



A PUBLICATION  
OF THE ALUMNI OF  
WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

# TALKABOUT



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## MUSEUM OF THE RIVERINA HIGHLIGHTS THE HISTORY OF OUR COLLEGE.

For twenty five years Wagga Wagga Teachers' College was part of the city of Wagga Wagga, participating in the community activities and playing a major role in the city's development.

For some years the Alumni Committee had sought a repository to house memorabilia as a history of the College. This was finally achieved when we approached the Museum of the Riverina, who offered to help us out. The display will be housed at the Botanic Gardens Site on Willans Hill.

In appreciation of the efforts of the Museum of the Riverina, the Alumni Committee has donated \$2,500 to the Museum to purchase mannequins to exhibit College uniforms etc., a retractible graphic panel, funds for perspex fittings and printing to enhance the College Display.

The Museum Display will be one of the highlights of the Reunion in in September -October this year, 2005.

Our thanks go to Michelle Maddison and the staff for all their efforts.

We also thank all the Alumni who have contributed memorabilia for this display.

### ALUMNI COMMITTEE FOR 2005:

At the recent AGM of the Alumni Association the following were elected as the executive for 2005.

President : Bob Collard. Vice-President : Graeme Wilson. Secretary: Dorothy Tanner

Treasurer: Lindsay Budd Editors of Talkabout : Lew Morrell, Lindsay Budd, John Riley

Research and Records Officer : Ann Smith.

*Research and Records* is a newly created position although its purpose has been carried out by our Secretary Ann Smith over past years. It is a time consuming and arduous task which Ann is happy to continue. To do so in such an effective manner she feels that she will have to forego the duties of Secretary. Dorothy Tanner has kindly consented to relieve Ann of these duties and has been appointed Secretary.

***The Scholarship Fund is over \$42000.***

## From the Secretary's Desk.



I am writing this after the Annual General Meeting of the WWTC Alumni. We had another successful year but unfortunately no new ex-students came to join the ranks. I am finding the work load very demanding. Fortunately Dorothy Tanner eased the load by taking on the secretary's job. I will be helping her as well as keeping records of correspondence and minutes in book form and recording addresses on the Data Base. So please help me find as many as possible of the thousand still to be contacted. If your newsletter goes back to the university, then your address entry is automatically taken off. I found details of 19 whose names were printed in the **November 2004 Talkabout**. Do have a look and see if you can help with any more.

I am happy to help those who would like to contact a friend from College days. **Margaret Edwards (1968-69)** was looking for **Barry Clarke, Ann McNamara and Vicki Hobson**. **Denis Norris** often wonders where **Ken Bond** and **Gary Quinlivan** are (1957-58). **Paul Tulloh (1971)** would like to hear from **Rhett Oldfield, Russell White and Diane Dodd**. **Clair Clough** was looking for **Lenja Kobelke (1965-66)**. **Sigrid Georges nee Stumbris (1958-59)** does photography, plays guitar, and teaches Yoga. She is going to run in a marathon. With all these activities she had to decline getting Talkabout. In Goulburn we found **Christine Berry (1969-71)** and **Robert Hugh Jackson**. Christine came from Goulburn and was Dux of the college in 1970. She has gone back to teaching this year. **Paul Gunning 1965-67** sent me **Ian Rasmussin's** address in Canada.

Paul loves getting Talkabout. While mentioning people who are overseas, did anyone keep in touch with an artist, **David Rankin** who lives in the USA? I know he is married and has children. I would like to enter his address.

Does anyone know where **Wondalga** is? **Don Lusty (1957)** would know.

**Peter Keeble (lecturer)** Can you find anyone you know in this group? He was there in **1968-72**.

**Karen Croft (1970-71)** was in the last group to graduate at WWTC. So were **Roslyn Frame nee Gibbs and Karen Farland, nee Dare(1956-57)** who lives in New Zealand.

**Doug Boughton (1962)** is a professor of Art and Education in Illinois U.S.A.

**Mary Dunn nee Crabtree (1950-51)** is going to move to Merimbula. Saw your photo with Gene in a Canberra Paper.

**Fernando Taylor nee Centofanti** 1961-62 now lives on the Sunshine Coast.

**Lionel Gailer** (lecturer) held an exhibition of Artworks in Alstonville.

**Noel Haberecht** advised that his session **(1953-54)** held their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion at the end of October 2004.

Mark the date on your calendar 30<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2005. Reunion for all sessions. It is to be held in Wagga. Try to come!

### In Memoriam

The following has been sent/ told to me on deaths which have occurred.

**Gordon Young**, lecturer to every session who attended WWTC, died 19<sup>th</sup> November 2004 aged 83.

**Margaret Young**, his wife died 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2005.

**Ronald James Duffy (1957-58)** died in New Zealand from throat cancer. Told by Alec Howitt (57-58)

**Michael Royce Wilmot (1954-55)** died about 16 December 2004 in Canberra.

**Rod Berkley (1958-59)** about 12<sup>th</sup> August 2003.

**Isobel Corin** (see November Talkabout) lived at Lapstone in the Blue Mountain She died from cancer on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2003. She was in **(1954-55)**.

**Kenneth James Gilbody (1950-51)** died 18<sup>th</sup> August 2004.

**Ken Player (1954-55)** died at the end of year 2004.

*Ann Smith*

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*These days I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter ... I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I am here after.*

*Stephen Wright*

### EDITORS' CONCERN

During last year there was a slight increase in the number of alumni who sent contributions to assist with the printing costs of Talkabout.

This has enabled us to continue with the 16 page issue for this year.

It is hoped that this year there will be a further increase in the number of alumni who contribute to ensure the continuation of Talkabout in its present form.

### CONTACTS

**President:** Bob Collard: 2 Louise Close, Ourimbah 2258 Phone 4362 2764

**Secretary:** Dorothy Tanner: 282 Doncaster Ave, Kingswood 2032 Ph 96633204

E-mail: netanner@optushome.com.au

**Research and Records Officer:**

Ann Smith: 24 Whitworth St, Westmead 2145 Phone 9635 0449

E-mail: annrae@bigpond.net.au

**Treasurer:** Lindsay Budd: 4 Flemington Close, Casula 2170 Phone 9601 3003

E-mail: lbudd@bigpond.net.au

**Talkabout Editors:**

Lindsay Budd

Lew Morrell: 25 Grandview Drive, Newport 2106

Phone 9997 1506 E-mail: lewisomorrell@bigpond.com

John Riley: 2 Woorak Cres, Miranda 2228

Phone 9525 5304 E-mail: jr384079@bigpond.net.au

**Alumni Office:** Michelle Fawkes: The Alumni Office, Charles Sturt University, Bathurst 2795. Phone 6338 4629. E-mail: mfawkes@csu.edu.au

## LOOKING BACK .... IN WONDER!



*John Pigram (1950-51) commenced an Arts degree externally at New England in the 50s. He caught the Academic bug and after obtaining a doctorate he joined the Geography staff and remained until his retirement. He wrote the following article as he was preparing to leave the Geography Dept in 1999.*

*He remained Executive Director of the Centre for Water Policy Research until his retirement in 2001. Ed*

Next year marks 40 years of my association with the Department of Geography (as it was then) at New England, and 30 years on the staff of that Department. 1999 will also see the end of that association when I leave the Department in February - the end of an association with literally thousands of students who have taken my courses; the end of involvement with more than 100 postgraduate candidates over the years; the close of a long period of immense satisfaction in contributing in some small way to the advancement of a great bunch of people.

Forty years - since a rather hesitant young external student took delivery of his first batch of lecture material and assignments, wondering if and how he could turn around a failure in Geography in the Leaving Certificate examination into a worthwhile result at University level. He's been trying to prove those examiners wrong ever since - with some success. A string of credit results, first class honours, and a Ph.D., finally helped put the doubts aside, and

led to an appointment as Lecturer in Geography at New England in 1970.

When the opportunity came in 1987 for a half-time appointment as Executive Director of the newly established Centre for Water Policy Research, a new career path opened up to complement my responsibilities in Geography. Currently I wear two hats (at least) - one in water and resources policy, and the other teaching and research in outdoor recreation, tourism and parks management.

It's a busy life, which will become only a little less demanding when the link with Geography ends in the new year. The task of leading the organisation of the Xth World Water Congress in Melbourne in 2000, and other commitments in water research, look like keeping me fully occupied until well into the next century.

### **Why water research?**

I suppose my interest in water and water conservation goes back to my roots in the bush on a farm at Cootamundra in southern New South Wales. As everyone knows, Cootamundra also produced Australia's most famous cricketer, Sir Donald Bradman (you can win money on that fact). Coota was also the home town of a couple of well-known Professors now based in USA - noted agricultural economist, Alan Randall, and leading world geographer, our own Reg Golledge, New England alumnus, and President Elect 1999 of the Association of American Geographers.

### **It must have been the water!!**

In any case, the level of water for livestock in farm dams, water for the crops, the garden, and even the household tanks, meant that we always kept an eye on the weather and an ear to the weather forecast. This interest later translated to

Honours and Doctoral research into irrigation agriculture with the Department of Geography at New England.

That was the 1960s and I was intrigued by the introduction of irrigated cotton in the Namoi Valley, and set about to describe and explain the emergence of this now flourishing industry in northwestern New South Wales. These early studies led to a series of research projects exploring the many different

issues which affect the sustainability of the cotton industry and irrigation agriculture generally, and ultimately to the establishment (with Warren Musgrave and John Burton) of the Centre for Water Policy Research. The emergence of the Centre as a national and international focus for the development and refinement of policy options and the pursuit of best practice in water management has brought with it responsibilities which are both demanding and satisfying. International commitments on the Board of Governors of the World Water Council and as Vice-President of the International Water Resources Association, and the Rosenberg International Water Policy Forum, call for my absence overseas several times a year.

Long flights, vast airports, choking traffic, strange accents and unfamiliar scenes - sometimes it's hard not to look back in wonder - at that young boy from the bush whose main interest in water once was how to entice a yabbie from the murky waters of the farm dam!

And recreation, tourism and parks,  
that's another story ...

John Pigram (1950-51)

## **WWTC OPEN REUNION**

A reminder about the reunion for all Alumni to be held in Wagga on the Weekend 30<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2005.

The Open reunion held in Bathurst in 2003 was a great success and many of those who attended expressed a desire to meet in 2005, this time in Wagga.

You should have received information about the reunion from Michelle Fawkes from the Alumni Office at CSU.

Why not arrange with some of your peers to form a group to attend and renew acquaintances with friends and colleagues you may not have seen for many years.



# REUNION PAGE

## 1953-54 50 YEAR REUNION



(Photo Courtesy Studio Image Wagga Wagga)

*Back Row: Noel Haberecht, Darcy Tosh, Henry Gardiner, Brian Brock, Jim Johnson, Peter Simpson.*  
*Third Row: Ron Midwinter, Ian Bootes, Ron Baird, Andy Raine, Clive Bondfield, Leon Parish, Geoff Cooke, Bruce Willson, Jim Banks, Len Madden.*  
*Second Row: Barry Reece, Mary Hodson, Lorraine Smith, Rhona Southwell, Marg Bollen, Dave Moxon.*  
*Front Row: Judy Tait, Barbara Skene, Mavis Stewart, Judy Shaw, Gordon King, Bev Hilton, Meg Davoren, Mary Duff, Mary Symes, Nel Bland, Margaret Claridge.*

Former students from the 1953-54 session at WWTC gathered for their 50 year reunion last year. They met at Wagga Wagga on the long weekend in October 2004. They enjoyed renewing old friendships and participating in the events organized by the CSU Alumni staff. These activities included the Friday evening reception, the morning teas, the tour of the old College site and the highlight, the dinner at the North Campus on the Saturday evening. Of the 150 students in the original 1953-54 intake, 35 came to this reunion. There were three college couples: Margaret Claridge and Henry Gardiner, Mavis Stewart and Ron Baird, and Judy Tait and Barry Reece. Twenty nine other former students attended.

We also received messages from Marion Miller, Anne Prendergast and Paul Gurrier-Jones. Mr John Cosier, former lecturer also attended.

On the Saturday evening we had thoughts too for the 21 students from our session who are no longer with us.

Geoff Cooke 1953-54

Lewis Morrell,  
Editor of Talkabout.

Dear Lew,

I am not a teacher-trainee from WWTC but served on the staff there in 1966-67.

I trained at Enmore Annexe STC 1952-54, September sessions for older entries.

I append some anecdotes from '66-'67, that may not be well known to students of that time, but could be of interest to them now, and to ex-students of earlier and later times.

At Easter '67, the Historical Museum was to be opened on Willan's Hill. Keith Swan asked me to produce a suitable re-enactment to present at the opening ceremony, handing me papers and letters about the meeting, (an attempted hold-up in 1863) between Magistrate Baylis and 'Mad Dog' Morgan on the road to Urana; and the subsequent shooting of Baylis by Morgan.

I mustered a team of actors from the local Amateur Theatre Club and from College students, (some of your readers may identify themselves), and we presented the 're-enactment' on the day outside the Museum. We had few resources, and went on without rehearsal, (except for some riding time on hacks at the local stables). The highlight of the occasion for me was when 'Morgan' fired blanks from his shotgun at the 'holdup', and my horse (I was playing Baylis) bolted! Being 'shot' later was an anti-climax.

The re-enactment was so well-received that the Historical Society suggested we re-do it so that it could be filmed. It wasn't, which was a bit of a relief, for though I'm a fair playwright and producer, I'm no rider.

All ex-students who went practice teaching in the Junee-Cootamundra, Temora-Coolamon area, will remember the railway crossing at Harefield. During 1967 I wrote a play 'Crossing', set there.

It was not accepted for playing in Wagga as it was considered by the local theatre society to be too controversial for Wagga Wagga at that time. The play's theme was opposing Australia's involvement in the Vietnam 'Incident'.

he play was subsequently presented in Mackie College, Sydney in 1969 and has had many outings since in such places as Armidale, Coonabarabran, Gunnedah, Grafton and Newcastle.

Supervising practice-teaching one year, I had students at Illabo school. This little, isolated school came to hold a special place in my affections, as I knew that Mary (Cameron) Gilmore had taught there in the 1880's. Eighty years later it gave me singular pleasure, (a tingle down the spine), to be standing in the classroom, probably not much changed, where she had once toiled with 'chalk and talk'.

Ron Vickress  
Lecturer-in-English

# TEACHING MEMORIES

## SCHOOL SPORTS 1954



During 1954, my second year of teaching, I was Teacher-in-Charge of a one teacher school at Armatree in the northwest of NSW.

Till 1954 the children of the Armatree school had not participated at athletics carnivals though I had been informed that an annual sports carnival was held at Gulargambone public school to which small schools of the district were invited.

A local grazier said it was OK to borrow his International table top truck so I took most of the children from Armatree PS to Gulargambone, approximately 15 miles or 20 km on the back of their truck. No doubt three or four sat in the front with me.

Mr S J Campbell, the school photographer, was at Gulargambone that day so he snapped the Armatree children while they were at the sports. The girl fourth from the left, back row, could high jump just on 5 feet which I am sure would have been right up there

with state standards, however she was reluctant to participate away from our playground.

Armatree school children had a great day at the carnival, winning practically every cup and shield that was available to the small schools section.

Upon our return home on the back of the International, all children were taken to the local Hotel where soft drinks were shouted all round. Someone at the Hotel had a camera to photograph the children in the back of the truck with their newly won trophies.

Could all this happen today?

Upon reflection, I don't know that the children had even brought, "permission to attend" notes back to me.

NB: The truck did have 30 cm side boards for safety!

Roy Parker (1951-52)



## LOOKING BACK

I arrived at WWTC and was uninformed of the 1st weekend joke being played out. Because 2nd Year boys were at Nasho training until Easter we Newies were piled into buses and taken to be indoctrinated at the Wagga

Demonstration School. One day at a News session a very naïve 6 year old boy said "Well last Friday the man who sleeps with Mummy while daddy is away driving the big truck said....." We never found out what he said as we were laughing so much.

What did I learn at WWTC? I had come from a Nuns Boarding School so believe it was to be able to talk and feel comfortable with boys.

As I majored in singing and acting that was another plus. I was not a top student but had a lot of fun and made

many friends. Faye Boxsell had looks, personality and a great singing voice. I was not built so nicely so Faye took the pretty lead roles and I became a character actress which I was able to pursue, later acting in a myriad of musicals here in Canberra.

Unfortunately I had a major stroke in 1998 and was invalidated out of teaching. I was the only girl in a quintet at WWTC which had Bruce Taylor, Eric Draper, Harry Bunton and Tony Davis and me, Shirley Trent. We were called "Four Beaus and a Belle".

Carole Lutton and I joined the Sydney G and S Society in 1954 and appeared in "HMS Pinafore" and "The Sorcerer", but only in the chorus. Don Talbot came to see us in these shows at the Conservatorium. This was before his Swimming Coach phase.

In 1957 I married Graham and we spent 12 years in Woomera SA in its Hey Day. Graham worked for Weapons Research and 4 children including twins were all born in Woomera. I sang at weddings etc during those years.

My husband Graham and our four children and I came to Canberra in May 1969 and I began work the day the men landed on the moon 21/07/69. This was my increment date and I taught continuously until 1998 when I intended to retire!

I played the lead role of Mumma Rose in "Gypsy" and a girl whom I taught at Downes 3rd Grade ACT played Gypsy Rose Lee. She was Carol Starkey.

PS: I was sorry to see that Reggie Byrnes had died of cancer. He was in my section and in Sydney took me to a Ball and to the Harold Park trots.

Shirley Thomas (Trent) 1952-53



# TEACHING MEMORIES

## VOLUNTEER TEACHING IN NEW GUINEA

I was fascinated with New Guinea in my later years at high school. In my third year of teaching in country New South Wales I saw a photo in the Catholic Weekly of volunteers receiving their mission crosses at a P.A.L.M.S. Ceremony in Sydney (P.A.L.M.S. stands for Paulian Association Lay Missionary Secretariat). I completed an application form and was accepted for the next training course in the August/September school holidays. During the course at Kincoppal, we had talks on Teaching (for the benefit of those with no teacher training), Health in the Tropics, Working with another Culture and Christian Formation. There were also talks by returned lay missionaries which quickly dispelled some of the “airy-fairy” ideas we had about going to New Guinea. I was accepted for the diocese of Wewak - to teach at St John’s Minor Seminary on Kairiru Island, off the coast of Wewak. This was a secondary school run by Divine Word priests to educate boys who wanted to become priests or native brothers. My return air fare was paid by the diocese, board and lodging was provided and replacement of clothing (within reason). Also I was paid pocket money of ten dollars a month (also all postage was paid by the diocesan office at Wewak) in my second year there I saved one hundred dollars.

My flight left Mascot at 7.30 am on morning in January, 1968, arriving in Port Moresby about 12.30 pm. Getting out of the plane at Moresby was like opening an oven door and having all the hot air rush out at you. I walked down the steps of the plane and felt as though I couldn’t breathe. The terminal at Moresby was very crowded. While I waited, one of the chains holding a light fitting suddenly broke and a fluorescent tube fell to the ground and smashed. No-one seemed to take a scrap of notice.

The scenery during the flight over the Highlands was wonderful. After a stop in Madang, I arrived in Wewak at about 4.30 in the afternoon. I was met and driven to the Catholic Mission – called Wirui. That night I slept under a

mosquito net for the first time in my life.

The next day the Bishop of Wewak, Bishop Arkfeld, walked up to me and introduced himself. During a short interview in his office, the Bishop took down some personal details and also asked if I would be happy to be buried in the Mission cemetery if I happened to die whilst I was there.

The next morning I attended my first Mass in Pidgin English in the cathedral. Later in the day I was flown over to Kairiru Island in one of the Mission planes – the Mission had its own airstrip and several planes. I was met at the airstrip and driven over to St John’s.

The house at St John’s was on a hill facing the sea about two hundred metres away. There was a large space above the walls so the air could circulate. I was the only person in the house who was not a priest – they made me very welcome and treated me as an equal.

My subjects were Maths, Art and Social Studies for Form 1 and History for Forms 2,3,4,5 and 6. I kept one page ahead of the boys in the Maths textbook. The only materials for Art were a lot of charcoal and some purple paint – and pencils. The boys at the school came from all over the Sepik district and outlying islands. Several were from the Highlands. The boys were brought to the island by a Mission boat which collected them from each Mission station on the Sepik River. Some of the boys who had never seen the sea before had horror stories of how they were very seasick once the boat left the mouth of the Sepik. The boys ranged in age from their teens to their mid-twenties.

Classes started at 7.45 am in the morning. I didn’t teach religion so I didn’t start until 8.30 am. There were two periods until 10 - then morning tea – then two more periods until 12. After lunch there was a siesta until 2.30 pm – then work period until 4 pm. There were two more periods from 4.30 pm until 6 pm. After dinner study period was from 7.30 pm until 9 pm. During work period some boys worked in the gardens, some cleared away rocks, some did washing and mending. There was not enough

room on the clothes line for everything to be pegged out, so some clothes were spread out on the ground to dry. These items usually came back with grass stains on them. I asked for the hem of a pair of bone-coloured shorts to be mended without giving any specific instructions. They came back mended with purple cotton in a wiggly line.

The boys stood and said “Good morning sir!” at the beginning of each lesson. They also stood and said “Thank you sir!” at the end of each lesson. There was no discipline problems whatsoever. If I was writing on the board and said, “Who is talking?”, I would turn around to find everyone pointing at whoever it was. If I was carrying more than two books, one of the boys would volunteer to carry them. Boys who felt sleepy had to stand up in class – some boys who stood up folded their arms and still managed to go to sleep.

We had an earthquake at about 7.30 am one morning. The two boys cleaning our house (upstairs) jumped straight over the balcony, putting large dents in the corrugated iron before landing on the ground. The swimming pool next to the house looked as though someone was shaking a bowl of water and waves from it were running down the hill. As we ran down the stairs of our house, they were rocking from side to side. The house was bolted together with enough give to withstand a quake. After the quake – 7.2 on the Richter scale but we were a long way from the epi-centre – there were a lot of small after shocks. Every time the ground shook, a number of boys ran out of the classroom.

Our supplies came by plane and boat. On one occasion, a hessian bag of tinned goods was dropped into the sea as it was being unloaded from a boat and every label came off every tin. We couldn’t tell what anything was until we opened it. At one stage we ran out of meat and, for what seemed like ages, we had Tom Piper Braised Steak and Tomatoes- it was not a great success to add curry powder. The cook-boy used some of it to make a meat loaf which was good- and a change. One of our priests wrote to his former parish priest in Sydney and said we were running out

# TEACHING MEMORIES

of food (for the boys- mainly taros and rice), He thought we were running out of food ourselves and sent us about two dozen cases of tinned fruit.

Mum and Dad sent me a carton of football boots. The boys were like the Ugly Sisters in Cinderella struggling to get into them and then hobbling off in them and saying they were okay – even though they obviously DID NOT FIT – just so they would have the prestige of having a pair .

When Mum sent me a big packet of Band-Aids with stars on them, they were gone from the clinic in no time. The boys were wearing them as BILAS (pronounced “beelarse” and meaning decoration ). I saw one boy wearing four or five on his face. Some of them liked to wear a bandage as bilas. A bandage left too long on a sore or a cut would turn the sore into a tropical ulcer. There was a plague of bed bugs in the boys’ dormitories – so they all had to carry their beds down to the sea and dunk them.

There was a malted milk powder tin sitting on the ledge at the top of the stairs. One day in a hurry to get ointment and a bandage for someone, I knocked it over. When I looked there were communion breads or hosts scattered all the way down the stairs. I dusted them off as well as I could and put them all back in the tin. I then moved the tin so that it wouldn’t happen again. I didn’t tell anyone about it – not until now, anyway. One day while I was teaching, the fly of my shorts was not done up. One of the boys put up his hand and said “Excuse me, sir, your chain is loose. The boys who swept the classrooms would sometimes leave a message on the blackboard – “Excuse me , boys, would you please put all of the chalk away?” This would be answered by someone writing underneath – “To the sweepers. Excuse me, boys, you are in charge of the chalk as well as the floor!”

Dad came to New Guinea on a business trip while I was there and visited us at Kairiru. One of his souvenirs was an overdue notice from St Xavier’s High School library on the island. It said “Because your book is overdue, you will have to cut grass for

two hours.” Mum was working at Parramatta Library at the time and was very amused.

A priest from one of the inland parishes came to stay with us while he recuperated after an operation. I went for a walk with him one afternoon and we walked into the nearby village. He started talking to one of the villagers (in Pidgin) and turned to me and said “She just invited us to have tea with them.” It was quite dark inside the house. We sat on the floor. could be quite hard to open at the top- but once they had been left overnight in The lady was using two sticks to roll big balls of sago- or saccas each one about the size of a cricket ball. It was like the old fashioned way of making starch with boiling water. She took some sort of small shellfish from a pot over the fire and gave each of us one to eat. Because I could not see in the gloom what it was, I pushed mine through one of the gaps between the slats that made up the floor. The priest ate his and was violently ill that night.

I started cooking when our cook-boy announced that he was going to visit his family on the other side of the island for a rather vague period of time. The large hessian flour bags could be quite hard to open at the top - but once they had been left overnight in the kitchen, the flour could be easily spooned out through the holes the rats had made.

Packet cake mixes very quickly ended up with weevils or other foreign bodies in them. I would either sift them out or just use them anyway. I showed our cook-boy how to make up packet cake mixes. One cake was very fruity but very flat – it turned out to be plum pudding mix. A visiting brother made a batch of sambal – it is very hot, the main ingredient being red chillies. The cook-boy using the same frying pan without washing it to cook our meat for dinner that night – so it was very spicy meat ! One morning one of the priests stirred what he thought was sugar in his coffee and watched as it frothed and bubbled out all over the place. It turned out to be fruit saline – someone had put the wrong jar on the table. I made a cake for one of our visitors and he commented that the icing sugar was transparent. This was because we were

nearly out of icing sugar. Packet icing sugar would go nearly as hard as a brick. One day I gave one of these “bricks”, a large crockery bowl and a mallet to one of the boys and asked him to break it into small pieces for me. He was back in no time – he had smashed the bowl with about the third hit. The Bishop of Rockhampton visited and was very amused to see us boiling eggs in the electric jug. From time to time I would make two large chocolate cakes for the boys and then give them to one of the senior boys to cut up and distribute. Towards the end of my first year there, I was trying to decide whether to stay on for another year. The boys somehow got wind of this and one boy said “I hope you decide to stay here next year, sir, because I have never had chocolate cake before and I want to eat it next year too.”

I showed one of the boys how to grate up a taro (a taro is like a coarse potato), mix it with beaten egg and flour and fry it. I must have simply pointed to the frying pan and said “Use that,” When he had finished, I saw that each fritter was the size of the frying pan – they tasted great with tomato sauce.

We had several fresh water streams running down to the sea from the mountain behind our house. Boats would occasionally call in for water – a solo yachtsman called in on his way round the world – eventually. A destroyer called in one day.

It was a great life working in a beautiful place with nothing to worry about and I was very sad when the time came to leave at the end of two years. I left by boat and when we were a long way from the shore, through my tears I could see everyone waving. I got far more out of my time there than I put into it. It helped to make me a better teacher and a better person.

John Cassidy 1963/64

# POTTED BIOGRAPHIES

## **EILEEN DONOHOE**

**(RYAN) (1948-50)**

Primary trained and requested country! Appointed to Maroubra Junction Infants as expected !! Completely "trained" and "controlled" by a very "competent" Headmistress but saved by a beautiful Deputy. Best days were very wet with few pupils so made "Free Material" all day after doubling classes. "Certified" after three years then moved to Narwee. Married, left teaching for fifteen and a half years to produce four beautiful daughters. Back to casual teaching until finally 11 years teaching year 6 girls at the local convent - loved every minute of it. Now I am a golfer (ha! ha!) and grandmother of seven little Australians who are (of course) the best in the world.

## **JANET BERKLEY (RYAN)**

**1959-60**



Taught at Ascham, Sydney 1961-63. Married Rod Berkley in January, 1963. We have 3 wonderful sons, 2 lovely daughters and now have the joy of 11 grandchildren. Completed B Soc Sc in 1993. Rod was an invalid from 1995 until his death in 2003. Also cared for parents and still care for my mother who is blind. Over the years have been active in Christian ministries, and that and family and rose garden are contributing to a fulfilling life.

## **BARRIE WRIGHT (1952-53)**

Upon graduation, having trained for the 'small school', I was sent to Killara in Sydney! Next stop Central School at Warren in the west, where I taught a 'combined' 3rd & 4B class, the '4B' being those old enough to be in high school, but still learning to write. No other accommodation being available, I lived in the pub. Then I finally went to

the situation for which I had trained - a one-man school on the banks of the Hunter River; Dalwood, so named for the Penfold wine estate it served.

From there I candidated for the Methodist ministry, where I served for over twenty years, including a stint as full-time chaplain for Wolaroi College for boys in Orange.

In 1983, I took up a position as head primary teacher at fledgling Northern Beaches Christian School at Terrey Hills in Sydney. Two years later I became the headmaster and between 1985 and 1990 saw the school grow from 120 to almost 400 - pre-school to year 12. (That school now has 1000 pupils and a most high reputation). I then moved on to a new career: having been chairman of the Board of Teen Challenge for many years (a street work among young people, including a full-time, live-in drug rehab), I became the Executive Director for N.S.W., national co-coordinator, and member of the International Committee.

Since leaving that role, I have retired (from being paid) but remain fully occupied with voluntary work both in the church and the community.

## **JIM ROCHE (1959-1960)**

First duty was Section Rep 597, then as member of the 1st XV and 1st XI 59/60. Played on the wing, outside Ellwood and Lenehan, in the Riverina team for Country Week 1960.

Posted to Goulburn High (61), then Birrong Boys' High until Relieving head teacher H.S.I.E. Cronulla High (69). Thence head teacher H.S.I.E. Condell Park High (70-74), and Ballina High (75-86). Deputy Principal Ballina High (87-91). Principal Leeton High (92-94), retiring at 55 to caravan around Australia. Returned to Ballina to build the "dream home" overlooking the beach and to enjoy a lifestyle centering on competition bridge, golf and voluntary work for Legacy. Married 1965 and re-married 1991, and now have five daughters (two teaching, two in the police and one a lieutenant commander in the navy), and five grandchildren.

Had much success in coaching school teams (rugby league/union), then girls in volleyball and softball. Coached

teams to win four state knockout championships (one rugby league, one volleyball and two softball). Rose through the softball ranks to coach North Coast Secondary girls, then NSWCHS and on to senior ranks, winning NSW and Australian championships. Coached Australian Youth (U-19 and senior women's teams in Canada, USA and New Zealand. Awarded life membership CHS and Australia Sports Medal for services to women's sport, especially softball. Rate my years in Kabi at WWTC as two of the best in my life. I attribute the training and friendships there as a major molding force in convincing me to make a successful career in teaching/ education and serving public school students in NSW.

## **HELEN NICHOLAS (1967-68)**

You asked for a little info about myself. I left my last permanent teaching position in 1996 as Principal of Berrilee School near Berowra Waters and took a variety of leave for the next few years, taking on a number of different positions including:

- \* casual teaching in a variety of capacities - IEC's, ESL, secondary, special needs projects and primary.
- \* data collection and collation of research on vocational education - a national research project with TAFE.
- \* education officer for research and development with OHS Task force.

Finally severed the ties with DET in 2001. Moved to the Blue Mountains, where I work as clairvoyant, astrologer as well as energetic/spiritual healing. I have been running a two hour weekly radio program 'The Bright Side of the Road' for the past two years on BLUFM 89.1 at Katoomba. This is a community radio station which serves the upper Blue Mountains and out to the central west. It recently won an award for Innovation from the Community Broadcasting Network. The program is about health and wellbeing and includes an interview segment, 'People with a Passion'. I have a webpage as part of the radio station's website [www.blufm.org.au](http://www.blufm.org.au). Follow the links to 'The Bright Side of the Road'.

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# LETTERS PAGE

Dear Ann,

I was delighted to read Bob Teasdale's letter about Tiu Malo. I met Tiu in June, 1960, when he was in second year and I was in first year, at a Methodist Youth Fellowship camp at Borambola (east of Wagga). I had just started attending M.Y.F, having left my former Church (much to my landlady's disgust) to attend one where there were young people. I think Tiu and I were attracted to each other almost from the time we met. I am glad to hear he is doing well in Suva and that he has a family. My landlady was also disgusted that I was going out with a coloured man. Bob himself was two years ahead of me at Wollongong High School and also occasionally attended Corrimal Methodist Church, which I finally went to on my return home to teach. He was actually associated with the Fairy Meadow congregation. Many students from Wollongong High went to Wagga, including Norma Phipps (Fowler). Prior to attending Wollongong High, I (and my older siblings ) attended Albury High. Another source of students at W.W.T.C.. In fact I wondered if Hazel Druitt might be a sister to Dawn Druitt who was in my class from Kindergarten till we left Albury. After leaving College, I was assigned to Corrimal Primary School where I spent the first fortnight waiting to be given a class. My first class was 5C, mostly boys until I was moved to 3B. The Inspector sent me to Woonona Infants before the end of the year, from where I was transferred to Berkeley West in 1965. (Having different surnames, I was surprised to discover this Inspector knew that I was the grand-daughter of John Branch, who had been Art Inspector of N.S.W. prior to his death in 1933). My next two years were spent at WEC Missionary Training School in Tasmania. On my return home, I worked in a Christian Bookshop in Wollongong until my marriage in January, 1968 and then spent one year at SCEGGS in Wollongong. My next school was at Port Kembla, perhaps one of the best schools after Woonona that I taught at and the following year at my "home town" of Austinmer before being sent back to Corrimal on an OA class. Being pregnant and having already lost my first, I resigned before the year was out.

My husband and I moved to Lismore where both our boys were born, I did a very little relief teaching there at Lismore Heights and Wyralla Road. At the beginning of 1974, we moved to Adelaide. When I discovered my mother had secondaries from breast cancer, I felt I needed to earn some money to be able to go home and see her, so I began doing relief teaching here in Adelaide. While my husband was at Bible College, I had to continue in this role, but was able to resign from it after his course when we discovered that people over 50 could do volunteer work instead of actively looking for work. I was able to work in our Church office while my husband worked in the music area there. I had become a "deaconess" in the Church for several years before being asked to become Church Secretary, a role I carried for eight years, until we moved to another Church where my husband was appointed Worship Co-ordinator. After some time I was appointed Church Treasurer, a role I enjoy. You may realize from my mention of Berkeley West that I know Dorothy Tanner. She was my Deputy there. She and Nigel gave us a garbage bin – a most practical gift – as a shower tea gift. Dorothy is also in contact with my sister-in-law through a mutual activity, perhaps lace making. Oh dear, here we are in November and I have received another copy of Talkabout, this one with news of and from Tiu. Not long after he arrived at Wagga, Tiu suffered a bout of pneumonia. I remember his saying about Wagga's weather that summer was too hot, winter was too cold and autumn and spring were too short. I often wonder about Robert (1960-61) and Roberta (1961-62; nee Giles) Playford. I met his uncle and aunt when we were at Lismore at the Methodist Church. In fact they invited us to have Christmas dinner with them in our first year there. I have also read a book in which there was a family tree of the Playford family, which only went as far as Robert's father's and uncle's generation. The Methodist Playfords and the Baptist Playfords (as in Sir Thomas, former Premier of S.A.) apparently are not related according to Thomas Playford VI.

A note explaining a child's absence from school reads as follows:  
"I am sorry that my girl did not go to school because she had to toak this thing if she went to school then she will vomick so that is why.

From Mr.Lanaro"

This was written in a third class girl's handwriting. We discovered at the end of the year that she was only seven, which explained why she was struggling with some things. Another note from the same father apologised for his child being at school, when she was really absent. She was a lovely little girl. I must close and send this before I receive another Talkabout. Thank you for interesting reading and memories of people,  
Yours sincerely,  
Patricia Lee (nee Jagger) (1960-61)

## Quarterly Alumni Lunches

The Masonic Club is no longer able to provide the customary 2-course "Business Lunch", and other offers by the Club were not acceptable to our needs. Hence it was decided at the recent Alumni Committee meeting that other possible venues might be found.

A \$25 smorgasbord lunch at Icons Brasserie in February was enjoyed by the majority of 24 attendees, so a reservation has been made for Tuesday 17th May. No bookings have been made beyond that date, but with the special price available on Tuesdays, this seems the day to go. Future lunches would be expected to be in the 3rd week of August, but this and the date for November should be confirmed by ringing John Riley (9525 5304) or Ann Smith (9635 0449) well in advance. Please do not leave your call to the last few days.

VENUE:

Icons Brasserie, Marriott Sydney Harbour Hotel, 30 Pitt Street, Sydney.

# IN MEMORIAM

## LESLIE GORDON YOUNG



Gordon was born on 31st May 1921 in Sydney, the youngest of three children. Gordon's mother had previously been a school teacher, and in 1926 she returned to teaching and all three children started school together.

Gordon was educated at Homebush and Flemington Public Schools, and later applied for entry to Fort Street Boys' High School – a selective entry school. Gordon was top of all the applicants.

His fourth year at high school, 1937, was a disastrous year, family wise: In January of that year his elder brother Jim was drowned, and in March his mother Nellie died. Following Nellie's death Gordon and his sister Nell went to live with their grandmother. Regrettably in September of that same year the grandmother also died!

What a year to be sitting for the Leaving Certificate! And yet Gordon achieved his Leaving Certificate that year with distinction!

In 1938-39 he studied at Sydney Teachers' College, and in the latter part of that year he had a most decisive event take place in his life: He became a genuine born-again Christian, with a burning desire to see the good news of Christ's saving power spread throughout Australia!

In January of 1940, he was appointed to teach at Bowning. There was no Christian witness there, and it was here that ideas formed that were later to develop into his life's project: Partners with Local Churches.

Following a very short stay at Bowning, he was transferred in March to Belmore Technical School in order to enable evening enrolment in a Bachelor of Arts degree at Sydney University. He obtained his B.A. with distinction.

In 1943, now an old man of almost 22, he decided marriage was the next thing on his agenda! He had already met the charming Miss Margaret Simpson, of Petersham, also a teacher. She had been transferred to Scone High School, but Gordon, being a man of impeccable taste, sent her the following telegram:

"Perishable goods arriving by train. Please meet!"

When Margaret met the train, she found the perishable goods were Gordon! He proposed, and they were married later that year on 28th December. They were to enjoy over 60 happily married years together.

In 1944 both Gordon and Margaret were transferred to Parkes High School, and the following year their daughter Helen was born. The next year their son Jim came into this world.

In 1947 Gordon taught at Newtown Demonstration High School, where he gained the highest teaching mark, and the following year was appointed to a lectureship in History and Religious Education at Wagga Teachers' College.

The period from 1952 to 1956 kept Gordon very busy at weekends: he became the honorary representative for the British and Foreign Bible Society, involving extensive travel over large areas of southern NSW. Gordon got to know and become known by practically all the churches throughout southern NSW, some of which (but by no means all) sought his advice. He became known affectionately as the "Bishop of the Riverina."

It was during this time as the honorary representative for the Bible Society that Gordon's Partners with Local Churches began to take shape.

In February of 1951 Gordon submitted a thesis for his M.A.:

**NEW SOUTH WALES UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNOR BOURKE (1831 – 1837).**

Gordon was not equipped with the best handwriting in the world, so his sister Nell typed the thesis. It had taken 6 years of detailed research and writing,

and Nell typed it: three carbon copies and double spaced lines to satisfy those who read such things. It was later retyped for his 80th birthday. It now takes up 336 pages of single spaced A4 sized paper! There are over 3,000 footnotes, and 17 pages of bibliography! The 100 or so pages devoted to convictism in Australia are still recognised as one of the best historical records of that time.

Gordon's son Jim has since had the thesis copied to CD and it is available in most educational establishment libraries around Australia.

Interestingly enough, in the course of the thesis, Gordon had the temerity to disagree with a historian by the name of Currey. Regrettably Currey was one of those who marked the thesis, and Gordon was only awarded Second Class Honours! His peers still say it was worthy of a PhD.

In 1971, Wagga Teachers' College closed down, and Gordon took extended leave and used the time to begin his extensive journeys throughout NSW, enquiring into and fostering Christian witness.

In 1974 Gordon accepted transfer to Newcastle College of Advanced Education, which carried study leave entitlements! Gordon chose an extensive survey of Religious Education in northern Western Australia. Partners with Local Churches was now nationwide.

In 1979 Gordon and Margaret returned to Wagga, purchased a house in Peter Street, and set about long haul trips throughout Australia, especially Queensland, a vast expansion of the Partners work.

While Gordon had marvellous skills, his mathematics could play tricks: He discovered that he had to return to Newcastle for a year to qualify for retirement! This he and Margaret reluctantly did, living with one of his old students for the year.

Following retirement Gordon was to spend the next 15 years of his life renewing acquaintances and spreading the work of Partners with Local Churches.

He made his last public appearance on 28th December, 2003 – his 60th wedding anniversary – where he was happy to announce that his ambition of

# IN MEMORIAM

fostering a Gospel witness in every small town in Australia had been achieved.

Some of Gordon's famous words to his son Jim, were "I think you will find I have supported very few new ideas in my life." Jim promises to have that written on his dad's tombstone!

Gordon died at Caloola Nursing Home in Wagga on 19th November, 2004, with his wife Margaret at his side. Gordon was much beloved by all who knew him.

John Maskey (1948-50)

John Maskey also wrote the following tribute:

## LESLIE GORDON YOUNG - FRIEND AND MENTOR

As a young Christian arriving in Wagga for Teachers College at the tender age of 16, I was soon met by Gordon Young, escorted to his home, and made most welcome. Gordon became my mentor in those two wonderful years in Wagga, and for the many years since. In those days I had the joy of sharing with Gordon and others in the Open Air Sunday Schools at various locations around the parks and streets of Wagga. I well remember the first time Gordon asked me to give the talk in Bird Park. I told a bible story and then announced, "And now Mr Young will give the application!" Needless to say I received much good advice on how to tell a story after that!

Gordon taught me how to lead a child to Christ, something that has been of inestimable value in later life. He introduced me to many worthy Missions, including what was then the Borneo Evangelical Mission, and Partners with Local Churches, which was very dear to his heart. Gordon and Margaret opened their house and hearts to all who came their way, and we thank them for this Christlike example that they set throughout their lives. Their hospitality was such a blessing to countless thousands.

Gordon and Margaret were wonderful friends, and have been for the 56 years that we have known them. Gordon has gone to his reward, and no doubt has already heard the "Well done, good and faithful servant." Margaret will feel the loss but can be confident in the

knowledge that Gordon is with the Saviour that he loved and served throughout his life.

What a joy it has been to know Gordon – affectionately called by many "The Bishop of the Riverina!"

## SNIPPETS

Submitted by Gordon's daughter Helen (1962-63)

These were found among his papers. WWTC (1947-72)

1. The College began as the first residential co-educational Teachers College in Australia. It was based on strict discipline and utter devotion to children and schooling, with a minimum of theory and a maximum stress on hard work. Teaching was to be considered a zestful, joyous and worthy task. I had the privilege of lecturing to every session.

2. The College had but one goal: **TO TURN PEOPLE INTO TEACHING PERSONALITIES!** Life was simple but never meant to be easy, with lectures all day, every day and practice teaching. Travel by old lumbering dust-bucket buses going often on unmade roads up to 64 miles out of Wagga daily. The first Principal had a theory "If there is going to be a bus accident, I want my lectures to be on it" so out WE went too.

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## ROD BERKLEY (1958-59)



Rod Berkley was a resident of Ipai, sharing with Ted Kaye in the 1958-59 session, training in English and History junior secondary. Perhaps it was because of the expectation that he would teach girls PE, that after less than 3 years, having taught at Cootamundra HS, Aria Park Central and Jannali High Schools that he decided that teaching was not for him and he left to pursue a successful career in insurance and finance.

He also gained ThL (Licentiate in Theology) which was then the course required to be an Anglican minister. Rather than enter the ministry, he sat on the Sydney Anglican Synod, was a lay preacher and active churchman, pioneering the appointment of special paid scripture teachers in this state and beyond during the 70s and 80s. Life changed forever for Rod one Monday in January, 1985, when he was met by gunshot as he entered the National Bank, in Jannali. The bullet grazed his right arm and while the physical effects were superficial the psychological effects were permanent. Later that year he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at the age of only 45.

By 1995, no longer able to work or drive, Rod threw himself into genealogy and writing as well as producing a magazine for the local Parkinson support group.

In January 1963 Rod married Jan Ryan (1959-60), the union producing 3 sons, 2 daughters and 11 grandchildren. He was immensely proud of his family. In August 2003 we were looking forward to a new life together in Armidale. Our church had given us a wonderful farewell and after church on our final Sunday, Rod suffered a cardiac arrest and died very suddenly. The Parkinson's disease had ravaged his body and he spent much of his later life in a wheelchair.

I know he is with the Lord he loved and served and lives on forever in our hearts.

Jan Berkley 1959-60

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# IN MEMORIAM

## MY MEMORIES OF KENNETH JAMES GILBODY



### FORGOTTEN SKILLS

No more do I see little kids in the park  
A ball, a dog, a laugh and a bark.  
To run, to tumble, to toss and to play  
To grow and to learn the natural way.

Now dogs are on leads as council decrees -  
A stranger may lurk in the park and the trees  
The kids are inside – computers or tellies,  
Lounging on sofas – on floors on their  
bellies.

They seldom play outside or go for a run  
To breathe the fresh air – or bathe in the sun  
Where is the hopscotch – the “fly” jumping  
sticks  
Marbles, red rover, elastics with tricks.

Prisoners base – and billy carts too,  
We hear many times “there’s nothing to do”.  
Turn back the clock - perhaps kids may see,  
There’s more to their lives than watching  
TV...

© Ken Gilbody 2003

*These were among the last words I heard from Ken Gilbody. We were at a poetry reading evening in Old Bar where he and his wife Dorothy Dyce had retired in 1996. Ken was reading a selection of his poems. He was a noted poet and often contributed to The Manning River Times and the local ABC Poets’ Corner.*

*He had many talents and interests. He played bowls, was a keen bird watcher and took note of all flora and fauna when he and Dorothy went on their many caravan holidays. But his great love was*

*people. Family, notably his two sons John and Les, friends, fellow bowlers and past pupils were all very important to him. He loved to make people laugh and had keen sense of the ridiculous.*

I met first Ken and Dorothy at Wagga Wagga Teachers College in 1950. He was in my section 203 and Dorothy roomed across the corridor in the Dormitory called Ipai (Aboriginal for Echidna).

Ken, quiet and unassuming, was outstanding in many areas of college life. He was a talented sportsman and represented the college in Rugby Union and Rugby League. Mal Hanratty told Ken at the Reunion in Canberra, he was the best half back he had seen.

He loved music and had a true tenor voice. He sang in the college musicals; The Pirates of Penzance and Iolanthe. This interest continued all his life as his fine collection of music attests. He liked all forms of music from classical to some modern (especially ABBA and Tina Arena), to country and western. Dorothy tells me there was music in the house all day and all night.

Very early at practice teaching it was evident that here was a student with outstanding potential. Therefore it was not surprising that during his final practice, Ken was recommended for an A+.

I was visiting Dorothy’s room one night when I made an amazing discovery, Dorothy was wearing an engagement ring. That was a secret I kept - only to discover that several people had been witness to a dramatic scene when a very quiet but determined Dorothy had thrown the precious ring at Ken’s feet outside the college library. The rift was healed as they scrambled together to find the ring which is still worn with pride.

In 1952 Ken was appointed to Mundiwa North (Deniliquin) but in May he and Dorothy were both appointed to Darlington point in order to take up a Crown tenancy that was coming due. They were married on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1952.

After four years there Ken was appointed to the one teacher school at Fivebough, outside of Leeton where he stayed for 10 years. Here I met them again because my nieces were pupils at the school. Mr. Gilbody’s word was law in their home and other houses of the village. Indeed he helped many people in times of difficulty

and sadness. He was like the old fashioned village schoolmaster.

When I came home on holidays I was always brought up to date with the doings of the school house. The two little boys John and Les were greatly loved by all the pupils and when John was missing Dorothy always knew where to find him, sitting in class with the Camm girls.

Once when Ken became ill, my nieces were very distressed. They missed their wonderful teacher so they did not rest until I went to visit just to make sure the family was OK.

It was not until the Reunion organised by Frank Meaney at Bridge Street in 1986 that I caught up with them again. I was looking forward to seeing Ken and Dot. Imagine my disappointment when they were not there. Ken was in the Sanatorium Hospital recovering from major heart surgery. Val Hoskin Rummery asked me to go and see them to take everyone’s love and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

I’m not sure the hospital staff approved of the laughter in that ward as we recounted old times and caught up with reunion news.

We met off and on over the years but in 2000 when I came to live in Taree our friendship resumed. Dorothy continued to be the expert craft person she was while at college. Ken used to joke that they were the only house in Australia that had 2 beds and 14 quilts.

When I arrived home from Sydney on Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> August there was a note on my door to say Ken had died after a short illness (cancer), and the funeral was the next day. I was very honoured to be among the 200 people who attended a very moving and dignified service at the Crematorium. Mates from the Old Bar Bowling Club formed a guard of honour and Shirley Fraser, one of his Fivebough pupils, was present.

My nieces were very sad to hear of the death of the best teacher they had ever had. He certainly had lived up to that promise he showed when he received an A+ for teaching in 1951.

In a recent Christmas card Dorothy summed up our friendship by writing “Thanks for being there for both of us over many years.”

Velma Kneale (1950-51)

# TEACHING MEMORIES

## SOGERI SOJOURN

*Nick Bricknell served in a number of Districts in Papua New Guinea from 1961 to 1974 as class teacher, headmaster, District Inspector and Regional Secondary Inspector before his appointment as Superintendent of Secondary at Education Department Headquarters in Port Moresby.*

My first posting in Papua New Guinea was to Sogeri Senior High School in January, 1961 after I had just resigned from my primary teaching position with the Department of Education. Incidentally, joining the PNG Public Service was to be my second resignation from the NSW Department. The first time had been some six or seven years earlier when, as a callow and somewhat ingenuous and romantic dreamer, I resigned to become a professional fisherman running my brother's 45 foot trawler on the NSW north coast. Two and a half years later, I went back to primary school teaching, having decided it wasn't such a bad profession after all compared to the vicissitudes of fishing for a living.

But back to Sogeri. How was it that a primary teacher was posted to arguably the top secondary school in the country at that time? Well, during my second spell of teaching in NSW I completed a Diploma of Physical Education, and apparently there was a vacancy for a P. E. specialist at Sogeri. Moreover, on my resume I mentioned that I spoke French and the Headmaster (who was given carte Blanche as far as picking his new staff went), decided that the boys needed a bit of culture. However, half way through the first term when the Director of Education discovered what the Headmaster had done unilaterally, he decided that they didn't! French was deleted from the Sogeri curriculum and I was allocated some maths classes instead.

Meanwhile, at the ripe old age of thirty-two, I had been talked into coming out of retirement to play rugby league for the Kone Tigers in the Port Moresby Rugby League Competition - I must have been mad. I had coached schoolboy teams in Australia, and was eager to introduce league into Sogeri because it was obvious that many of the students were naturals. Unfortunately the Headmaster would have none of it! As an ex-Victorian the

Headmaster was a fanatical Aussie Rules supporter and claimed that league was "too dangerous" for Papua New Guineans, so, as Sportsmaster I had to settle for "coaching" the school Rules team. This consisted of lots of conditioning and fitness drills because I hardly knew one position in the game from another - and still don't! I was, however, able to keep my rugby fitness up by joining in with the team during our daily training sessions. Fortunately the boys were both keen and talented, and consequently that year we won the Moresby AFL open competition despite my shortcomings as coach.

One of the first things that I did when I arrived was to build some P.E. Equipment. This included an overhead ladder, parallel bars and some pull-up bars made of galvanised pipe - all of which the boys and I cemented into the ground. Finally, under my direction, the school carpenter built a very creditable vaulting box and springboard.

The only thing missing now from my P.E. programme was a swimming pool. No problem. I decided to remedy that by damming up the creek that ran behind the dormitories. After we talked it over one day after footie training, a group of senior boys and myself went into the bush and cut down a number of trees. Teams of enthusiastic students and I then carried them down to the creek one by one on our shoulders with Peter Tavip, a charismatic Tolai senior, balancing on the top to urge us along. Once at the creek, we anchored the logs into position between two walls of rocks, holding them together with short lengths of water pipe.

Once completed, the pool became an integral part of my P.E. programme as a useful and safe (I thought) means of teaching students how to do forward and back somersaults, until, - on one not to be forgotten morning - one of my keenest gymnasts, Noka Peter, forgot to tuck and throw in a back somersault and hit the bottom of the creek, splitting his head open on a sharp rock and had to go off to the hospital to be stitched up. The Headmaster was not impressed, and that was the end off the formal gymnastic lessons in the creek.

I was told later that "Bricknell's Folly" was finally washed away in a flood, But during my two years at Sogeri, at least, it

provided a lot of pleasure for staff and students alike.

My family and I left PNG in January 1974 and, apart from a stint at UPNG giving in-service training to primary headmasters in the 1980s, I hadn't been back until in the early 1990s I was invited back to Port Moresby as part of a team of consultants preparing a report on the reorganisation of Teacher Education. The evening before my departure to Australia, Betuel Peril, the Deputy Director of Education, held a function for visitors at his home. He was an ex-Sogeri student and had been in my Aussie Rules team. As we chatted about our time together there thirty years earlier, Betuel said, "you know, Nick, my most enjoyable recollection of my time at Sogeri was when we dammed up the creek and built our swimming pool. That was really something!"

The next morning while I was waiting just outside the hotel for a cab to take me to the airport, a well dressed Papua New Guinean who had been sitting in the foyer came up to me with a smile on his face and held out his hand in welcome. "Hello, Mr Bricknell. Do you remember me?" As we shook hands, embarrassed, I had to say I didn't. "I'm Ted Diro, Ramu Diro". Of course I knew who he was now, a former Major General, Government Minister and successful businessman. He, too, had been one of my footballers, a brilliant all round sportsman, and dux of the school to boot.

"Hi Ted. That bushie military moustache had me fooled," I said. "You didn't have it when you were a schoolboy. It's Nick, by the way." "Hi, Nick. Good to see you again after such a long time. It must be thirty years. What have you been doing up here?"

We talked for ten minutes or so about the school, the teachers, some of his classmates and what they were doing now, until the arrival of my cab. Then, just as I was about to get into the cab, Diro said, "You know the thing I remember best about my time at Sogeri was when we built that swimming pool. Do you remember?"

Nick Bricknell 1947-49