parents.

With all the formalities over we had a barbecue and a time to reminisce and take photos including one of myself with eighteen of my students from 1956/57.

From one building in a dry paddock, two water tanks, weather shed, pit toilet, no phone, no electricity and few resources, the school now has a new building for the classroom and the old building is a well stocked library and resource room.

There is a teacher's residence, flush toilets, phone, electricity, twenty computers, an administration lady, a general assistant, tennis court cum basketball court, lawns, gardens, trees and a fence.

I had to board term about with the parents and for a reticent twenty two year old city boy, it was a daunting task to have twenty eight students K to 7 and no outside help.

The school now has twenty students K to 6 and a vibrant young teacher Tonya Worling who has been at the

school, for five years and will be sorely missed when she goes.

For three reasons I'll always remember Mungoola:

1. The wonderful students I had who now all look as old as me at 73.
2. The friendship and assistance from parents, especially those with whom I boarded.
3. The Italian share farmers, growing tobacco, their great spaghetti bolognaise that I often shared with them and the Italian they taught me which helped me to survive in Italy in 1961.
4. What an unforgettable day !! A credit to those who organised this memorable day.

Bill DeBrouwer (1952-53)

### COMING EVENTS

#### ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

The next quarterly meeting of the Alumni Association will be held at 11 am on:  
Tuesday 13th May, 2008.

(Venue to be advised)

#### WWTC ALUMNI LUNCHEONS

The next Alumni luncheon will be held in the Icons Restaurant in the Marriott Hotel Pitt Street Sydney (near the Quay) on Tuesday 20th May 2008.

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

#### 1957/58 REUNION

A reminder that the reunion for the 1957/58 session will be held in Wagga on 17th, 18th, 19th October 2008.

# TEACHING MEMORIES

“As the 1956/57 Session of W.W.T.C. meets for a reunion this March there will be much reminiscing of our first teaching appointments. The following is my story of my first teaching appointment.”

Beverley Irving (nee Greig) 1956-57

## **Broken Hill or Bourke**

Christmas 1957 and New Year 1958 had been and gone and the visitors had all returned to their own homes. The lazy days of a coastal summer turned into ones of anticipation as we anxiously waited for the letter that was to tell where our first teaching appointment was to be. For my late twin sister, Barbara, and myself this was the first time when we would truly be separated. It was a big step in our hitherto entwined lives. Barbara had applied for Broken Hill, Bourke and I think, Cobar. I had applied for Kempsey, Bowral or Kiama. She was more adventurous than I was and had a stronger desire to go to far-off places. In 1958 Broken Hill and all places west were very far-off. Perhaps she was inspired by the line in that college song that went to the tune of “There’s a Tavern In the Town”! Who knows? Or was it the attraction of an extra week’s holiday at year’s beginning for all schools in the Western Division?

As we have all experienced, the Education Department works in mysterious ways its teachers to appoint. The letters arrived - one addressed to Miss A. B. Greig (Barbara) and the other to Miss B. J. Greig (myself, Beverley) so there was no mistaking that the letters would go to the wrong twin. I opened mine. I was directed to report to Central School, Broken Hill by 9.00am on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1958. I could not believe it! Barbara opened hers. She was to report for duty at Burke Ward School at 9.00am the same date. In my dismay and disappointment and to a degree hers (Broken Hill was her first choice), we did not notice the spelling of Burke Ward. She thought she was to go to Bourke and I would be in Broken Hill. That was odd enough.

On a re-reading of her letter she realised it was not Bourke she was to go to but to Burke Ward School in Broken Hill. She was elated. I was still in shock! We often wondered if there was someone in

the Department who did not like to see twins separated, someone who had a twisted sense of humour or someone with a lazy pen! Our big step at independence was thwarted.

The trip to Broken Hill began with a car trip from Moruya to Sydney. Then it was on to a train that left Central in the evening. Our parents had insisted we have a sleeper (remember them?) for the night’s journey to Parkes where we would board the Silver City Comet to Broken Hill. The Dining Car with its shiny cutlery and wellset tables, the seats that became beds, the fold-away wash basin and loo fascinated us and seemed so grand after those trips in the dogboxes on the Albury Mail.

Early the next morning we arrived at Parkes to be dazzled by the shiny Silver City Comet waiting to take us west. It was already a well-known train and we were actually going to travel in it! For the first time we noticed a crowd of children changing trains as we were and learned that they were all returning from a holiday at Manly as part of the Far West Children’s Scheme. As we travelled further west and met up with some of them we were told some stories about life in the west. I am sure we were told a few tall ones. They were a lot of fun to meet.

Leaving Parkes and its gently rolling country the land became flatter and flatter and the sky larger and a deeper blue. Trees became sparser and smaller, the soil changed alternately from rich red to brown. Grey-green saltbush and yellow grass covered areas which were not salt or mud pans. So different from our coastal home and the Riverina. Emus and kangaroos raced and bounded beside the train as it sped at a furious pace ever westward to Broken Hill, the Silver City. We met other new appointees to western schools as well as to Broken Hill, some filled with great excitement and enthusiasm and some, like me, with some trepidation. However, I was enjoying the scenery and meeting new people.

We crossed the Darling River at Menindee and were surprised how narrow it was and how much it looked like the “great grey green greasy Limpopo River”. Entering Broken Hill after passing through the Barrier Ranges

and arriving at the brand new railway station we were fascinated by the mass and height of the huge slag heap that dominated the town, the mines, the corrugated iron houses and fences and the dry warm air.

Barbara and I had arranged for temporary accommodation and were whisked off quickly by our hosts to recover from the long journey and be familiarised with Broken Hill. It was then a vibrant working town with grand public buildings and prosperous looking hotels of 3 storeys. One, the Palace, was featured years later in the film Priscilla, Queen of the Desert. All the mines were working, a variety of shops were well-stocked. Small hotels with interesting names were numerous and were well patronised.

Educational needs were met by four primary schools, three separate infants schools, one high school and a technical college. As well as public schools there were there was one infants school, three primary schools and two high schools maintained by the Roman Catholic church. An evening college provided for further learning and the School of the Air provided education for isolated children on surrounding stations.

Sporting and cultural clubs catered for the interests of residents, churches were numerous and well attended and the South Australian Symphony Orchestra made regular visits. Broken Hill was no backwater. The Barrier Industrial Council ruled the town (no married woman was allowed to work outside the home unless she was self employed or was a government or bank employee) and those of a pink political persuasion sold copies of “Tribune” every Saturday morning on the street corner near the Trades Hall, known locally as The Kremlin.

Many of the wide streets with their part paved, part dirt footpaths were named after minerals, the main one being named Argent. Others had corresponding lanes running parallel to them. Corrugated iron was the main building material with concrete blocks and/or bricks or stone the next. Timber dwellings were not common. Nut and fruit trees, grape vines and roses filled house surrounds. Green lawns were

# TEACHING MEMORIES

few. Many of the corrugated iron dwellings were quite grand.

Surrounding Broken Hill a large regeneration area had been planted with trees to shelter the town from dust storms and drifting sand. The Twin Lakes Reserve at the Zinc Corporation Mine gave welcome relief from the lack of green vegetation that we from the South Coast were so used to.

An interview with the very charming District Inspector, Mr Tom Ingersoll, resulted in private board being found with a local family where we were well looked after and made to feel very welcome by them and their extended family. We stayed there for a year then rented a house for the next year with two other girls, one being Bev Sinclair nee Cochrane. Scattered around the town were group houses or “batches” for accommodating, separately, single men and women. Each batch took turns to host a party at regular times throughout the year and we all did the rounds. The only danger was the potent punch!

I was appointed to Central School Infants Department and was pleased that I had been attentive during Miss Newmarch’s lectures. Her assignments and lecture notes proved valuable teaching aids. The Infants Mistress was amiable, welcoming and helpful. I was lucky. Two other ex-students also joined the staff. All three were from Broken Hill so I felt a little like an alien. In fact, residents of Broken Hill considered anyone coming from east of the Darling River a foreigner!

I began my teaching career with 45 little 1<sup>st</sup> Class kids sitting in desks bolted to the floor which was unpolished, splintery and draughty. The names of class members indicated that Broken Hill had quite a substantial migrant population, especially those from southern Europe. A small area between the desk line and the blackboard allowed for dusty mats to be spread out and sat on for story time. There was a wood burning stove in one corner, there was no electric light and, because of a necessary verandah, visibility was not always the best. The building was old with small windows, corrugated iron walls and roof with weatherboard lining. Peppercorn trees surrounded the asphalted playground - not a blade of

grass was to be seen. And it was so hot! In winter it was so cold! Clouds of dust from surrounding bare earth and the huge slag heap that sat over the Line of Lode swirled over all and sundry when cold winter or hot summer winds blew.

Like many of my fellow teachers at our first school, I shudder at what those children must have suffered from my teaching inexperience. I just hope they survived and went on to lead useful and happy lives. I do know that many of them would have had some money to help them along. Remember the days of school banking when every Monday morning the children rolled up with their money and bank books, we entered the amounts and hopefully added up and counted correctly so that everything balanced? Some of my little people had huge balances in their books. At age 6 they were well on the way to becoming millionaires!

After a few months I began to appreciate the Department’s sense of humour or whatever it was that was the reason for both Barbara and me to be sent there together and started to enjoy being in Broken Hill. We celebrated our 21<sup>st</sup> birthdays there with a party that rivalled any of those we had attended at the various “batches”. Although we did spread our wings in different directions through the new friends we made and activities we participated in, we could share in the common experience of being “sent to Broken Hill or Bourke”! It holds a special place in my life’s journey as it also did in hers.

Highlights of my 2-year stay were a weekend trip to Tibbooburra for the Picnic Races, inspecting the Menindee Lakes Scheme during its construction, visiting Motwingee Gorge (now Mutawintje) sans Visitors Centre and marked walking trails, Silverton pre-tourism and movie location site, the Broken Hill’s 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, watching the steam trains from South Australia arrive and depart from the then Sulphide Street Railway Station, my first view of Sturt’s Desert Pea growing in splendid profusion on footpaths, visits to the Royal Flying Doctor Base and School of the Air, visiting the small open-cut mine owned and operated by a local woman and the many Saturday or Sunday afternoon

forays into the surrounding countryside for picnics or to small roadside pubs for deliciously ice-cold lemon squashes or going for late afternoon drives to Silverton, Penrose Park and Umberumberka Weir to enjoy the colours of the magnificent sunsets over the Mundi Mundi Plains.

A recent train trip to and stay in Broken Hill brought back many memories despite the changes that have occurred due to tourism, the closing of the older mines and changes in our lifestyles. The opening up of new mines is giving Broken Hill a positive view for the future. It is a great place to visit and was a great place to have begun my teaching career.

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## 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. 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.

After 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)



# LETTERS PAGE

Dear Editor,

The printing of a couple of Dr. Vic Couch's reminiscences brings to mind another one. Many years back I had a property on the upper Namoi River. The scenery was such that we developed a holiday resort and Vic and Mrs Couch booked in for a week.

In our reminiscing he related the two incidents printed in "Talkabout" and he described how he had declined an opportunity to become a television celebrity.

He was stopped in the city by a stranger who explained that he was planning a television series to be called "The Dismissal" and he tried hard to persuade Vic to consider acting the part of——. At that moment it became obvious and I exclaimed "John Kerr". Vic's confirmation followed. His resemblance then to the Ex Governor General was remarkable.

Vic described another incident that impacted on their well-being. The more elderly of the alumni may recall a dramatic incident in Sydney when an explosive device was detonated in a large block of flats just north of the bridge. The Couch's were living in an apartment very close to the one where the explosion occurred. They were badly shaken.

We talked about George's, at times difficult relationship with his students and over the years his premature death has often come to mind. At college we never gave a thought to the difficulties he had in having the responsibility for the well-being of his students now becoming eager to loosen cultural restraints to experience the pleasures of adulthood. Such a responsibility would have caused high stress levels and sadly this would have contributed to his early death.

Perhaps someone could provide details of George's last years and the circumstances of his passing and does anyone have any information about his son? Has the college in any way kept in touch with him, if not, then in memory of his father, should not this be done? After all, George was the inaugural principal, he had come a long way from remote Tibooburra where he started his teaching career, and don't renewals

become increasingly important as we near the end of our life's journey.

On the theme of renewals, could a list of names, addresses and phone numbers for each session be compiled and be made available (sorry editorial staff) so as to maximize the number of individual reunions that could still take place before we exit stage left or be put into aged care facilities.

A short reminiscence. In 1951 a mature aged student made a trip to Melbourne during a 3 day college break. He owned an Austin A40 utility and four other students accompanied him. To make the trip comfortable two mattresses were taken, the spaces filled up with suitcases and books.

A slow return journey due to heavy rain was made overnight, the students growing increasingly apprehensive as they were going to be seriously late for lectures. They need not have had anxiety about lateness, the missing mattresses had been discovered and the students who owned the mattresses were summoned to the principal to receive a very stern reprimand and warning. In the next issue of "Talkabout" the incident was reported thus "the crime of mattressie has been committed on campus".

The more perceptive readers will have been puzzled by the naming of a tie in my previous letter on college reminiscences. The name came out as a "Swanee Yankee" tie, it should have been printed "Swankee Yankee" - in the transfer of the letter to the printing equipment the letter "K" was left out.

Barry Michell (1950-51)

*Barry, your suggestion that lists of names, addresses and phone numbers for each session be compiled and made available is not possible.*

*Publication of these facts is regarded as an invasion of privacy so before names, addresses and phone numbers can be published, permission must be sought from all persons involved. Ed.*

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## WHY THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS DIFFICULT TO LEARN

This little treatise on the lovely language we share is only for the brave. It was passed on by a linguist, original author unknown. Peruse at your leisure, English lovers, but be sure to read aloud. Reasons why the English language is so hard to learn:

- 1) The bandage was wound around the wound.
- 2) The farm was used to produce produce.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- 4) We must polish the Polish furniture.
- 5) He'd be able to lead if he would get the lead out.
- 6) The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- 7) Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
- 8) A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- 9) When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- 10) I did not object to the object.
- 11) The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- 12) There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
- 13) They were too close to the door to close it.
- 14) The buck does funny things when the does are present.
- 15) A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
- 16) To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
- 17) The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
- 18) After a number of injections my jaw got number.
- 19) Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.
- 20) I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
- 21) How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

ghoti spells fish — gh as in cough; o as in women; ti as in nation

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# A LIFE OF ACHIEVEMENT

## HERBERT THOMAS (TOM) HODGES (1947-49)

Tom passed away quietly on Tuesday evening. On his last day he did some of his favourite things. He went to the beach, played cards, spent time with the family and watched the tennis. He was a happy man.

Tom was a Coalfields lad. His Dad was a miner and he was born and raised in Paxton. He was the youngest of seven children. The family was raised in a two bedroom cottage – the three girls in one bedroom while the boys slept on the verandah. Tom attended the local school and then Cessnock High School. He loved his sport and excelled at cricket, rugby League and athletics. He was selected as an opening bowler in the Combined Northern High School Cricket team playing against the CHS Sydney team. In those teams were Ritchie Benaud and Alan Davidson both of whom went on to play for Australia. In Athletics he could run even time for the 100 yards and in the same year won the State Shot Put. He represented his school in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Rugby League. He was no slouch.

Tom received a scholarship and was among the first intake of students at Wagga Wagga Teachers' College. He was a Pioneer.

It was there that I met Tom and shared a dormitory room for our time at college.

It was at College that Tom met Shirley Brown. He was smitten and theirs was one of the true romances of the Pioneer Session. During college vacations Tom worked Pit Top at Stamford Coal Mine. There was not a great deal of money in the Hodges family as Tom's Dad had died in Tom's last year at Cessnock High School. His mother was fearful that the high wages earned at the mine would entice him to remain at the mine and not return to college. There was no chance of that occurring with Shirley at College.

Tom continued his involvement with sport at College and was the recipient of the first Sporting Blue for his achievements.

Following Graduation Tom was appointed as TIC to Maroo PS outside Adaminaby on the Monaro. He loved a

bet on the horses and while there developed never ending betting systems to beat the bookmakers. According to Tom they were sure fire successes. No wonder we were broke following such system betting. It was at that time Tom was selected to represent Southern Districts against the touring French Rugby League side.

Tom and Shirley were married at Berrima in 1952. Tom was transferred to Tahmoor Public School and in the thirteen years in that area helped build a home at Maldon and a family holiday house at Warri Beach. He studied for and obtained his BA from New England University and helped Shirley raise five children. He also played sport and represented Picton at Cricket and Rugby League. They were busy years.

Tom had transferred to Secondary English History and following appointments to Picton and Maclean was promoted to English/History Master at Telopea Park High School in Canberra. He later transferred to the same position at Karabar High School in Queanbeyan.

Tom became very ill while at Karabar High School and retired early following heart surgery. He took over house duties while Shirley remained as Librarian at Holder Public School. Following their years there they retired to Canberra in the early 1980's. Perhaps Tom's retirement years in Canberra were his most enjoyable. Though restricted by severe arthritis and heart problems he led Shakespearean and Current Affairs Groups. The Sympathy Notice lodged in the Canberra Times bears testimony to the regard in which he was held by the Current Affairs U3A Group.

While I have endeavoured to trace Tom's professional career and record his sporting achievements it was his personal attributes that endeared him to so many. Tom could not be other than how and what he was. He was conditioned by family values. During vacations, homes of his sisters were always havens for us when we had drunk well but not wisely. I cannot ever recall admonishments from any. The memories of those days always bring a smile.

Tom was non-judgemental and accepted each for what we were. His love for his family was simple and unconditional. The students of the Pioneer Session who knew Tom as a friend were privileged.

Submitted by Des Bieler (1947-49)

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## JILL ROWE (VENABLES) 1949-50.

It was with extreme sadness that David Rowe has written to Talkabout to inform us of the death of his beloved wife Jill.

Jill (nee Venables) died on Sunday, 11th November, 2007.

Jill died peacefully at home after an operation in hospital had revealed the existence of advanced bowel cancer. She was seventy five years old.

Jill was born at Forbes, N.S.W. and was educated at Methodist Ladies College and Sydney Fort Street Girls High School before attending Wagga Wagga Teachers' College in the 1949/50 session gaining her N.S.W. Primary Teachers Certificate.

In 1951 Jill began her teaching career at Tarcutta. She became a very good and dedicated teacher, gaining experience over many years in both New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

In 1954 she married David Rowe, a former Music Lecturer at Wagga Wagga Teachers' College. Over the years she became a devoted mother of four children and the proud grandmother of eleven grandchildren. She was from the beginning and remained to the end the beloved wife of David.

Jill was a convinced and practical Christian, active in and through the local church and keen to study and learn more.

An extra accomplishment in addition to those mentioned above, included the gaining in 1993 of the Associate Diploma of Arts in Biblical Studies awarded by the Canberra College of Theology.

Jill was truly an outstanding person and she will be mourned and sorely missed by her loving family and her many friends.

# NEWS FROM CSU

## Building Australia's National iSchool

The leading provider of education in library and information management and teacher librarianship in Australia has embraced a new vision as a leading educator for the online world. The Charles Sturt University (CSU) School of Information Studies is repositioning itself as Australia's national iSchool.



The iSchool idea, which is already supported by almost 20 overseas universities, was designed during a recent workshop at CSU's Wagga Wagga Campus which attracted information industry leaders from Australia and overseas as well as CSU. They examined the future of information education in line with Federal government policy agendas and international trends in information use.

"The international group of iSchools is interested in the relationship between information, technology and people. It is committed to learning and understanding the role of information in a wide range of human endeavours," said Associate Professor Stuart Ferguson, Head of CSU's School of Information Studies.

A driving force behind the iSchool movement in the USA is the Dean Emeritus at the University of Washington's Information School, Professor Michael Eisenberg. He travelled to CSU to be involved in reshaping information education in Australia.

"The future of education and research for the information field is clearly in the form of iSchools," said Professor Eisenberg.

"CSU is ready to make the major leap to becoming a full iSchool with a rich and impressive array of teaching programs, meaningful scholarship, and outreach to the information field and to a range of professions."

Professor Eisenberg was "particularly intrigued by the possibilities of teaming up with health professions, agriculture, education, and sustainable environment".

The iSchool group is currently made up of the leading providers of information education across North America, including many of Canada's and the United States' top universities.

"CSU is well placed to build on its national leadership in library and information management and teacher librarianship by expanding its program and promoting a broad view of the role of information in innovation across science, education, culture and society," said Dr Ferguson.

## Inland Education Foundation

The Inland Education Foundation was established in 2007 and will raise funds to support CSU Faculty of Education students to overcome the financial disadvantages associated with professional placements in rural and remote communities. Historically, attracting financial support for Teacher Education students has been challenging, due to the industry's lack of corporate entities. It is hoped that through the creation of professional experience scholarships valued at \$500 - \$1,000 (depending on the applicant's circumstances and costs), we can increase the number of students undertaking rural and remote placements in the future.

By providing assistance that encourages students to experience remote, isolated and indigenous schools and communities, it is envisaged that a greater number of students will seek careers in these communities and ultimately remain to provide a stable and quality workforce. The more experience and exposure students have with these environments, the more culturally aware they become, and this will not only boost their ability to teach in these communities, it will provide immeasurable benefits to the students, schools and communities in both the short and long term.

We believe this program has great potential to richly enhance the knowledge, skills and capacity of our students to contribute to education in rural Australia.

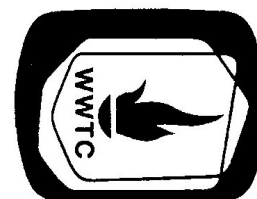
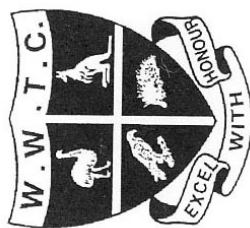
For more information on the Inland Education Foundation contact Hannah Hogan on 02 6338 4832 or via email at [hhogan@csu.edu.au](mailto:hhogan@csu.edu.au).





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