



A PUBLICATION  
OF THE ALUMNI OF  
WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

# TALK ABOUT



Volume 3: No 2

July 2000

## SCHOLARSHIP QUANDARY

To be or not to be....

When a scholarship was initially proposed it was envisaged that we raise the sum of \$25000 so that a perpetual scholarship would be established. This is the amount that is generally donated for such a scholarship. The scholarship would consist of the interest gained annually on the invested \$25000. We have over \$10000 in donations so far.

It was suggested by a Charles Sturt University spokesperson that we could establish the scholarship earlier by allocating a sum of what has already been donated and hope that further donations would fill the gap as the years go by.

This seems a risky enterprise when the initial proposal would guarantee a perpetual scholarship.

To date there have been many generous donations, and as we have 2000 ex-students on our mailing list, our target would be achieved if every ex-student donated just \$10 each. Of course we would not limit donations (which are non taxable) so we appeal to you all to contribute to reaching our target as soon as possible.

We would like to hear from you and your ideas on our proposed scholarship, especially if you have some experience in this area.

It is very important that the scholarship criteria be formulated and this will be discussed at our next Alumni meeting to be held at commencing at

ALL ARE welcome

## *The Spirit of Giving is Alive and Well*

### **1999 Gifts Target Reached**

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

*REMEMBER any gift over \$2 is TAX DEDUCTIBLE*

## **PROGRESS ON “TEACHING MEMORIES”**

Extracts from the PREFACE to  
TEACHING MEMORIES  
dictated By Dr. Victor Couch  
on 24 / 9/ 97

*“I could say at the outset that we were all rookies - students coming to learn how to teach, everyone on the staff from the Principal down had not been on the staff of another teachers’ college, so they in fact were rookies in teacher education just as the students were. There was an important element in bringing together staff and students in what I can only regard as an extraordinary sort of bonding.*

*I was on another college staff afterwards and it was very much more impersonal, much less effective, so I can look back on those four years at Wagga Wagga Teachers’ College as the period when the College ethos was set, where in fact you had mostly young lecturers who tried to interpret as best they could the needs of their students because so many of them had been teachers in primary schools who then did evening degrees at honours level and came into teaching. So in essence the staff had a very sound background in primary teaching across the various subject fields.*

*I think also that the College being a substantially residential community meant that there were great advantages for many of the creative types of activities such as drama, musical performances, physical education displays and art and craft exhibitions. And because*

*there was a captive audience, the amount of time that could be put into rehearsals for these performances was maximised, such that the performances were of quite outstanding quality.”*

## **PROGRESS REPORT ON “TEACHING MEMORIES”**

Stories received so far in the following categories :

College (30);  
Early Appointments and  
Probationary Days (25),  
Schools (31);  
Pupils (10)  
Inspectors (13) .

**MORE ARE NEEDED.**

**PHOTOGRAPHS :** We are seeking photographs (black and white preferably) to illustrate stories already submitted or about to be submitted for “TEACHING MEMORIES”. If you could lend us a good photograph to illustrate features such as those listed below, preferably with a story attached and an appropriate caption, we would be glad to hear from you. Utmost care will be taken of the photographs, which will be returned as soon as they have been scanned and will be duly acknowledged if used.

**SOME SUGGESTIONS:-**

Special School Occasions  
Pupil Activities such as  
Excursions  
One-teacher school buildings and activities now virtually consigned to history.  
Groups of Special Pupils, e.g. Winning teams, debaters etc.  
Practice Schools we all remember.

Please send to me at the address below or phone if you have any questions-

JOHN RILEY  
2 Woorak Crescent,  
MIRANDA, NSW, 2228  
Phone (02) 9525 5304

## **PATRONS OF W.W.T.C. ALUMNI**

It is a pleasure to announce that the following have signified that they would be delighted to be Patrons of our Association.

They are:-

Marjorie Cornell,  
Eric Hawcroft,  
Joe Lonsdale,  
Ruby Riach,  
Dr Joyce Wiley, O.B.E.  
and Gordon Young.

**VALE**  
**JUDY REID (1956-57).**

Judy attended school at Moruya from Kindergarten to Third Year. Her final two years were spent at Bega High School. We had met when we had started school and she was my best friend throughout our early school days. So it was a pleasant surprise to see her at W.W.T.C. Judy was one of those rare persons who was good at everything. She excelled at any sport, she had a fine intellect, as a clear and concise thinker and she was a good singer. She always made one feel special in the way she spoke and listened to them. She was always kind in her attitude and treatment of those who could be difficult to get along with.

At College, Judy displayed the same attributes. For her outstanding achievements she was awarded the Whittaker Prize for the outstanding woman student in both sport and scholarship; the Apex Prize for the student who promised to give the greatest service to the community after leaving College; the Joseph O'Brien Prize for Literature; the College badge for being secretary of the Students' Representative Council and a full Teaching Certificate with honours. She was also a member of the College Quartet.

Judith's teaching career began at the small southern tablelands town of Delegate. She then taught in the Wollongong area before moving to Letheridge Park (at that time the largest school in the State) and then to the Blue Mountains to teach in that area.

Although our lives took different directions, we remained friends and could pick up the threads whenever we met. She was a true and loyal friend. Judy died on 25th April, 1986 after a long battle with cancer. At her funeral this poem by Christena Rosetti was quoted ;

When I am dead, my dearest  
Sing no sad songs for me;  
Plant thou no roses at my head,  
Nor shady cypress tree.

Be the green grass above me  
With showers and dew drops wet;  
And if thou wilt remember  
And if wilt, forget.

I don't think Judy will ever be forgotten by all those who knew her.

Beverley Irving ( Greig) (1956-57)

**VALE .**  
**BARBARA PAULL (GREIG)**  
**(1956-57).**

Barbara entered Wagga Wagga Teachers' College with me, her twin sister Beverley. She enjoyed her College days as much as I did. Barbara was not into sport. Her interests were more intellectual and is remembered as being much more serious although she would readily join in any of the harmless pranks that were instigated by others. Barbara had suffered from a tendency to stammer during her school life and was so very quiet in lectures. Being an avid reader and not having had access to a large library, the College library was one of her special haunts. Her particular interest was history and she joined History Option with Mr Swan. It was always the highlight of her week and was an interest that she continued for the rest of her life. She also liked to write and a story of hers was published in Baringa.

Barbara's first appointment was to Burke Ward School in Broken Hill. She loved the school and city from the moment she arrived. It was at this time that she became interested in sport. She played softball, hockey, basketball and cricket. One of her other new interests was to visit every small, quaintly named pub in Broken Hill. After four years Barbara was transferred to Sydney where from 1963 to 1967 she taught at Greenacre and Bankstown. In 1968 she was transferred to Moruya and then back to Sydney after her marriage to Ron Paull. She then taught at McCallums Hill before daughters Catherine and Natalie were born .

Her last years of teaching were at Narwee Primary where she set up the new library. After her untimely death in February , 1992, the library was dedicated to her and is known as the Barbara Paull Memorial Library. She was very much involved in training

library assistants and computerising the library. She was active in the local Teachers' Federation. Her interest in sport continued, especially in women's cricket and at one time she was the manager of the State Junior Team.

The following is a quote from an address by a colleague at her cremation.

"We shall miss Barb's smile, her passionate debate on causes close to her heart. That she loved learning and was an avid reader was a further blessing as these loves were instilled into the many children she taught over the years. We will leave here knowing that the beautiful loving woman under the slouch hat at Easter Hat Parades, growling, laughing, smiling, encouraging and assisting, has left us richer by being our friend, teacher , twin sister, wife and mother."

Beverley Irving (Greig) (1956-57)

# COLLEGE MEMORIES

## WWTC in the 50's:

Vic Couch and Wagga Teachers' College were pretty much inseparable. It was Vic who was responsible for my going to Wagga Teachers' College. I had known Vic as a family friend since I was a small child. He had been a school counsellor and a friend of my father, additionally he was married to a friend of my step mother and we visited often. In 1952, after completing five years at boarding school in Sydney, an offer came (among others) of a place at Newcastle Teacher's College. Maybe my father wanted me at a greater distance from home, on maybe it was because I had relatives in Wagga, I'll never know, but he sought Vic's advice and assistance and had the offer changed to Wagga.

It was a mid afternoon on a hot still day in March 1952 when I stepped through the gates of WWTC, a brash youth of 17. I stood looking across the rose gardens and lawns to the Assembly hall, to the vista of sunlit wheat fields and the soft undulating hills beyond. My first sensory impressions remain:- the heavy fragrance of roses and the lingering scent of cut grasses carried on the hot still air. The only sound was the faint hiss of a seemingly incessant sprinkler system.

That view was also a symbol of what that year was to bring:- beautiful experiences of people, the various arts, and intellectual stimulation as the vista of life began to spread out before all of us.

Later, as the sun was low enough in the sky to penetrate the windows, I joined others in the dining room. After dinner, in small groups and pairs we walked in the still evening air through the fast lengthening shadows into the twilight, exploring both the roads surrounding the college and nature of our new companions.

It all started well that year in the bounteous months of autumn: the grape season; two girls for every guy, walks in the long warm evenings

which gradually grew cooler, the blackouts which provided sudden and delightful temptations in the common room; the music of Louie Armstrong and Fats Waller, the sporting activities, the stage productions, the picnics in the hills, and of course the various romances. It was all very exciting and left flickering memories. Walking under a full moon through the wheat fields. Walking in the rain under oak trees with the light of street lamps fractured by foliage. Windswept and wet, alive and experiencing. Frosty winter nights, warm bodies in the darkness, the starry stillness and the beautiful sound of Chris Sterling's voice, a song carried into the darkness on the cold night air. The joyful roar of a cast rehearsal for the Revue or for Gilbert and Sullivan's "Patience".

That first year was wonderful, one of the most enjoyable in my life, despite the inconvenient intrusions of prac' teaching and lectures. The lectures and lecturers left their mark too, "Dutchie" Holland introduced me to TS Eliot, Owen and Auden, and Steinbeck, "Laxy" Latham introduced me to Psychology and "Speed" Gammage left some indelible memories of biology. Lionel Gailor allowed me to stretch my wings a bit with stage and décor design.

Conversely the second year started badly. First there were three months of National Service Training, then back to a college where all of the friends of previous session (for whom I ached) had disappeared to be replaced by newcomers. It was soured from there on and, indulging my teenage emotions, I withdrew myself from most activities except stage decor. There were frequent clashes with authority, the "Bivouac Mutiny", the "Cootamundra Incident", the "Sabotage of the Stagbonds" and a series of minor baiting skirmishes. Poor Eric Pearson, I attended his lectures, ostentatiously unencumbered by either pen or paper, prompting him on a number of occasions to delicately suggest I may need notes. As I both knew the source of his notes and the availability of other slavishly written

ones, his suggestion went unheeded. I knew my results would surprise Eric. At one stage I felt so depressed and desperate that I actually considered serious study, but pride gained the upper hand and I refrained until the last minute. Ultimately I was glad to depart, despite the impending threat of having to actually teach, an issue I was beginning to confront.

David Lyons – (1952-53)

## More Memories Of WWTC:

### THE MUSICALS:

"The Mikado" and "The Pirates of Penzance".

The first was produced by Ray Pople who used to "do his block" and the second by Elvie Cornell, she was quite an accomplished pianist and used to roll her eyes. We had a lot of fun in our rehearsals on the stage of the old gym. I can still sing a few of those old choruses, so the learning processes must have been O.K.

### AUDIO-VISUAL

I had a special interest in things audio-visual and became the person who checked students out in the operation of the movie projectors - that was Friday afternoon in the Labs. Everyone had to thread the film, rim it and rewind etc. I think it was to earn points on a check list. Even when we moved into self-threaders we still had to be able to operate the film manually.

### OUTSTANDING RECOLLECTIONS

There was a red headed Maths lecturer who used to ride a bicycle ! There was Barry Jackson the Rugby League player ! We had a couple of good hockey teams!

WEBSTERS? Was that the corner store up on the block away from Hut 9 ? We used to visit there when our allowance arrived and those who depended on the allowance might even have to pay off a bill on the book !

Tony Baker (1949-50)

# TEACHING MEMORIES

## FIRST APPOINTMENT

I was first posted to Kingston P. S. in January, 1951 -- a one teacher school 28 miles west of Uralla in the New England. I travelled on the Glen Innes Mail train to Uralla -- not much money in the wallet, of course, but no one to meet me and at 7 a.m. a what to do ? Had to settle for a cab driver to take me the 28 miles. Can't really remember what it cost in 1951, But I think he was happy with twenty pounds, or was it ten ponds, not dollars.

The couple I was to board with would give me breakfast and a packed cut lunch. The husband had to drive the school bus and his wife ran the post office and telephone exchange. In the evenings I used to have to walk {week about} to three different families in the area for dinner. (Why did I sell my bike to somebody at W.W.T.C. before I left). It wasn't so bad in good weather -- fortunately it didn't rain much but it was certainly frost to snow in the winter. Incidentally for the first four years there was no electricity.

The school and the post office were on the same peninsula. When I was planning to marry in '56 there was a strong local movement to keep me there but there was no residence ! I think Davis Hughes was the local member for some of that period and a new residence was built beside the school on the peninsula/island. When it rained several times a year and the creeks came up for a day or so, the children couldn't go to school and the Postmistress couldn't get to the P.O. -- so I used to run the telephone exchange and keep the lines open.

I was at Kingston for ten years. Policy closed down several one teacher schools in the district and a couple of new bus runs meant my numbers were growing -- still in one classroom. At the worst stage I had 50 plus children with 12 or 13 of them on correspondence up to the Intermediate Certificate. Lots of lobbying again and a second classroom was built in 1958 and Ruth McClelland was appointed as my new assistant for lower division.

During that time she lived with us in the residence which must have been tough on both sides but we seemed to survive happily and I was sorry to lose her to the Armidale Demonstration School in 1960. During that time I also had a larger correspondence group in my classroom and two students sat for the Leaving Certificate in following years

On one occasion my wife Beth and I took all the correspondence students ( 12 or 13 ) to Sydney to meet their teachers and see the sights.

We returned to Kingston for its centenary in 1996 -- oh the changes now -- all those staff and all those facilities.

Seriously, I along with many others of us were in the "truncated session ". Wasn't that what they called us ? We had very little prac teaching experience and we were put out there. I didn't do the special small school's course, but that's where I landed, as did quite a few others. At that time advisory visits from Inspectors were an unusual occurrence and of course there was no support staff. Didn't we have some trembles and worries but I tell you what -- I wouldn't swap any of it. I learned to stand up and lead and be a real contributor to the community -- no place to hide ( to small ) and a lot of fun on the way.

## PEOPLE

My first Inspector was Charlie Ebert whom I'm sure some of you would have been fortunate to meet along the way then or later as Regional Director Northern. It was many years later in the '70's when I was to meet him again in Madang, P.N.G. when I was a Regional Inspector and he was visiting N.S.W. and Australian teachers who were on loan or secondment in various areas. Strangely within about the same time I was able to meet Dr. Harold Wyndham who was an avid stamp collector, and for quite a few years we exchanged stamps(he reciprocating with new Australian series).

I bumped into Trevor Broomfield in 1972 when he was Principal of the

Woodenbong Central School but have not heard of him since.

In the '90's when I was visiting an Aboriginal Teacher Trainee doing a prac in Dubbo, who should I meet, but Ruth McClelland, my first assistant, then the Infants Mistress at Dubbo.

Reading your reports of the 1999 reunion and Dr. Vic Couch and Dr. Joyce Wylie brought back a few memories. I was fortunate after 16 years in P.N.G. to meet up with Dr. Couch when I was employed as a lecturer at the Catholic Teachers' College in Sydney and Vic was Chairman of our Council. At that time his wife was still able to participate and it was a wonderful experience to share with this loving and loved couple,

That association continued into the Catholic University and at one stage I used to use Vic's office at North Sydney when I was visiting that Campus. I hope Vic has time to make all his records available to all interested organisations. His was truly a tremendous contribution to Education spanning 60+ years - who can beat that!

Hope you joint editors are enjoying life and health. For Lew C. I remember gold/silver rimmed specs; for Lew M. a bolt of fair uncontrolled wavy hair (any left ?)

Regards,

TONY Baker, 1949/50

## SCHOOL PLAY NIGHTS

Playnights used to be a feature of life in some country high schools in earlier days. You probably remember the way it was arranged. All members of staff, regardless of faculty, were expected to take part in some way or other - in actual production, in costuming, make-up, properties, back stage work, sales and bookings etc.

Not all participation by students and staff was willing, of course, with students saying "I can't act" and some staff reasoning that the time wasted in weekly rehearsals for a whole term and in the loss of class members and some staff for final dress rehearsals, was not justified in terms of academic results. But all became involved.

Such Play Nights had their HIGHS and LOWS. The most successful production I can recall on one such night was put on by one of the abovementioned "unwilling participants" - a member of the Commerce staff - who allegedly could see no point in the exercise. Whether by intent or accident, it matters not; he produced a skit on Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake".

For his cast he had a class of burly 3B boys, probably from an agricultural elective. These were clad in military greatcoats and boots borrowed from the school's cadet corps. To the accompaniment of the original music, these delicate beings pranced around the stage to perform their version of "The Dance of the Swans", and in

doing so nearly brought the house down.

So well received was the performance that the school staged a special encore the following night.

At another Play Night at the same school I adapted the CLOWNS sub-plot of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for a production with my 3A English class. This also went well, largely I suspect because of the antics of Bottom, played by the class "clown". With the help of a papier-mache ass's head manufactured by the Craft faculty, he carried the day.

On the other hand, the LOWS are equally hard to forget. At another school I tried the same adaptation of Shakespeare with a much less gifted year 7 class. The language proved to be beyond them, and any semblance of humour was lost.

Even worse was my effort at the same school with an equally dramatically ungifted class. The play selected had a "cast of thousands", with the mercenary aim of ensuring that more parents would come along on the night to see their children perform.

With over twenty in the cast, responding to cues would obviously be critical, especially with crowds backstage awaiting their invitation to come to the fore. Unfortunately, cues at the start and at the beginning of this long-forgotten play were almost identical! You can probably guess the rest - one member due to come on stage LATE in the play, responded to the wrong cue EARLY on, those due to follow on from him duly took

their cues, and the play came to an embarrassing conclusion before half the cast had even seen the footlights.

The producer, meantime, stood behind the curtain frothing at the mouth with frustration!

How dependent we were during those Play Nights on little things like that not going wrong !

Embarrassed, 1948-1950

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Don Talbot, a promising young swimmer, graduated from WWTC in 1952 and was appointed to Revesby Primary School. It was there he met John and Ilsa Konrads and became their coach. He left teaching to become a full time swimming coach.



He attended the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956 and in 1962 was appointed Australia's first team coach to the Commonwealth Games in Perth. The followed the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo and the 1972 Olympics in Munich. In 1972 he moved to Canada to coach at Lakeside University until 1980 when he returned to Australia and set up the Australian Institute of Sport. Three years later he moved back to Canada and became national coach. In 1989 he returned and became Australia's head coach.



Don now lives on the Gold Coast but at present his time is spent overseeing our national swimming program, coordinating the overall coaching system and pursuing his lifelong quest – “getting Olympic medal winners”.

## Letter to the Editor



“Wandjina”  
Berwick Park Road  
Wilton 2571

Dear Lew,

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

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

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

Best wishes,

Don Davis (1947-49)

### Interested in having a Reunion?

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

Phone: (02) 63384629



## The Wagga Wagga Teachers' College Alumni Association Scholarship Appeal



### KEEPING THE SPIRIT ALIVE IN 1999 TO SECURE THE FUTURE

The WWTC Alumni committee is seeking your continuing support for the Scholarship Fund in 1999. Already gifts have been received this year from colleagues who are anxious to see this project succeed.

It is an important project as it will serve not only to assist students who are related to our members but also perpetuate the spirit and comradeship which was established so long ago and still exists. The WWTC Alumni Association will have direct input as to how this Fund is managed and where the Fund will expend its monies. All information pertaining to activities of the Fund will be communicated to our membership through 'TALKABOUT'.

Your willingness and courage to 'secure the future' providing for the best possible education for members of the WWTC Alumni family is an outstanding goal.

The running of the Association requires a larger expenditure than previously envisaged. A contribution from alumni towards expenses incurred by the WWTC Alumni Association Management Committee is therefore much needed. Five dollars has been suggested but 'every little helps'.

Please indicate your support for this appeal and/or your willingness to help the Management Committee by completing this form and returning it to the Alumni Office at:

Charles Sturt University, Panorama Ave. Bathurst 2795 or Fax 02 63384766



### Wagga Wagga Teachers' College Alumni Association Scholarship Appeal 1999

I want to support the WWTC Alumni Scholarship Appeal: (All gifts are TAX DEDUCTABLE.)

My gift for 1999 is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and / or \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help the Management Committee

Please find my cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **OR**

Please debit my credit card account for the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Visa



Master Card



Bankcard



American Express

CARD NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

CARD HOLDER'S NAME: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

EXPIRY DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Years at College: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Name at College: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

Facsimile: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thankyou for your generous support*