



A PUBLICATION
OF THE ALUMNI OF
WAGGA TEACHERS

TALK ABOUT



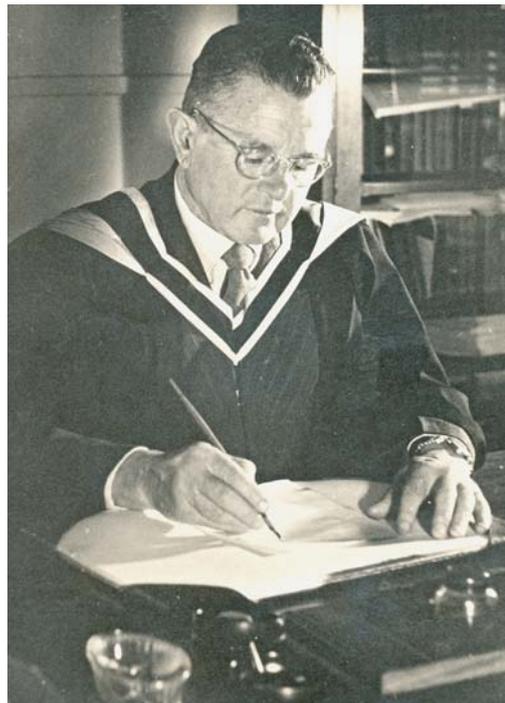
Volume 15 No 3

November 2012

ANNIVERSARY LUNCH A GREAT SUCCESS

The Anniversary Reunion lunch was planned to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the formation of the Wagga Wagga Teachers Alumni Association. This also coincided with the 65th anniversary of the beginning of Wagga Wagga Teachers College.

We had as a special guest, Elaine McIlquham, the daughter of George Blakemore. The invitation was prompted as the result of a letter from Barry Michell (see letters page). We contacted George's children Warwick and Elaine. Warwick lives in Adelaide and sent an apology as he was ill. Elaine was happy to attend and she was made very welcome.



Elaine had brought a photo of George Blakemore which was taken on the occasion of his 40th year with the Education Department. This was on display with some College memorabilia.

Elaine told us that George was born in 1900 and started teaching at West Wallsend at the age of 16 in the old pupil teacher system. He did a six month training course at Healford House in Newtown.

He taught at Tibooburra in the early 20's and by choice travelled there by Cobb and Co coach, just for the experience! In 1947 he was asked to become the first Principal of a new residential Teachers College in Wagga. He maintained the position until his death in 1958.

Elaine said: "One happy memory of him that stays with me was his great enthusiasm for life and his absolute honesty and integrity."

REUNION PAGE

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY REUNION LUNCH



Pioneers get together: Kevin Wilcox, Winifred Wilcox (Walshaw), Bonnie Mills (McIntyre), Maureen Hathaway (O'Neill), Shirley Barry (Yonge), Graeme Wilson, Gwen Ferguson (Roberts), Clare Hopkins (McGee).

65 alumni assembled at the Icons Brasserie in the Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel on 18th September 2012 and from all accounts, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Name tags were provided by Lindsay Budd to save people the embarrassment of trying to remember the names of those we knew so well in the past.

There were 11 members of the Pioneer session who commenced their training 65 years ago.

It was disappointing that Joe Lonsdale, the first bursar, who is now 93, was taken ill at the last moment and was unable to attend.

The early sessions were well represented, including Ruby Riach

who lectured from 1950 to 1954, with a few from later sessions up to 1967-68.

There was much merriment as people renewed acquaintances with friends that they had not seen for many years.

After everyone had sampled the delights of the buffet lunch a few



The girls from 1950-51 meet up again: Pam Holman (Clayton), Margie Bell (Burke), Margaret King (Wallace), Margaret Smith (Priest), Rosemary Doherty (Slattery) 1957-58, Wendy Rutherford (Thomas), Gladys Meaney-Budd (Chapman)

REUNION PAGE

speeches were attempted without the advantages of a public address system.

President Bob Collard welcomed everyone and introduced Elaine McIlquham (Blakemore), who was in the 1956-57 session at College, and asked her to say a few words.

Elaine spoke of growing up in Wagga and attending College. She also spoke of some of the

difficulties her father faced running the residential College, which may have contributed to his early death.

Pioneer Gwen Ferguson (Roberts), who was the first dux of WWTC, spoke to us about her experiences as a volunteer at the Art Gallery of NSW. You can read about her involvement in this edition of Talkabout on page 12.

Then Geoff Gorman (1950-51) entertained us with a poem/song that he had composed especially for the occasion. It was along the lines of a Gilbert and Sullivan song and was well received, with people joining in. It provided a light hearted conclusion to the formal proceedings.



Bob Collard introduces Elaine McIlquham (Blakemore) 1956-57.



Cec Williams 1951-52, Ruby Riach 1950-54, Beverly Bennett (Bonnar) 1952-53

REUNION PAGE



Geoff Gorman delivers his poem/song watched by Shirley James (Cook) 1949-50 and Phil Bastick 1950-51.

FOND MEMORIES

When I was young, with a thirst for knowledge
They sent me to the Wagga College.
I would not pash or seek a mate
But slaved for my certificate.
A slave for learning I was prepared to be
When I was at WWTC.

With two great mates I shared a room
Three hard beds, a table and broom
We hurried off to lectures at a great rate
At meal times we were never, never late
At meal times we were never, never late.

The college had a task sublime
To ready us for teaching in such a short time
Long days of lectures and reams of notes
We had so much rammed down our throats
We had so much rammed down our throats.

I looked up to George Blakemore humbly, humbly
I practice taught at Gumly Gumly.
I cut and pasted, wrote and read
Then finished an assignment and off to bed
Finished an assignment and off to bed.

The students loved their Saturday dance
It was great to see them waltz and prance
And one thing they would never, never miss

Was down behind the gym for a goodnight kiss
Down behind the gym for a goodnight kiss.

Now time goes quickly when you're having fun
And soon my time at College was done.
Off I went to my very first school,
"Excel with honour" was my golden rule.
Excel with honour was my golden rule.

We can now but look back upon
Far away days of cuisenaire rods and Fay and Don
When the class coloured in a jelly pad sheet
And thirty six inches made 3 feet
And thirty six inches made 3 feet.

Retirement has brought us great fun,
Relaxing times for everyone.
Caravanning, golf and overseas cruises,
Very clever grandchildren and afternoon snoozes.
Very clever grandchildren and afternoon snoozes.

So thank you Lindsay and thank you Lew,
Without your committee whatever would we do.
Talkabout and dinners we all agree
Keep alive fond memories of WWTC
Keep alive fond memories of WWTC.

Geoff Gorman 1950-51

2012 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Hayley Dwyer, Jenni Munday Acting Head of the School of Education, Luke Richardson

HAYLEY DWYER

I am writing to thank you for your generous Wagga Wagga Teachers Alumni scholarship. I was very happy and appreciative to learn that I was selected as one of two recipients of your scholarship.

I am currently in my fourth year of university studying bachelor of education (primary). I will be commencing my internship in a few weeks where I will be teaching in a kindergarten classroom.

Once I graduate I hope to be able to continue teaching within the local area. In receiving this scholarship it will assist me in completing my studies, this will be done as I will be able to purchase a new laptop computer. I will rely on this laptop to create lesson plans and my program while on my internship.

I have always had a passion for teaching so when it came to choosing what I was going to do after year 12 it was an easy choice. I am currently working casually at Good Start learning centres in the Wagga Wagga area, this includes working with special needs children.

My dream position would be to teach Kindergarten at Henschke Primary

School.. I hope to be able to travel and teach overseas in order to gain experience and life skills. In becoming a teacher I hope to give back to the community as you have done.

Sincerely,
Hayley Dwyer.

LUKE RICHARDSON

I am writing to thank you for the extremely generous scholarship that I received at the CSU scholarship ceremony. I was very happy and appreciative to learn that I was selected as the recipient of The Teachers' Alumni scholarship.

I am currently studying secondary teaching with a Biology major. I plan to pursue a teaching career in rural Australia upon graduating from Charles Sturt University. The money allocated to me will help me to achieve this goal.

By awarding me this scholarship, you have indeed changed the way I can live and study this year. Immediately after receiving the scholarship, I was able to resign from one of my 3 part-time jobs - where I was working approximately

hours per week. By having the ability to give up that job, I now have at least 20 hours per week more to concentrate on my studies which will no doubt show in my results for my final two semesters. The end is now thankfully in sight for me, with one less thing to worry about whilst trying to complete my studies.

I am also happy to say that I have quite enjoyed discovering 'Talkabout' on the CSU website, and some of the stories from past members of the Teachers' college are just amazing.

On a similar note it was an absolute honour to be able to meet some of the Alumni of the College whilst being interviewed for the scholarship. I hope that once I graduate that I am given the opportunity to be a part of such a strong support network as the Teachers' College Alumni.

Your generosity will greatly assist my education and has inspired me to help others and give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you have helped me.

Sincerely,
Luke Richardson.

LETTERS PAGE

Dear Lindsay,

A couple of years back I had a letter printed and along with other matters, I asked if anyone had any information regarding the death of George Blakemore and the whereabouts of his son Warwick.

I suggested that in memory of George, we should try to contact Warwick and convey to him our good wishes which I'm sure he would appreciate but there was no response though a correspondent replied that Warwick had married a Broken Hill girl and was now a solicitor in Adelaide.

I haven't been able to get confirmation of this but have recently learnt that George had a daughter, that he died in office and that his biography was written by Mary Gilmore and completed just prior to his death,

In an article on the early history of Wagga College printed in an old Talkabout, tributes were paid to George for overcoming the many difficulties and frustrations in those development years and interestingly, George was quoted as saying that he would not take on the position again. Now that should make us sit up and think.

In my letter, I suggested that the stress in handling students eager to experience adult life may have contributed to his premature death and there would be many of his students who in attaining high promotional positions, would have experienced those same damaging pressures.

I'm sure we all have come to appreciate what George went through and he had these pressures 24 hours a day and because of his commitment to his college, one of the sacrifices he certainly would have had to make was the inability to spend more time with his young children, and they themselves would undoubtedly be living with this loss compounded by his premature death.

George had an exceptional career, his first appointment was to Tibooburra and he was very proud of this, such an appointment in those times would have been a daunting challenge. Of course many young teachers before and since have experienced challenging first

appointments in remote places. But sadly, Talkabout hasn't received many of those experiences.

John Rummery gave an account of his first appointment to Pooncarie and Dawn Andrews described her early life on a property near Bourke, both great reads. Dawn's reminiscences were interesting, detailed and well narrated and I hope she had them published, they were certainly good enough.

It was interesting to read of Elaine Graham's early years in never being in a classroom until she entered college, how unique is that, there must be a good story there Elaine and congratulations, on your Doctorate achievement.

I feel strongly that it behooves us, the remaining numbers of George's students, in our appreciation of him, to make contact with Warwick and his sister, who would now be into their 70's, and convey to them that we remember their father with great respect and appreciation for the care he had for his students wellbeing and that in some way, we understand the impact that his premature death would have had on Mrs Blakemore and themselves.

Only those who have lost a parent in such early circumstances would have any real understanding as to how difficult it would be to live with such a loss.

Barry Michell 1950-51

Dear Lindsay,

I was greatly interested to read such details about the life of the College lecturer Mr Latham. Mr Latham was not only our lecturer but during the week he was the live-in Supervisor of our dormitory.

When I found out that he had suffered a stroke which had left him completely blind, my late friend Keith Potts and I decided to visit him in his Wagga home. We knocked on the door and Mr Latham answered it. I said "Good morning, Mr Latham", and his reply was, "Good morning Tony". As this was some time since our last meeting, I thought that he had a remarkable memory for voices.

The account in Talkabout shows that he was certainly an inspiration. Such courage against almost overwhelming odds is a rare and memorable thing.

It was with great sadness that I read of the passing of Ted Fowler. Ted was a great fellow to have in the Dormitory. He was someone who had a real sense of humour. He loved using comical voices especially to convey "double entendres". I remember one time when Ted, Kevin O'Callaghan and Fred Rice were teasing a female co-student and they wouldn't tell her their names. Finally the ever witty Ted told her that his name was "Fred O'Fowlerghan".

Of course Ted was also a Tennis Champion but you would never hear it from Ted himself. I think he was the most modest person I ever knew.

I am grateful to Colin Curtis for supplying so much information about Ted. I have many fond memories of Ted and he certainly had led a "Life of Achievement".

Tony Sherlock 1951-52

Dear Lindsay,

Just a note to thank you for your part in the organisation of the reunion lunch yesterday. We (Brenda Saunders and I) enjoyed it very much. It was a good venue with plenty of nice dishes available. It was great to see so many friends from college days. It would be good to do it again sometime!

Best wishes

Margaret Smith (Priest) 1950-51

Lindsay,

Thank you for coming up with such a wonderful luncheon. The food was outstanding, the wine delightful, the girls beautiful and the tales were unbelievable.

Margaret and I had a great time and we are so glad that we were able to attend. I have a few photos which you might like to see.

Best wishes,

Arthur and Margaret King 1950-51

LETTERS PAGE

Dear Lindsay,

Thank you and congratulations on the most enjoyable event you organised for our big College celebrations. It was lovely to see the pleasure we all felt on coming together to relive for a short time a memorable time in our lives.

I have taken it upon myself to send you a copy of the poem/song Geoff presented after the speeches. I felt it was well received with people joining in and offered a light hearted finish to the formal proceedings.

Best regards,

Shirley James (Cook) 1949-50

Dear Lindsay,

Last week I had a note from the family of Fay Lee (nee Barnes) who was on the staff of WWTC, (Geography Lecturer) when it opened. She was Warden of Women Students in 1950 when I was there. The newly appointed Warden who took over from Joyce Wylie in 1950 was not suitable and gave up the position after about 6 weeks. Fay Barnes was given the job. (I think reluctantly by the Principal).

At the end of 1950 Fay resigned to go to London for further study. Soon after arriving she met Peter Lee and after a year or so they married and England became home. Peter was a Science lecturer in the Technical Institute – in a senior position when he retired. He died after a battle with cancer about 10 years ago. They had four children – all still living in England.

I have always kept in touch with Fay and visited her each time I have been in England – most recently in 2003. I recall two meetings also in Sydney when she and Peter were in Sydney, visiting family.

I am sure students from 1947-50 will remember her.

I trust that you and Gladys and families are well. I was pleased to meet with the 1952-53 session at their recent reunion in Sydney – dinner at the Bowlers Club. It was a very happy and memorable occasion.

Sincerely,

Ruby Riach 1950-54

Dear Lindsay,

I am sending a cheque for 2012 and a few years back. I don't have a cheque account as my days of business have long gone. I have asked my daughter to write one for me.

Just over seven years ago I came to live in a small house at the back of my daughter's as I had my husband Eric declining in health and I had to be his carer for quite a few years before he passed away (July 2009). I had this place constructed so I could be close to help.

I keep in touch with Monica Spartalis (Begg). She and I are the only ones still living from our small group that roomed together at College. We are like family, it seems. One occasion I thoroughly enjoyed was the 40th Anniversary for 1954-55. Jim Cleary greeted me when I arrived and just said, "Come in Bev." It was wonderful.

Regards,

Bev Veitch (Donnelly) 1954-55

Dear Lindsay,

As mentioned to you on the phone, would you please include this enquiry from Arizona in the next *Talkabout*?

Martin McColl is seeking information about his late father Pat McColl who was a student at WWTC in the 1949-50 session.

I have just returned to my home in Tucson, Arizona after visiting my mother in Dubbo. While in Dubbo I found an old green and gold rugby league pennant from Wagga Wagga Teachers College that belonged to my father (Colin) Pat McColl.

Sadly, my father died in 1968 when I was just starting school, so my memories of him are somewhat limited.

I think he would have attended WWTC sometime between 1949 and 1951. His teaching career took him to Molong Central (50's), South Dubbo Primary (50's, 60's) & North Dubbo Primary (until 1967).

I would really appreciate any recollections, copies of documents or

photos that your generous alumni might be able to provide in regards to his time spent at WWTC.

The number of Pat McColl's peers still alive would be becoming small but, possibly, some *Talkabout* readers who taught with him at Molong Central, South Dubbo PS or North Dubbo PS might have some news for his son, Martin, who can be reached at:

Martin Patrick McColl

Senior Engineer

Arizona Radio Observatory,

Steward Observatory,

University of Arizona

933 North Cherry Ave

Tucson, Arizona 85721

EMAIL: mmccoll@email.arizona.edu

Gerard Say 1963-64

In Memoriam

*Years go by, memories stay
As near and dear as yesterday.*

Frances Yvonne (Fay) Bevan (Foord)
1954-55 March 2012

Donald Christie 1953-54 Aug 2009

Fay Lee (Barnes) lecturer 1947-50
March 2012

Judith Malcolm (Perryman) 1957-58
July 2010

Brian Charles Webb 1947-49
October 2012.

WENDY'S STORY

Wendy Rogers (Trotman) attended Wagga Wagga Teachers College in 1957-58.

She became deaf and received a Cochlear implant. This is the story she put on The Cochlear Awareness Network so if anyone is interested in reading some more of these stories then you can look them up on the internet.

The website is: c-a-network.com.



I first noticed I had a hearing loss when I couldn't hear on the phone with my left ear. I was in my early forties at the time and didn't pay much attention to it apart from making a mental note to use the other ear on the phone. I continued with my casual teaching job and then began a two year Early Childhood Conversion Diploma Course. As well as many written assignments, the course involved lectures at the College for a week each year. I sailed through with no thought of any hearing problems.

A few years later, a preschool in Canberra offered me a teaching job and as my three girls had grown up and left home, I jumped at the chance to try something different. All went well for a year or two. I met an old friend who was also on his own and we teamed up and then married. Life was good until suddenly one day I realized I couldn't hear the children or the parents clearly, particularly the fathers. Oh, I must have wax in my ears I told myself. A trip to the doctor for a check and I'll be right. I will never forget her words: "Wendy, your ears are as clean as a whistle. I'll

send you to an Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist for a hearing check."

The hearing test showed I had a significant hearing loss in both ears, more severe in the left than the right. No wonder I was having trouble hearing the children. Dr Chapman told me the low tones were down more than the high tones, and this was unusual.

While I was there, I noticed a magazine on the shelf called "Hearing Matters - SHHH - Self Help for Hard of Hearing People". I wrote down the details and sent away for a subscription. The magazine had a list of contact numbers and details about SHHH groups and meeting times. Canberra had a group and I joined up.

At this stage, I knew no one with a hearing loss. I felt so alone, almost unique.

I started going to the SHHH Meetings hoping that I would pick up some clues about the whole puzzling scenario I was facing. At one meeting, an audiologist

was guest speaker. She spoke clearly and seemed kindly; maybe I could go to her for help.

She tested my hearing again, noted that the low tones were down and said, "We don't really make hearing aids for this type of hearing loss", but she gave me one anyway, just for my better ear. The other one stayed unaided.

I was still in struggle land, hardly any better off than with no aids. Life, in and out of work was getting harder. Finally, at age 57 I decided to retire.

Things began looking up, hearing wise, when my sister met an audiologist on an overseas trip. She took me to Sydney where I was fitted with two in-the-ear hearing aids. They came with a remote control. I could change programs and turn the volume up or down. I discovered that when you turn up the low tones you also turn up the background noises, as most background noises are low tones. Now I could turn down the trucks, mowers, air

conditioners and extractor fans that were making hearing very difficult.

After some years, we moved back to Bega and I took up some of my old interests. I joined VIEW Club again and soon was on the committee as delegate and then publicity officer. I joined Book Club again and found myself doing the Secretary's job. When needed, I had to contact other members by email, as I couldn't hear on the phone. Then I took up bowls. During this time, I did a huge amount of lip-reading or face-reading as I prefer to call it. At the end of the day I was exhausted, but determined not to give up. My great inspiration to keep going was the Libby Harricks Award announced via the SHHH Magazine annually. How inspiring! If those people with much greater hearing problems than mine could do it, so could I.

I first heard about Cochlear implants through my sister-in-law who was receiving inspiring letters from her cousin Burn Reeve. Burn, who is a Cochlear Awareness Network Member, has two implants and is so enthusiastic about how it has transformed his life. I asked my audiologist in Canberra about the possibility of having one. She said I was probably a suitable candidate as I now had no measurable hearing in my left ear.

She gave me an information package, which included two DVD's. One explained how they did the operation, and the other had inspiring stories told by Cochlear Implantees. The whole family, grandchildren as well, gathered around to watch. We were mesmerized and spellbound by their truly amazing stories and there was cousin Burn Reeve on the DVD telling his amazing story too.

Soon I had referrals for trips to Canberra for all the tests. Would I be a suitable candidate? Would I pass all the necessary tests? It was a nerve-wracking wait. The surgeon who was to perform the operation was the same Dr Chapman whom I had seen fifteen years

earlier. He was so enthusiastic when all the tests came back positive. We made a date for the 15th of September 2010. There was no going home to think about it and get cold feet.

I can remember feeling quite petrified at the thought of having a brain operation but the thought of going completely deaf was even scarier. I knew they had thrown me a lifeline.

Only one night after the operation, the Canberra hospital discharged me - looking very much like an Egyptian mummy - my husband said. We spent that day and another night in Canberra with friends before heading home, three hours away. The hospital gave me some pain medication to take with me but I found I didn't need any. If it got a bit sore or started hurting, I just sat still and stopped moving and the pain went away. It seemed to be nature's way of telling me to rest up.

Switch-on Day was two weeks later in Canberra. It was 2 hours of concentrated listening to lots of Beep-Beep-Beeps. Finally, we had it pretty good and I could hear my audiologist talking. Bronwyn, my daughter called in and afterwards we went to lunch together at a nearby restaurant. I could hear her quite well and the passing traffic did not interfere too much - amazing! Then we went back to our friend's house and there were six of us having afternoon tea around the table. I could hear and understand everyone. For the first time in fifteen years, I could join in the conversation around a table. I was staggered at how quickly this had all happened!

The next three months were the most exciting in my life. There were many trips to Canberra to fine tune and adjust the settings. During this time, I discovered that I could hear on the phone with my Cochlear ear. I also found I was hearing the soft sounds that I hadn't heard for years such as the rain, the duster dusting, the clock ticking and water running from the tap but best of

all I could now hear my husband talking. He no longer had to say things three times and then write it down. I could hear men's voices again!

At ten weeks post Switch-On my hearing tests showed that with spoken sentences I achieved 100%. Pre-Cochlear it was 0% in my left ear. I could now hear someone in another room. When I called out to my grandson, who was in the computer room, I clearly heard his answer. Before, he would need to be three feet away and facing me! When I attended a celebration at the children's school, I found I could hear words spoken through a loud speaker. When asked if I would like to join a music group at the cochlear rooms, I found I could hear my old Frank Sinatra DVDs again. The music of my youth was back with me. What a joy.

I now have a 'Focus' program that I access via my remote and this enables me to hear in tricky noisy places. I can now hear the guest speakers at VIEW, the president at bowls, the other members at Book Club and most of the people at the table when we go out to dinner. I can also hear people speak in the car now, even the ones in the back seat. My life is back on track.

People say I look different now; happier, more confident, more self assured. It has made a huge difference in every way. I'm no longer afraid of meeting new people or going to different places where the acoustics are unknown.

I can't imagine going back to life pre-Cochlear. I feel truly blessed; thank you Graeme Clarke and all the wonderful team who have made this possible.

I am happy to answer any of your Queries [or find someone who can] if you want to write to me or phone me up. My email address is:

sightsys@bigpond.com

Wendy Rogers [Trotman] 1957-58

COLLEGE MEMORIES

“TO BE OR NOT TO BE” ‘CARPETED’

Alan Lake’s wish that all his college transgressions might be forgiven (Talkabout July 2012) so that he might receive a favourable first appointment for 1962, prompts me to write about college rules, infractions and being ‘carpeted’.

One infraction “Swampy” escaped, I believe, was for unseemly comments during Doc Keet’s annual compulsory viewing, for all, in the College Hall of some sex education movie. I ‘copped the carpet’ for said comments and my protestations that they came from close proximity to Alan Lake, fell on deaf ears, it seems my reputation was worse than his. (He got Wakool and I got Goulburn in 1961, so enough said, case closed!)

Another unjust ‘carpet’ occurred because I was section rep for 597, the refraction was for our section’s “disgraceful, juvenile behaviour” during Doc Keet’s weekly health lecture. Each week all of us would change names but on this occasion three people forgot who they were supposed to be and answered in unison during roll call, so the game ‘was up’.

A most severe ‘carpeting’ happened after I suffered a life threatening, coughing attack at 2.35 pm on the first Tuesday in November 1959, and had to hurriedly vacate Mr Young’s lecture. At the subsequent ‘carpeting’ in his office, and after a forty minute diatribe on the ‘evils of gambling’, I requested permission to leave as those who’d had money in the ‘cup’ sweep were waiting to be paid before the College shop

closed. This prompted another harangue as to why no child at school should ever be allowed to listen/watch the Melbourne Cup.

Another ‘carpet’ occurred on 4th April 1960 after I was reported AWOL from the 10 pm bed check on 3rd April. I escaped penalty when I explained I was hiding under the gymnasium till 2 am to prevent capture by the ‘lynch mob’ who had devised all manner of tortures to help me remember my 21st birthday. Since 21sts happened very infrequently at College in those days the case was dismissed. Luckily I didn’t have to undergo a breath test!

My luckiest escape from a ‘carpet’ came about 3 am on a freezing Saturday night in July ’59. During an all night card game in the old Kabi dorm (blankets across the windows of course) I drew the short straw to raid the College kitchen for refreshments. Out of the fog emerged a most unsteady lecturer who asked in slurred speech for me to explain my ‘out of bounds’. “Kitchen raid” says I. “I’m not sure I believe you (as would many others) but I’ll forget this untimely encounter if you do likewise” (You gotta be lucky sometimes!)

A voluntary ‘carpeting’ occurred when I fronted Principal George Muir as delegated leader from the Rugby First XV. It always irked the team that when we played ‘away’ we were always invited back to our host’s ‘watering hole’ for post-game refreshments but we could never return the courtesy for our home games. I offered to go guarantor, along with vice captain ‘Tiny’ Hammond, that none of our team would have a drink if we could hire a room at

a downtown pub to provide refreshments for our visitors. George’s response “Request denied; that would be like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank!”

There are many other ‘carpet’ stories to be told but they can wait for our next reunion. Hope it’s as good as our fabulous 50th at Mittagong in November 2010 and so well chronicled by Joan Robinson (Kirkham) in the March 2011 edition.

Jim Roche 1959-60.

COMING EVENTS

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Alumni Association will be the Annual General Meeting and will be held at 11 am on: Tuesday 12th February 2013.

The meeting will be held at: NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre, 37 Reservoir Street Surry Hills. All welcome.

ALUMNI LUNCHEONS

The next Alumni luncheon will be held at the Icons Restaurant in the Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel, Pitt Street Sydney (near the Quay) on Tuesday 18th February, 2013.

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

FIFTY YEAR RE-UNION

A proposal to hold a fifty year re-union of **WWTC graduates of 1966, 1967 and 1968** (the last years of the Leaving Certificate students) is being put forward for 2016.

Bruce and Lesley Forbes are happy to act as initiators of this and are appealing for other interested persons to contact them by email bruceles@bigpond.com or by phone 0243225650 mobile 0408587065. The Alumni Association has supplied a database to begin with but undoubtedly there will be members who can help with locating more members.

The first priority will be to nominate a venue, Wagga Wagga or perhaps somewhere else.

COLLEGE MEMORIES

Ruby Riach lectured at WWTC from 1950 to 1954. She submits some memories from the perspective of a member of staff. Ed.

Having arrived in Wagga Wagga to take up a seconded lecturing appointment at the College, together with some teaching at the Demonstration School early in February 1950 and with accommodation ensured at a hotel in the city for one week only, I was actually very pleased to be offered a place on the residential staff with supervision duties. That seemed a real 'gift' to me after my earlier experiences in Warren and Gunnedah (previous appointments) where I had literally walked the streets to find accommodation in a private home. Hotels were refusing to offer any permanent places and flats as we know them to-day had not been 'invented'.

Although students had not arrived at that time, I met several staff- some packing to take up transfers and others who had come as replacements. My first impressions were that they were all relatively speaking quite young and very enthusiastic about the work in the College. Obviously there had been some difficulties encountered as the College set working routines and regulations.

The environment certainly was different from that of Sydney Teachers College, which I had attended some few years earlier to be educated to teach in primary schools and where there was a well-established history and philosophy of teacher education. As I learned in later years the programmes at Wagga were more closely related to those at Armidale Teachers College than to those at Sydney.

The focus on the needs of students was always evident although resources were basic and funds limited. There was good co-operation among the staff members to achieve the goals set. The staff members were very aware of the significance of the tasks before them

striving to fully prepare student teachers to understand the curriculum, to value their own knowledge and how to improve it, as well as to understand the need to study child growth and development. The general curriculum activities as well as sport, drama and music projects became tasks for all staff and students and the results brought much satisfaction to all.

The subject departmental barriers often found in educational institutions were never very strong at Wagga Wagga Teachers College. There were many activities running from early morning to late evening with scheduled practices and special classes to assist students. The cross-curricula discussions and activities supported every member of staff. In fact there was evidence of a primary school curriculum in action which at times involved the demonstration school staff as well.

Although at times small problems seemed to grow in strength and impact overnight, a calm solution usually was forthcoming without too much disruption. The positive outcomes took precedence in any of my recollections of life over those five years in residence at WWTC. The 'bumpy' aspects of the

journey generally were noted as 'amusing incidents'. I am sure that the life at the College and the education offered to the students provided a suitable preparation for a teaching career at that time when most appointments would present a variety of challenges to them.

I valued the friendships formed with the College staff, contacts which continued over many years as did many of the contacts with students.

When I look back, it was certainly a full-time position occupying day and evening hours. There was little time to become involved in the activities of the city community. For a young member of staff as I was at that time, there were many and varied challenges to be met. It was very good training for what I faced in the following years after a transfer to Sydney Teachers College, a larger teacher education institution with a range of programmes for primary and secondary teacher education. I was well prepared to move on and take up further studies at the University of Sydney to be better equipped to continue my career in teacher education over the following thirty one years.

CONTACTS

President: Bob Collard MBE: 2 Louise Close, Ourimbah 2258
Phone 02 4362 2764

Secretary: Dorothy Tanner: 282 Doncaster Ave, Kingsford 2032
Ph 02 9663 3204 email: netanner@optusnet.com.au

Research and Records Officer :
Gerard Say: Unit 3, 822 Pacific Highway, Chatswood 2067
Phone 02 9412 3267 email: gsay@bigpond.net.au

Treasurer: Lindsay Budd: 4 Flemington Close, Casula 2170
Phone 02 9601 3003 email: lbudd@bigpond.net.au

Talkabout Editors:
Lindsay Budd: 4 Flemington Close, Casula 2170
Lew Morrell: 25 Grandview Drive, Newport 2106
Phone 02 9997 1506 email: lewismorrell@gmail.com

Faculty Advancement Officer: Stacey Fish
The University Advancement Unit,
Charles Sturt University, Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone 02 6338 4832. (Preferably Monday and Wednesday)
email: sfish@csu.edu.au

AFTER TEACHING MEMORIES

Born in Sydney, I had never been further than the Blue Mountains when I chose to go to the newly established Wagga Wagga Teachers' College as a Pioneer student.

I had always wanted to be a teacher and was ready to give it my best shot.

We came from all over NSW, as far north as Mullumbimby and most of us arrived by train on cold dark mornings in May.

The new college on the edge of town was unprepossessing and the accommodation was Spartan. Nevertheless we soon settled in and accepted the old army huts as our new home and made new friendships which in some cases, have lasted more than sixty years.

The two years that followed were the most important in my life and for many others. I imagine, because we learned to be independent and resourceful. We were encouraged to be responsible and to make the most of the opportunities provided by extra-curricular activities. The lectures and practice teaching were a thorough preparation for classroom teaching.

Two years in Wagga Wagga were an aberration for me and my first posting was a Sydney girls' primary school. I worked out my three year bond in Primary and High Schools in Sydney. Marriage and four children followed. Then, twelve years later, I returned to teaching at Maroubra Bay High School [since closed], three days per week as a Music teacher and later in the Geography/Commerce department. During the next eight years I was asked to teach English, French and Social Sciences at various times. Wagga had certainly done a good job!

Interestingly, in those days, women had to resign when they married, so I re-entered teaching in 1964 on the salary rate of a teacher first year out of College and because I chose to teach



Gwen Ferguson giving her talk at the Anniversary Luncheon

part-time, my rate of pay never progressed beyond first year. The fact was, I loved teaching so much I was prepared to work for such poor remuneration. My husband's business was doing well and we didn't need the money. However, after eight years, I left the Department and transferred to the CBC St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney and trained through Catholic Education to be an ESL Teacher.

While at St Mary's, I started attending the AGNSW lectures in Art and subsequently applied to become a Volunteer Guide. In 1978 I trained at the gallery and in 1979 began guiding. This year 2012, I complete 34 years as a guide and have decided to retire. There are now more than 135 guides who are required to guide children for 3 years. Adult guides are rostered to take visitors around the Gallery's Collections of European, Asian, Australian, Indigenous and Contemporary Art as well as the special exhibitions which come our way.

To increase my knowledge of art, I attended the Art History Summer School at Cambridge University in 1991 and in 1992 at Oxford. Both were wonderful experiences. All guides are

required to do their own research as well as attend the Meetings and two lectures held every other week during term time. Catalogues for exhibitions also need to be studied. No scripts are provided for guides. We each have our own approach to the works.

Groups for tours are met at the entrance and after introductions, by way of conversation, we try to establish the levels of interest, knowledge and language of the visitors, some of whom are invariably tourists, and we guide accordingly. Visitors come from all over the world and all walks of life. Some have never been in an Art Gallery before.

It can be challenging. I have had a request to "See your Nudes" and on another occasion, to see "the frames". Guiding Muslim groups (mixed) past naked sculptures is also a minefield. The aim is for them to enjoy the experience, take away a little new-found knowledge and to want to return to the AGNSW again.

For all of this, teacher training was invaluable.

Travelling to the great galleries of the world widens one's horizons.

A lasting legacy of guiding at AGNSW is the many friendships formed with other guides or even visitors.

Compared to the experiences in country schools of my fellow Pioneers, my life seems dull but volunteering has been rewarding and enriching and I heartily recommend it.

Throughout the state there are Galleries, Museums, Local History Societies, Gardening Groups etc all needing the skills of retired teachers.

Go for it.

Gwen Ferguson 1947-49

A LIFE OF ACHIEVEMENT

BRIAN CHARLES WEBB PIONEER

9th April, 1929 – 11th October 2012

Brian was born in Bathurst on 9th April 1929, the second of three children. As for many children of the Great Depression, life was not easy and Brian found early on in life that strength was to develop in adversity and that to make things happen you had to have drive and determination. He lost his 9 year old sister when he was 5 years. At this time his mother's health went in to gradual and permanent decline and his father assumed the dual role.

He started school in 1934 at South Bathurst and went on to Bathurst High School in 1941. Due to home circumstances he left school for employment (with a reference from Ben Chifley in 1945). However he returned to school in 1946 to complete his Leaving Certificate.

During his High School days he was a prominent athlete – taking out both junior and senior championships and representing Bathurst High in the Astley Cup – a sporting competition embracing Bathurst, Orange and Dubbo. He was also an accomplished tennis and hockey player.

In 1947 he received his Teachers Scholarship to Wagga Wagga Teachers College. He was able to pass on to his children stories of the Spartan life of the early students. Brian was given the task of organising the first College athletics carnival which was a great success.

He was also the captain and centre forward of the College Hockey team which took out the district Championship in 1947 and 1948; and was a comfortable winner in the first Intercollegiate against Balmain T.C. The team came back to earth when beaten by Goulburn in an exhibition match 9-2. The team felt a little better when it was



revealed that the Goulburn team had seven State representatives!

Brian's first appointment was to Kelso teaching migrant children. A few years later, when teaching at Eastwood Primary he met Dorothy. They were married on 25th August 1956 at St James Church Burwood. In 1960 they built a home in Glenbrook and were soon the proud parents of four children – Peter, Ian, Barrie and Suzanne.

Promotion took him back to Kelso as Principal in 1970, a much larger school than it was on his first appointment there. Brian later served as Principal at Thornleigh and West Epping.

Building on his own experiences, as a Principal he was energetic and endeavoured to make a difference in the communities in which he served, bringing understanding and compassion to children in need.

Brian retired to Berry in 1989, where he and Dorothy built a new home. They moved to Willow Vale in 2003. In his last years he was active in the local

progress committee and enjoyed working in his vegetable patch.

Also in his retirement he battled through a by-pass operation in 1993, prostate cancer in 1997, the loss of a kidney to cancer, and a heart attack in 2010. As his family said, "he never thought of giving up, he was far too competitive for that!"

He is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Dorothy, his four children and three grandchildren, Aiyaa, Michael and Charlie.

A fitting epitaph from his son Ian: "My most enduring memory of my father will be his commitment to his family and his unfailing love and commitment to his wife. That says more about him than anything else I can think

of."

Winifred and I feel that we have lost a valued friend. Brian and I had shared many experiences at High School and at Wagga Wagga Teachers College.

Once when I found myself in Wagga Wagga Base Hospital after an incident on a hockey field, Brian was kind enough to put Winifred on the front of his bicycle and pedal from College to the hospital so that she could visit me. Moreover after the visit he pedalled all the way back, up hill, with his passenger.

It was pleasant to be able to make contact again at times throughout our careers and in retirement. There will be many others among the Pioneers who will remember Brian with fondness.

Kevin and Winifred Wilcox.

NEWS FROM CSU

Wagga Wagga Teacher's Alumni Fundraising

The Wagga Wagga Teacher's Alumni Fund currently sits at \$79,672.80. This is an outstanding effort by the Alumni Association and is a great credit to all who have donated over the years. Of this money, \$60,000 is held for the Wagga Wagga Teacher's Scholarship Fund. The WWTA Scholarships are currently being advertised to CSU students via the CSU web site www.csu.edu.au/scholarships. The primary criteria for the WWTA scholarship is that the student be in their final year of a course in the Faculty of Education and be a descendant of a WWTC graduate. These scholarships greatly improve the student experience and are of tremendous assistance to two teaching students in their final year of study.

The additional funds of nearly \$20,000 will be held in a development fund for rural and remote practicum placements for final year students within the Faculty of Education. The money will be dispersed as grants awarded on need and academic merit to students for living expenses while away on rural and remote practicum placements. These experiences not only enhance a student's practical teaching but also aid rural communities by having a student teacher in their classrooms.

All members of the WWTA are encouraged to continue to send your gift for support to the WWTA Fund to the **Charles Sturt University Foundation Trust c/o PO Box 883 Orange 2800 NSW**. Alternatively, you can make an online donation at: <http://alumni.csu.edu.au/get-involved/supporting-csu>, select the **Wagga Wagga Teacher's Alumni Fund**.

CSU Academic Education Research – Learning to Know and Do

Starting with recognition of what students 'know' and 'can do', a CSU academic explains how research can impact teaching, and vice versa, in modern Australian education.



CSU education researcher and lecturer Dr Noella Mackenzie gets back to foundational knowledge when she starts on a new teaching or research project.

“In my research and my teaching, I start with what students ‘know’ and ‘can do’. All new learning builds on existing knowledge and experience,” Dr Mackenzie said.

“However, sometimes when a student moves from one situation to another, say from preschool to school or from high school or work or university, what they bring with them is not always fully recognised or valued.”

According to Dr Mackenzie, relationships between teachers and students are a key to successful learning at all levels.

“Sometimes the phrase ‘meeting of minds’ is used to describe how teachers and students must connect for effective learning to take place. This is evident both in my research findings and my daily experiences of teaching at Charles Sturt University,” said Dr Mackenzie.

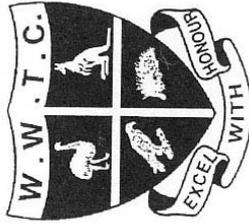
After a long career in teaching in schools and in educational consultancy, Dr Mackenzie greatly values opportunities for student teachers to work with teachers in schools.

“In one literacy subject I teach, student teachers spend time in classrooms as teachers’ aids and create digital stories to reflect the pupils’ developing understandings. This allows student teachers to build on what they know and can do, utilising their knowledge of technology to demonstrate their developing knowledge of how to teach literacy.

In 2001, Dr Mackenzie was recognised for her work with students and teachers in the NSW Department of Education and Communities, receiving a Education Minister’s award for teaching excellence.



November 2012
Volume 15 No 3



November 2012
Volume 15 No 3

If undeliverable please return to:
The University Advancement Unit
Charles Sturt University
Bathurst NSW 2795 Australia



Change of Address

If your address details are incorrect please email
advancement@csu.edu.au

or

The Advancement Unit
Charles Sturt University
Bathurst NSW 2795 Australia
02 6338 4680