SCPSA INC

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ISSUE

KINAWAH

VOLUME 2020 DECEMBER EXTRA EDITION

IN THIS ISSUE

Glad tidings we bring... 1
Editor's Notes 2
2020/2021 Committee 2
Johnno's Corner 3
Graduating Seniors WCC 2020 3
WCC News: Presentation to 2020 Bursary Winners 4
SCPSA Website News 4
Lost Faces of Warwick 4
Lizzie stars on the sports page 5
Diane Cairns harks back to her school days 5
Storm clouds over Southern Downs 6
Warwick and the Leslie Brothers 6
Jest a Moment 7
The original meaning of a deck of playing cards 7
95th Celebrations, in 2021 7
June Gemmell 1949-2020 8
St Catharine's Prefects 1965 8
Vale
June Gemmell 9
Facebook Update: 433 Members Strong! 10
What we're talking about on Facebook

"The joy of brightening other lives becomes for us the magic of the holidays."

W.C. Jones

Glad tidings we bring...

Wild reindeer run free under the Northern Lights

As 2020 draws to its inevitable conclusion, it gives us cause to look back on a year like no other. As some commentators have noted, in many ways it feels as if the last few months have dragged on for at least ten years! In terms of extremes and the unexpected, nobody could have predicted all that has transpired in the year that has been. In Australia we have ceased to be surprised by climatic influences such as drought, catastrophic bushfires, cyclones and flooding. All of these things induce massive hardship when they come to pass but we have grown to accept that as difficult as they are to cope with, they are at least part of the natural order of things.

This year, however, coming right out of left field, THE VIRUS found us a little on the back foot. At first we found it hard to believe that such a thing could be happening in an era when like occurrences seemed confined exclusively to the pages of history.

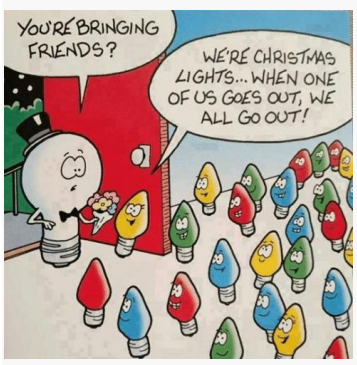
Plainly, on a world scale the toll has been disastrous and no matter how differently world leaders choose to view it, the final outcome is still to be determined. What is clear, is that in contrast to the widely varying responses to the global pandemic internationally, those of us fortunate enough to be living in Australia have fared far better than just about everyone else. As has been stated in previous issues of Kinawah, we are aware that many of our past students live overseas in places such as Europe, the Americas and the United Kingdom and realise that for them, the outlook is far less certain than it is for us and we remain concerned for their welfare and that of their families. They might be far from us geographically but are still close to our hearts.

The picture above right is a nod to our fellows who make their homes in the northern hemisphere from whence most of our traditional Christmas imagery and seasonal references originate. So far as I am aware, the photo is a recent one and gives us hope that in the midst of so much uncertainty there is still great beauty to be appreciated in troubled times and unfailing hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Philippa Wetherell, previously known to us as Sister Philippa or Sister Pip noted the following thoughts in her recent Christmas newsletter and I feel it appropriate to include them here, exactly as expressed.

"I feel sure that as you look back over the year you will reflect on positive learnings, acknowledge the dark times, and appreciate even more, with thankfulness, the many good things that have come your way, as I find myself doing. In spite of uncertainties, I trust that you are looking forward in hope to 2021.

I wish you all much joy and delight as you come together to celebrate the Nativity at Christmas. Ronald Rolheiser says that for us to 'bring Christ into the world involves an ongoing commitment to growth, to discomfort, to love, and to surrender- God's invitation to us all'. May you know true peace and fulfilment this Christmas."



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Editor's Notes...

AS I WRITE, Christmas is almost upon us and for the past several days I have been doing my best to attend to some of those things that have been sorely neglected this year while I have been working away at all those extra Kinawah editions. I can't yet say that all my set tasks have been accomplished but a good many of them have been ticked off the list and now I can also say that this final Kinawah of the year, a short and hopefully sweet Christmas edition is all but ready to send.

As the year winds down, we think about all those Year 12 students leaving school to venture out into the big wide world after this most difficult of years and wish them well. It takes a measure of resilience and determination to settle into life after school at the best of times but with so many uncertainties factoring into life at the moment, the challenges are greater than ever.

So far as we know, we have not lost any of our past students due to COVID and we remain cautiously optimistic that the situation stays that way.

I have been watching the rainfall reports from the Southern Darling Downs and hoping that the prevailing drought conditions there will shortly be eased. People living in Warwick and Stanthorpe have glumly expressed the view that they feel like they have been sent to the naughty corner. Send it down Huey!

Are you looking forward to the highly anticipated conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn? When the due date, Monday December 21, is here, it will be low in the western sky close after sunset and it is highly likely to be obscured by cloud (the bane of the astronomer's existence) but worth noting nonetheless. If you miss it, the photo on page 9 might help appease your disappointment.

For now, it remains for me to wish you the compliments of the season and a blessed New Year and I conclude with the following quote from Janice Maeditere:

"Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts."

Until next time, enjoy the extra reading Joan White

EMBRACING THE YULETIDE SPIRIT

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that."

Bob Hope

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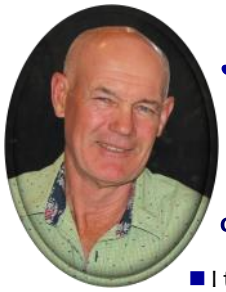

Johnno's Corner

WELL WHAT A YEAR 2020 HAS BEEN. A POPULAR PHRASE THAT MY FATHER USED ABOUT FARMING (AND LIFE) WAS "THE ONLY THING YOU CAN BE CERTAIN OF IS THAT YOU CAN'T BE CERTAIN OF ANYTHING".

■ I think like every major disaster / event / change, the way we respond is as individual as the person handling those changes. I hope that all within our group have been able to meet the challenges placed upon us this year.

■ The next major event for the SCPSA is the 95th Anniversary of the founding of Slade School. As we get our 95th Committee organized we will keep you updated. Now would be a good time to contact old school mates and start to budget and plan for a big weekend (Oct 9th) in Brisbane.

■ On behalf of our new and dedicated Committee I would like to wish all a Merry Christmas and the best in life for 2021.

Until next time, take care.

Johnno.

PLEASE NOTE ☑

DOMAIN NAME NOW for revitalised website:
www.scpsawarwick.com

WHAT'S ON IN 2021

October 9

Celebrations at the Glen Hotel to mark 95 years since the foundation of Slade School in Warwick

Christmas gives us an opportunity to pause and reflect on the important things around us. David Cameron

Congratulations! Graduating Seniors WCC 2020

SCPSA Committee member and Warwick Christian College Student Liaison, Timothy Sommerlad, shares some thoughts of this year's graduating class as they leave their school years behind...

THE SENIOR CLASS AT WCC HAVE CERTAINLY HAD A ROUGH GO OF IT THIS YEAR, AND THAT'S PUTTING IT MILDLY...

What with all the restrictions imposed upon schools due to the outbreak of COVID-19 early in the year, teachers and students alike have had to become very flexible very quickly, adapting to the new and uncertain circumstances with a great deal of patience and fortitude.

These resilient young people have been kind enough to share with me some of their experiences from the year that has been – the good, the bad, and the ugly alike.

We all know how easy it is to complain and give way to pessimism and despair in the face of trying times such as these. **Zyetta** has some wise and encouraging words to share with her fellow students about their time at school:

"Study hard, stay out of drama, be yourself, [and] enjoy your last year of school – it will fly quickly."

Indeed, it certainly has! As we (rapidly) approach the advent season, may we all take some time to reflect on the blessings and battles that have come our way in spades this year.

Every student had something positive to say about their time at the College this year, and about the incredible job the staff are doing to deliver a quality teaching experience.

Montana *"[The] teachers care more"*

Logan L *"The smaller classes make it easier to learn"*

Zyetta *"I'm understood, and the teachers work with me, not against"*

Looking ahead to the new year, our seniors have some mixed ideas about what to do after they graduate.

Amanda *"I'm going to USQ in Toowoomba to study Medical Laboratory Science"*

Henry *"I'd like to move, and work on a farm"*

Sarah *"I'm taking a gap year"*

Who knows what's really on the horizon? Only time will tell, as COVID has shown us so effectively. For now, may we pray for a good outcome to the year, a restful holiday for everyone at the College and lastly, to the readers, a very merry Christmas!

"Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas." **Peg Bracken**

WARWICK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
Christ Community Character

Recipients of SCPSA Bursaries 2020

Faith Quach (Year 8) and Hannah Grava (Year 10) were the recipients of our two Slade Campus Past Students Association bursaries at WCC Secondary School Awards Night on November 18.

Due to COVID restrictions, this was held at the College, rather than Warwick City Hall, the venue used most frequently for this in recent years.

Representing SCPSA, Helen Moloney made the trip to Warwick to present certificates to both girls and spoke about the privilege we as an Association enjoy of maintaining meaningful ties with the college and the shared history of the campus.

From our point of view it is enormously heartening to see the Horsman Road site being cared for, maintained and used once again for the purpose the founders intended. Congratulations girls!

"There has to be at least one day of the year to remind us that we're here for something else besides ourselves." **Eric Sevareid**

SCPSA WEBSITE NEWS

As noted previously, museum caretaker, Leigh Nisbet, has also been curating our SCPSA website.
Following numerous requests for old school magazines, Leigh reports that copies of the magazines for CEGS, St Catharine's and Slade are now all available for viewing on the site. If you are reading your Kinawah on your computer or device you can go there by clicking this link: http://www.scpsawarwick.com/
Note: While the Website is in the process of being updated, Leigh tells us that he is planning to start uploading photos but that this will be a little way into the future. He also notes that running the Association is not without costs so the support of past students via memberships is very much appreciated.

Lost Faces of Warwick

NECESSITY BEING THE MOTHER OF INVENTION...

Seeing a bearded man standing naked in the pouring rain about two miles from Warwick, the driver of a buggy literally flogged the horse to the police station, where he reported the incident.

A constable, who no doubt thought that the law would take care of itself while the weather was bad, perforce had to saddle up and ride to the scene.

Here he found a swagman just ready to resume his journey along the road to Toowoomba and asked him if he had seen a man behaving strangely in the vicinity. The swagman replied in the negative and was about to move on when "the law" asked him how he had managed to keep dry during the storm.

"Easy" said the swagman, "come over here." They retreated to a hollow log, into which, so the wayfarer explained, he had shoved his swag and had then taken off all his clothes and thrust them in after it. After the storm he had rubbed himself down with an old towel and donned his clothes.

The constable commended the swagman on his foresight, and after suggesting that next time he might select a hollow log a little farther away from the public highway, rode back to the station through the mud.

Warwick Daily News. Tuesday, 11 August 1936.

LIZZIE STARS ON THE SPORTS PAGE

A recent story in our local newspaper, The Chronicle, made much of the news that for the first time in the existence of Toowoomba's Brothers Rugby League Club, an all female executive is set to lead the Leprechauns, with our own Lizzie Adams invited to take on the role of president.

While the presidency was not something she had in mind, Lizzie said she has been associated with the club since 2005 when her boys played after her family moved to Toowoomba from Charleville.

Saying she had attended a few meetings and when approached to take the reins because the club had faith she could bring the skills needed for the task, she was honoured to accept and continue to foster the club's family–oriented atmosphere and values.

For the year ahead, Lizzie expects that a unified approach off the field will contribute to success on it.

"I think it's great that all us ladies have come together with all the same interests and likewise thinking.

"We want to be able to look after our current and old players, get some of our diehard people back on board and reintroduce our ethos and philosophy about being inclusive to help grow Brothers to be the healthy club it needs to be."

We congratulate Lizzie on her appointment and wish her every success in her new venture.

Brothers' Sisters 2021 executive: Kelly Wockner, Kerri-Anne Betros, Lizzie Adams, Leanne Brown and Kylie Mohr

Diane Cairns harks back to her school days...

THE MIDNIGHT HORROR: *To go home from school many of us travelled on the old steam train which we called the Midnight Horror. We boarded the train about 4 o'clock in Warwick and arrived in Goondiwindi anywhere between midnight to 2 o'clock next morning. The train stopped at various sidings along the way, including Karara. Here the boiler was refilled with water, the engine drivers put the billy on and the Slade boys ducked off to the pub. If we put our heads out the window we were soon covered with the soot belched out from the locomotive. To get back to school the train left Goondiwindi about 6.00 a.m. I remember many a freezing cold departure from home, a good hour's drive away with ice and frost covering everything and us, all rugged up in the back of the ute.*

EASTER: *The school's lovely Chapel, a converted stable was still on the property when Mytton House was purchased for the Church of England Girls School in 1918. I remember the Easter Garden the nuns made in a corner beside the Chapel. Lighting the Paschal Candle was a special occasion. Dressed in our Sunday White Uniforms and blue veils, each girl carried a candle, all of us singing a hymn and walking in procession behind the Paschal Candle into the Chapel. On Good Friday we observed the Stations of the Cross and afterwards enjoyed a hot cross bun. We kept silence from this time until after the Sunday morning Easter Service—something that was quite a challenge for us. On Saturday the Chapel was given a spring clean, every piece of brass polished until it shone, girls busy cleaning everywhere. Only after the Sunday Easter Service was silence permitted to be broken. The Chapel played a big part in the daily lives of all the boarders.* **Diane Cairns (Martin) St Catharine's 1953-1958**

"Christmas is the season for kindling the fire for hospitality in the hall, the genial flame of charity in the heart." **Washington Irvington**

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CAFÉ OPEN EVERY DAY

Storm clouds over Southern Downs

If you are grounded firmly in a major city it may have escaped your notice that the Southern Darling Downs has been deep in the grip of drought for the past several years now. Water is still being trucked daily into Stanthorpe and as of December 19, Leslie Dam sits at 11.4%. The official rainfall for Warwick is measured at Yangan and in no way reflects the rain falling in the dam catchment area.

A few years ago, just before the notorious 2011 floods, it was Toowoomba in the news with combined dam levels sitting at 8%.

As I write, the Condamine River is at last flowing through Warwick after some heavy storm rain in its Killarney/Top Camp upper reaches.

The photo below, posted on the Lost Faces of Warwick Facebook page, taken at the Condamine Gorge on the night of December 16, shows a transformed 3rd Crossing that had no water in it just a day or so ago. We'd all like to see more of the same please!

The 1898 photograph of Warwick's waterworks at right showcases the chimney stack, described as "75 feet high, with a 10 x 10 feet base and the engine house as "a wooden building 48 x 42 feet, roofed with iron. The full article in Trove also includes the following...

"Around the stonework with which the walls are capped, runs an ornamental fence which is to serve the double purpose of ornamenting the work, and preventing too inquisitive human or other juveniles from taking involutionary ablutions."

Leslie Dam: Did you know?

WARWICK AND THE LESLIE BROTHERS

As the name suggests, Patrick Leslie was a Scot. He, along with his brothers, Walter and George, was the first settler to take up land on the Darling Downs. In 1847 the New South Wales government asked Leslie to select a site for a town on his Canning Downs station. It was originally to be known as Canningtown but the name Warwick was eventually chosen.

At the first land sale held in Warwick in 1848, Patrick Leslie bought the first allotment. Leslie Dam is named after the pioneering settler.

The dam was built between 1961 and 1965 on Sandy Creek, 11 km from Warwick, to provide water security for Warwick residents and the district's irrigators.

The wall was raised and radial gates were added in 1986, which more than doubled the dam's original storage capacity to 106,300 ML. It's primary function is to store water for irrigation and urban use. Granite rock sculptures of Patrick Leslie and his wife Kate are located near the dam wall.

This photo shows the seriousness of recent drought conditions on the Southern Downs.

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The original meaning of a deck of playing cards

A TIME HONOURED WAY TO SPEND A FEW PLEASANT HOURS indoors during those typically cold and damp dark days of the northern European holiday season is to get together and play board games, mah-jong or perhaps a hand or two of cards. Like me, you might be surprised to discover the following about the traditional card deck.

- 52 cards for 52 weeks in the year.
- 2 colours for day and night
- 4 suits for the 4 seasons and 13 weeks per season.
- Twelve court cards representing the 12 months.
- If we add each of the cards (ace + ace + ace + ace + two + two + three + seven + eight ... and etc) of the game we will get 364.
- The card game is an agricultural calendar that told us about the weeks and the seasons.
- With each new season, it was King's week, followed by Queen's week, Jack's and so on until as weeks changed seasons and we started over with a new colour.
- Jokers were used in leap years.

"Christmas is doing a little extra for someone." **Charles M. Schulz**

And now, to jest for just a moment

I went for my eye test today. The optician said :"I want you to look into this machinery and tell me what you see.."
I replied:"I see a geezer eating a bat, pubs closed and people wearing masks "
"Fantastic"...he says "you've got 2020 vision"

My son was chewing electricals, so I had to ground him.
He's currently doing better, and conducting himself properly.

A Roman man walks in to a bar and holds up two fingers and says five beers please.

A married man's confession:
"I always read my wife's horoscope to see what kind of day I'm going to have.

Today was national awareness day...I didn't know that .

Three Old Fellas sitting at the Pub having a drink.
1st says " My memory is not so good these days. I stopped halfway on the stairs at home and I'm darned if I could remember if I was going up or coming down."
The 2nd Old Fellow said, " Similar thing happens to me, the ole memory is going." I was sitting on the edge of the bed, I couldn't remember if I was getting up or if I was going to sleep"
The 3rd. Old Fellow said " Thank God my brain is as sharp as a tack, Touch Wood " as he knocked his knuckles on the Bar three times and yelled " Who's There?"

2021 Slade Celebrations: are you on board?

SLADE SCHOOL WARWICK-1926 - 2021- PATRIBUS DIGNI ESTOTE 95 YEARS

We are pleased to announce our 95 year celebrations set to take place **October 9, 2021** at the Glen Hotel 24 Gaskell Street, Eight Mile Plains.

Expect more details soon.

Save the Date

JUNE GEMMELL 1948-2020

A lifelong lover of music, theatre, history, reading, learning and family, June's legacy as a teacher, parent and grandmother will endure.

JUNE YATES WAS BORN in Beaudesert 2nd June, 1948 to parents, Gloria, nee Aldridge and Len Yates. Initially Len worked at a career as a painter using the lead based paints that were customary at the time. He later changed course midstream to become the proprietor of a cake shop in Beaudesert. Gloria had been a boarder at St Catharine's in Stanthorpe before it melded with the Warwick Church of England Girls' School to become St Catharine's Church of England Girls' School.

June attended Beaudesert State School for her primary school years before coming to St Catharine's in Warwick as a boarder in 1962. She maintained close friendships with her school fellows in later life and remembered her time at school and these friendships with a great deal more fondness than the food.

Those who were at school while she was there remember her playing the organ in the school chapel most evenings before dinner and accompanying many singing productions on the piano during daily assembly in the hall and for inter-house singing competitions and eisteddfods contested in Warwick's City Hall. She also played the big organ at St Mark's for some church services when required.

June sat for her Senior Public examinations in 1965 in which year she was a Prefect, Neal House Captain and Music Captain. She had studied an Arts based course, successfully avoiding any Maths subjects after Junior and trained as a specialist music teacher at Kelvin Grove Teachers' College after leaving school. During her teacher training she lived at the CWA Hostel in Gregory Terrace.

Upon graduating as a teacher, June's first appointment was to Oxley State High School where, much to her dismay she was thrown in at the deep end and expected to teach... Maths! It was a case of learn as she went but, beginning as she meant to go on, June still managed in her first year to pull together a school musical production of *The Pirates of Penzance*.

This proved to be just the first of many other musical productions that June brought to fruition throughout her professional career and, later on with community groups such as the Sunnybank Theatre where she recalled producing about thirteen shows and being involved in choral and other theatrical works.

June reflected that musicals require a big commitment with auditions, lengthy rehearsals and choreography taking a healthy chunk of time. And the process is seldom straightforward, with the need to first secure the rights to put on a production unless someone has written an original work.

Among her favourite and recent productions are *Brigadoon* and *Dusty* but there have been many more.

June was always a gifted and accomplished musician and taught many students privately as well as at school but later on went back to school to upgrade her qualifications and study at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. Here she mastered the flute and developed a love of Indonesian music, later introducing the gamelan to many of her students.

Her marriage to David who pre-deceased her just fifteen short months ago, resulted in a daughter, Fiona and son, Scott.

David had worked as a sound technician in television and also possessed a wealth of computer skills so was a good fit as a partner to help June with sound and lighting in stage productions. Both David and June adored their two grandchildren, Luke and Mitchell.

In later years the couple bought a catamaran, whimsically christened *Bach and Byte*, a name which cleverly reflected the interests and expertise of the couple.

June was on the social committee of the University of the Third Age for mature age students and embraced community life at The Village, Coorparoo when the time came to downsize with David.

She is remembered as methodical, strong, loyal, brave and stubborn, always more concerned about others than herself even though she was struggling with the cancer that invaded her bones during the last several years of her life. She was a voracious reader especially of crime fiction and was a lifelong lover of music, travel, history, learning, theatre and more recently, mah-jong which she found to be a great mental exercise and a good way to meet and interact with others.

Her loss is keenly felt by those who knew her.

St Catharine's Prefects 1965

Back Row left to right: Jocelyn Wright, Judith Deighton, Elizabeth Hungerford, Judith Gillam, Lois Goodwin, June Yates, Madeline Lo

Front Row left to right: Margaret Fraser, Margaret Ree, Helen Jackson

"How can the dead be truly dead when they still live in the souls of those who are left behind?"

June Gemmell 1948 - 2020

GEMMELL, June, nee Yates passed away 12th December 2020. A service celebrating June's life, Friday 18th was held in compliance with current COVID restrictions but was also attended remotely on application via live streaming. A number of her school fellows and old class members were at the service which was held in the East Chapel at the Mount Thompson Memorial Gardens. June attended St Catharine's 1962 - 1965. She is remembered as an exceptional music student, providing musical accompaniment for too many school productions to name. June's mother, Gloria, nee Aldridge, was a student at St Catharine's Stanthorpe and died eight years to the day before June passed away. June claimed a PHD in Retail Therapy. She is sorely missed.

AND HERE'S SOME MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

A person well past 70 years of age and nudging 80 was asked about the deeper changes being personally experienced during the twilight years. The following highly thought provoking thoughts are the response...

1) After loving my parents, my siblings, my spouse, my children, my friends, now I have started loving myself.

2) I just realised that I am not "Atlas". The world does not rest on my shoulders.

3) I have now stopped bargaining with vegetables and fruits vendors. A few pennies more is not going to burn a hole in my pocket, but it might help the poor fellow save for his daughter's school fees.

4) I pay my waiter a tip. The extra money might bring a smile to their face. They are toiling much harder for a living than I am.

5) I stopped telling the elderly that they've already narrated that story many times. The story makes them walk down memory lane and relive the past.

6) I have learned not to correct people even when I know they are wrong. The onus of making everyone perfect is not on me. Peace is more precious than perfection.

7) I give compliments freely and generously. Compliments are a mood enhancer not only for the recipient, but also for me. And a small tip for the recipient of a compliment, never, NEVER turn it down, just say "Thank You"

8) I have learned not to bother about a crease or a spot on my shirt. Personality speaks louder than appearances.

9) I walk away from people who do not value me. They might not know my worth, but I do.

10) I remain cool when someone plays dirty to outrun me in the rat race. I am not a rat and neither am I in any race.

11) I am learning not to be embarrassed by my emotions. It is my emotions that make me human.

12) I have learned that it is better to drop the ego than to break a relationship. My ego will keep me aloof, whereas with relationships I will never be alone.

13) I have learned to live each day as if it is the last. After all, it might be the last!

14) I am doing what makes me happy. I am responsible for my happiness, and I owe it to myself. Happiness is a choice.

You can be happy at any time, just choose to be! Why do we have to wait to be 60 or 70 or 80, why can't we practice this at any stage and at any age...

I don't know who to credit this to. But thank you!

Life is a song – sing it. Life is a game – play it.
Life is a challenge – meet it. Life is a dream – realise it.
Life is a sacrifice – offer it. Life is love enjoy it." *Sai Baba Sathya*

The moon conjoined Jupiter and Saturn. Not long to go before the exact conjunction.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

As always, we are deeply appreciative of information that you are able to contribute about any of our number we have lost. Please be sure to pass on anything that should be included in our Valé or Obituary notices.

worthy of their forebears

Members of the Slade Campus Past Students' Association are committed custodians of the history of Slade School and St Catharine's Church of England Girls School, and of the two schools which preceded the formation of St Catharine's Warwick, St Catharine's Church of England Girls High School, Stanthorpe and CEGS Warwick and the Warwick Christian College. Members of the Association may include past students and members of staff of Slade School or of St Catharine's Church of England School, or of the St Catharine's Church of England Girls High School Stanthorpe, or the Church of England Girls School, Warwick or Warwick Christian College and their descendants, past students of any other school, who have attended the campus and members of staff of any other school, who have attended the campus.

Check us out on the Web:
www.scpsawarwick.com

Find us on Facebook

What we're talking about on Facebook...

Facebook is the 21st Century way to find out many things. Kathy Fabila (1972-1975) took the initiative of establishing this page as a way for past students to connect with one another in a respectful, non-confrontational way.
Our aim is to get everyone connected again, to share stories, our families, continue friendships from where we left off decades ago and get some conversations going!

Paul Stevens 18 October
Thanks for letting me join your group. I was a Manual Arts teacher at Slade from 1981 until it closed in 1997. I taught there for 17 years and loved the school. Having looked through the group members I see a lot of names and faces, from old photos, that I recognise. A big hello to all my past students.

Helen Moloney 17 November

Slade School 1990!
Some great memories & some very prominent people who still live in Warwick!
Some lovely staff & teachers back in 1990! Some great laughs & the we felt like a family, good times

Elise Richards 2 December
I'm looking for pictures of and for my father-in-law John Richards
He was at Slade school from 1952 -53
He was in the cadets and the rugby/football team
If anyone has any pictures around that time that would be great
Thanks in advance.

Leigh Nisbet
Elise, go to the Slade & St Caths website: www.scpsawarwick.com and browse the school magazines for the relevant years.
SCPSA – Incorporating Slade, St. Catharine's & Warwick Christian College

Elise Richards
Thankyou Leigh. I have looked through the relevant years.
I couldn't find much so thought I'd try on here.

Ted Ross
Hi Elise. Our records indicate that John was at Slade in 1952 and in that year completed his scholarship year. Sorry but we do not have any photos of John. Wish we did. Regards Ted Ross Association Archivist and Association Patron.

Elise Richards
Thankyou for having a look Ted. Appreciate it.

Leigh Nisbet 12 December
I've commenced loading photo's of School Prefects from both Slade and St Cath's on the www.scpsawarwick.com website. Unfortunately some of the transcribed information is "questionable" however that is all I have available.

Neil Lancely 13 December
Leigh, the last time I visited Slade was in 1995 and at that time there were many photos, some of our era, in the main office / vestibule. Do you know what would have happened to those photos?

Leigh Nisbet 13 December
I have stored in the museum six (6) albums for the 80's & 90's plus another five (5) relating to the period us ole fella's were there

Brigalow, Billy Cans and Bottle Trees

Joan Clothier White published 2010

Chapter 10: Sad News from Far Away

ONE DAY IN THE MAIL there was a letter from Dad's sister-in-law, after whom I was named, Joan Clothier, in Sydney. Joan was married to Dad's older brother, Allan and she had written to let us know that Dad's elderly mother, Ida, had suffered a stroke and was not expected to live.

Grandma was the only grandmother that we had ever known since Mum's mother had passed away before I was born. Grandma was an interesting person indeed. Her older grandchildren remember the wooden toys that she fashioned for them with her own hands when there was no money for bought ones. Now I think that she was a woman who had been born ahead of her time. She was a genuinely talented artist but circumstances had not allowed her drawing ability to be encouraged or nurtured. Instead she was an enthusiastic amateur photographer and used to develop her own negatives and make her own black and white prints in various make-shift dark rooms—very often the bathroom.

Her loyal allegiance to the Temperance Society was the background to a tale that was often recounted fondly and which accredited Grandma with sending Mum a book of recipes that had been requested. In here she had crossed out any place where the ingredients called for whisky, rum or other spirits. She had annotated the book with the explicit instruction—*Omit the alcohol in all these recipes. It is quite unnecessary*.

More than this, though, Grandma was a keen naturalist—the kind that loves nature, not the kind that goes skinny-dipping. She had every edition of one particular Australian wildlife publication that had ever been printed and loved bird watching and anything at all to do with wildlife.

Grandma had come to stay with Mum and Dad at Yuleba after I was born and again when Leon was about one. She was patient and kind and as children we used to receive the most wonderful letters from her—sometimes even illustrated!

The only time I remember Grandma being annoyed was after a transgression of mine. She had spent all afternoon taking pictures of the baby—Leon—in our modest garden and yours truly, aged all of four years, not understanding the process and impatient to see the result of the photo shoot, opened the camera when Grandma was not looking and ruined the entire afternoon's work.

I also remember her with a mini habitat that she had created in an enormous glass jar. She showed us the magic of how a caterpillar eventually metamorphosed into a butterfly. Her interest in this and other areas must have rubbed off on me and prompted the following incident which happened at Yuleba before I started school ...

Dad had taken the two girls up the paddock while he attended to some fencing. As the afternoon grew warmer, we all grew thirsty and Dad sent me back to the truck to get a billy of water for us. All I had to do was follow the fence back and return the same way with the water to where Dad was working. I remember setting off and then becoming sidetracked by some plants and flowers and then losing sight of the fence, the truck and everyone else and becoming thoroughly tired and lost.

This caused no little consternation—snake bite was a very real possibility. I can't remember how long it was before I was found but I do remember that it was beginning to get dark. Dad had Mum and Grandma on high alert about my missing status and had directed them to fire a single shot from his .22 calibre rifle if I happened to find my own way back home. I am hazy about all other details but this one which stopped everyone in their tracks later on when the story was told and then retold.

When Dad finally came upon me, I was walking towards him clutching a few limp bits of vegetation in my hand and proudly announced, "I've got some interesting specimens for Grandma!"

Grandma had not yet made the trip from Sydney to see Numeralla and now it looked as though she never would. Each week we received an update from the family. This might say that "Mum took a few teaspoons of water yesterday" or "Mum seems a little better today" but Grandma didn't recover and passed away in August, 1961.

At times like this, the isolation of our immediate family from the greater extended family must have been felt most acutely. With our ultra-tight budget and transport being what it was, either going all the way to Sydney to try to see her before she died or attending the funeral was quite out of the question.

There had been a big family gathering for Grandma's 80th birthday a year or two earlier and we had not been able to attend that either. I am sure that in hindsight Dad regretted not being with his family for this momentous occasion but he had other priorities at the time.

I have often had occasion since to think that we never fully realise in the present that *this* may be the last chance that we are given to see someone we truly care about. Logic tells us that death will separate us all one day but it still takes us by surprise when it happens, ambushing us with emotions and a biting sense of loss we are never ready to deal with.

Still, Grandma's love of nature was marked for posterity. Some time after her death, those of her children who lived near Sydney erected a sandstone birdbath to her memory in Muogamarra Nature Reserve on the southern shore of the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales. This reserve is open to the public just six weekends a year on special open days around August and September. This is when visitors come to see the wildflowers. Grandma would most surely have approved.

There was one other loss that we learned about down at the hut and this was that of Mum's mysterious younger brother, Charlie. Mum would never tell us much about her brother so he was always someone who was not quite real to us. She received a letter one day, some time after the fact, from her sister to tell her that he had passed away suddenly. This was so as not to unduly distress Mum with the birth of the new baby so close.

Putting two and two together, with the benefit of hindsight, it seems that Mum and Charlie may have been estranged for some reason and that now, sadly, things would never be put right. As the only boy he had been granted favours that his sisters did not enjoy and was, according to Mum, more spoiled than was good for him. All of this was a tremendous shock for our mother who, although she was someone who was fond of reliving her childhood memories with us, never ever spoke about this again.

I feel certain that both our parents felt their respective losses greatly but grieved stoically, silently and privately.

Next Chapter: "Can I ring Auntie Billie's doorbell?"

Brigalow, Billy Cans and Bottle Trees

Joan Clothier White published 2010

Chapter 11: Can I ring Auntie Billie's doorbell?"

WE WERE REASONABLY SETTLED in our temporary accommodation down at the hut, when we received a surprise visit from Mum's sister, Julie, her husband, Fred Bradley and our two cousins, Jeffrey and Jeanette, just in time for New Year.

Fred and Julie did a lot of travelling and holidaying by caravan and always seemed to have just been to places that we could hardly imagine. Fred was profoundly deaf after an accident when he was a young man but he never let this stop him from doing anything he made up his mind to do.

Imagine our surprise when it was their light blue Ford Customline with its New South Wales number plates, complete with caravan in tow, that hove into view through the trees after we had wondered for several minutes who might be coming to our place. It is not hard to imagine that visitors to the hut were not an everyday occurrence and they generated quite a bit of excitement whenever they came our way.

Fred and Julie had managed to find us with little trouble even though we were a long way off the beaten track and they most certainly achieved their aim of surprising us completely.

Imagine the stir this caused! We almost never had anyone come to stay and certainly none of our city cousins. Their family slept in the caravan which was just as well because we would have been hard pressed to find somewhere to put them all, even doubling up in every bunk.

The excitement was not ours alone. All the way along, ages and ages before they had left the bitumen which was a good many miles back, Jeanette had been asking, "Can I ring Auntie Billie's doorbell?"

It was inconceivable to someone born and bred in the city that a house might not have a doorbell. Imagine Jeanette's surprise when it turned out that not only did Auntie Billie have no doorbell—she didn't even have a door! This was also not to mention that our place resembled no human habitation that she had ever seen.

We all had a good laugh about this and thoroughly enjoyed their visit. Uncle Fred was a proficient lip-reader and here was a wonderful opportunity to practise on both him and Auntie Julie, who was also hearing-impaired, the two-handed signing alphabet which Mum had been teaching us.

Their family visited us on another occasion too, some years later, when things had become far more civilised, although they must have had cause to wonder about *that* when the following took place.

It was on one of our trips with them up the paddock to point out various things of interest that we chanced to pass by a stack of dead cows' bones. The carcasses had all been hauled out of a gully during a drought so as not to foul the water and one of the casualties had been one of our very first two milking cows, Beauty.

It was not until many years later that Jeff and Jeanette told us of the complete astonishment they felt when we told them in off-handed fashion while gesturing towards this pile of bones "Oh yes, and that's Beauty over there".

What kind of Cook's tour was this?

But this time we were keen to show off our own little part of the world to our city cousins. Here was the billabong and here was the log in the water that we dived off when we went swimming. This was the fence that we had helped Dad to put up and this was what we had to do to get the cows in and milk them and so on and so forth. They saw for themselves the warm milk streaming into the bucket when the cows were milked and the way Mum carefully strained it through two thicknesses of a clean linen tea towel before it was used. They were able to pat the house cows and their calves too if they wanted to.

Goodness knows what they thought of our *make-do* bathroom. We usually put the washtub out of the wind under the annex, about one third filled with nice warm water from the copper and bathed there. I cannot recall anybody complaining about the lack of privacy but as near as I can remember everyone got cleaned up ready for bed each night with no fuss.

I really have no idea what the Bradleys' private estimation was of the way we were living. They were certainly too polite to say but it must have given them a different perspective indeed to take back home to Sydney with them.

It was surely next to impossible for Julie to picture her sister any more as the city girl that she had once been. Years later Julie recounted with some disbelief the way Billie had calmly squashed a spider with a kitchen knife. The spider had been causing Julie, who was most definitely *not* accustomed to such things, considerable consternation.

We have since been told that Billie was considered by the city relatives to be exceptionally brave to go "all the way up there to Queensland" with Max and live the way she did.

For his part, I am quite certain that Dad never ever fully grasped the enormity of the changes Mum made in her life for him. He didn't often mention it but he was privately disappointed that she never learned to ride a horse or work with the cattle. He thought she was unnecessarily fussy when it came to matters of hygiene and cleanliness.

She, for her part, never shirked when it came to caring for hearth and home. There was always a nourishing meal at day's end and on those occasions when someone visited, people were discreetly surprised at how clean she kept everything even if the hut *did* resemble something like a hovel from the outside.

The stove top was kept clean with stove black and all the pots and pans were always scoured, scalded and gleaming from the poky and rather dim little corner that was the corrugated-iron stove recess. It was undeniably small but everything was as neat and as orderly as it was possible to be. Humble though it was, Mum did her best to make it home.

There was one handy little serendipity that resulted from our unexpected visit from the Bradley family: it was this first visit from any of our more citified relatives that provided some of the impetus for Dad to finally see about putting in an earth closet. Prior to this we had taken care of business by burying the necessary a fair distance away from the hut.

Up until now, Dad had thought nothing of the *status quo* after all his years in the army and living in the bush but, after Uncle Fred set off up the paddock one morning in good humour with a shovel over his shoulder, singing "Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to work we go" in that odd tuneless voice characteristic of the profoundly deaf, Mum let it be known that it was high time *something was done*.

Dad put together a rudimentary cubicle beside the rough shed a little further up the hill with no door and no roof but a doorway facing away from the hut. Needless to say we all thought this was a great improvement. We just had to be willing to dig bigger holes.

Next Chapter: Sydney or the Bush