



In celebration of a season of gratitude...

# KINAWAH



VOLUME 2020

MAY JUNE EDITION

## The best of times, the worst of times...

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### A Different April this year in New York City...

**SPRING IS THE SEASON IN OUR NORTHERN HEMISPHERE** Christian calendar that heralds new life and new hope and this year, even amid the disaster of the COVID-19 situation in New York City, we are somewhat paradoxically witnessing exactly that. Because of the pandemic, the city that never sleeps is struggling more than most with uncertainty, desolation and loneliness. The normally bustling streets, quiet and empty, have been unexpectedly brightened by bouquets of flowers bringing beauty, cheer and reassurance that even though life is so amazingly fragile it can still be heart-stoppingly beautiful – this pandemic will pass and the world will be better!

This genius idea for decorating Manhattan with flowers comes from floral designer and native Californian, Lewis Miller. Full of respect for nature as a youngster, he moved to Seattle at age 18 to study gardening and landscape design. After seven years of practice in design, flowers and event planning, Lewis moved to New York City working in top floral boutiques and founded his own company: LMD New York (Lewis Miller Design), which soon became one of the leading floral design companies in the city, known for its fantastic wedding and party arrangements. In recent weeks, Lewis Miller and his team have been secretly creating what they call "Flower Flash", a flower arrangement in Manhattan trash cans and street corners. "Flower Flash" aims to honour the medical staff and other first responders, to bring joy to New Yorkers who commute on a daily basis, and thus letting in the spring during the pandemic. The bright and beautiful flowers that suddenly appeared in seemingly random locations were a surprise that Lewis and his team gifted to Manhattan every morning. All works were started at around 5:45am in the morning and completed before sunrise. They never announce in which corner of Manhattan the next "Flower Flash" would be held. Every time they finished the installation, they painted the sign LMDxNYC in chalk, then quietly left. Each creative flower arrangement thus blooms in the first morning sunlight. Now, with so much US civil unrest, we need the inspiration that this story brings. *The above information was first published April 18, 2020.*



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IS YOUR CLASS celebrating a MILESTONE in 2020 or 2021?

CAST YOUR NET WIDER FOR LOST CONTACTS AND ADVERTISE HERE!

## Editor's Notes...



The aims and motivations of a Kinawah editor can be a little elusive to define. Mostly fluid, mindful of the need to be adaptable, sometimes challenging, and often filled with surprises, the task is unquestionably an interesting one. It is not, however without its rewards. It is always encouraging to receive positive feedback after an issue has gone out and to have readers respond generously when a request for information has gone out to help flesh out an upcoming article.

This Kinawah is a great example of that support. Thank-you for the input that has been provided by Ray Hammond, David Carstens, Rob Nolan, Marion Mackenzie, Helen Moloney, Ted Ross, Carolyn Mom, Judith Fawcett and the ever supportive Jenny Schonfisch.

Jenny sent me the article with the gist of the front page story with the beautiful "Flower Flash" photos which I have used throughout this Kinawah and which dovetails neatly into the gratitude theme inspired by the Patricia Cameron-Hill and Shayne Yates information in this, and the May Extra Kinawah. I realise that this page 1 story is generated out of New York City rather than Australia but we have several past students currently living in the United States. There is also the very pertinent point that this American city has been so hard hit by COVID-19 and now the riots, that such inspiration blooming amid all the ruin and devastation is heart-warming. As Rob Nolan says on page 4, generosity and beauty is all around us.

Recently Jenny made another of her welfare check up calls, this time to Betty Burley (Merry 1953-56). Betty was widowed a few years ago and shares Texas connections with Jenny but her internet access has failed since her husband's death. Dawn Carseldine, one of our old girls, has stepped into the breach in the meantime though and is printing off copies of Kinawah for her so Betty can stay in touch. Both Jenny and Betty, who is now mostly confined to her home with Parkinson's Disease were delighted to make contact with each other.

Has anyone concerned made contact yet with Colin Jackson's class that came together 50 years ago in 1970? Perhaps quite a few of you might manage to get together in Roma in August. (See our Facebook update on page 14)

Until next time, enjoy the extra reading Joan White

## IN THE HOUR OF TRIAL

"Appreciate what YOU HAVE, where YOU ARE and who YOU ARE within this moment."

**Tony Clark**



## 2019/2020 Committee

### EXECUTIVE

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Vice President/Membership	John Bayliss	0418 987 900
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## Cookie's Corner

IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF GRATITUDE THAT THREADS ITS WAY THROUGHOUT THIS KINAWAH, NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO REFLECT ON CHANGED REALITIES AND BE THANKFUL FOR MANY THINGS INCLUDING THE COUNTRY IN WHICH WE LIVE.

- It is wonderful to hear that as of May 30, there have been no more than 8 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Papua New Guinea, NO DEATHS, 8 recovered. We hope things stay this way. While total accuracy is tricky in this situation we are encouraged to feel that our many PNG school fellows appear to be OK.
- We are also grateful that so far as we know, no others of our number have been a victim. With so many of us in the “at risk” age range we still need to stay careful. This is also a shout out to those of you who are living in the US to please let us know you are OK. There are several of you and we are watching current US news reports with ever growing concern.
- I am thankful that we are still on track with our 95<sup>th</sup> celebrations in October next year and for Joan’s efforts to keep us all connected and informed via Kinawah. There has been lots of interest generated by the articles while we have been in lockdown. I would like to add my personal thanks to those who have helped to make it so much more interactive.
- I may not have imagined ever saying so back then, but I am grateful now for the friendships that grew out of my school years and appreciate those whose life’s work created that legacy for us.
- Lastly I am hugely grateful that the Slade Campus is again a place of learning, resounding with youthful exuberance and that we are able to enjoy the privilege of a meaningful and productive relationship with the College. It so easily might have been a different outcome.

Now Until next time, take care and stay safe — gratefully Captain Cooke!

### PLEASE NOTE

**DOMAIN NAME NOW**  
for revitalised website:  
[www.scpsawarwick.com](http://www.scpsawarwick.com)

### WHAT'S ON IN 2020

**2020 AGM !**  
Still no firm date yet but we hope to be able to confirm a time and venue soon

**July 16 - 26**  
Jumpers and Jazz in Warwick doubtful but to be confirmed

**November 7**  
Brekky Creek Lunch to be confirmed

**November 11**  
Remembrance Day

In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity. Albert Einstein

## Membership



“Since the last issue of Kinawah we have received five new memberships which is great news and support for our Association. Kinawah, even though it is sent out mostly by email (and some 50 odd via Australia Post still), does incur considerable cost to produce and distribute. The response that Joan, our wonderful editor, receives after each edition is very rewarding for the great effort that she puts into it with information supplied by many.

As has been the case in recent years, those who are already financial members will be sent renewal invoices by 8 June for payment by the end of June. The new membership year commences 1 July 2020 and I invite and encourage those who are not financial members to please consider joining for the small amount of \$40 a year or \$180 for a five-year membership. You will find a membership application as a separate attachment with this issue.

The funds are used to continue the work that has always been done with the recent initiative of the last few years of a bursary awarded to a male and female student at the College at the end of each year. The President highlights the projects we are working on and have completed through his article in Kinawah during the year.

Memberships are the only source of income we have to enable the Association to continue the work that it was initially set up to do. Our Membership year runs from 1 July to the 30 June each year so now is the time to join.

Should you have any questions about membership please contact me via the membership email at: - [scpsa.membership1@bigpond.com](mailto:scpsa.membership1@bigpond.com) or call me on 0418 987 900 to facilitate your membership.” John Bayliss

I find that the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have. Thomas Jefferson

## 2021 Slade Celebrations: are you on board?



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





**WARWICK**  
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE  
*Christ Community Character*

## Keeping the focus on Christ

The following is the text quoted in a video posted on the College Facebook last month. Today I am going to talk about the first word in our logo – Christ. I am going to quote from one of the best ever descriptions of Jesus the Christ – from the now famous, ‘That’s my King’ sermon by Doctor Shadrach Meshach Lockridge.

### Do you know Him?

He's the greatest phenomenon that ever crossed the horizon of this world.  
He's God's Son.  
He's a sinner's Saviour..  
He's the centrepiece of civilization.  
He stands in the solitude of Himself.  
He's awesome.  
He's unique.  
He's unparalleled.  
He's unprecedented.  
He's the loftiest idea in literature.  
He's the highest personality in philosophy.  
He's the fundamental doctrine of true theology.  
He's the cardinal necessity of spiritual religion.  
He's the miracle of the age.  
He's the superlative of everything good that you choose to call Him.  
He's the only one qualified to be an all sufficient Saviour

### I wonder if you know Him?

He's the key to knowledge.  
He's the wellspring to wisdom.  
He's the doorway of deliverance.  
He's the pathway of peace.  
He's the roadway of righteousness.  
He's the highway of holiness.  
He's the gateway of glory

### I wish I could describe Him to you, but

He's indescribable.  
He's incomprehensible.  
He's invincible.  
He's irresistible.

### Our Goals and Objectives

As a College, we seek to promote CHRIST, to benefit the COMMUNITY by producing citizens of the best CHARACTER possible.

That's My King! SM Lockridge on YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzqTFNfeDnE&feature=related> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qrS8-PljLI&feature=related>

God bless

Carmelo Rubio



## Keeping things real in turbulent times...

**AS I TURN THE PAGES OF MY 2020 DIARY** I find two types of entry – one before coronavirus and the other, during the pandemic. What might have been and what has been. Sometimes there is a large difference. For example turning to 30<sup>th</sup> April, Jan and I were to have been on the “Rocky Mountaineer” in Canada. In actual fact we were at home in our Bellbowrie house. The point I am trying to make is that in life, what we plan does not always work out as we would like. And under normal circumstances we may well be disappointed. However, on this occasion, not so. Far better to be here than stuck in Canada trying to reorganise accommodation, new airfares etc. Anyway we can not change what has happened around us.

I try to stay cool, calm and collected under most circumstances. Doing otherwise can use up a lot of energy and not change anything. So I accepted our trip was not happening. On reflection I realised I would rather be hugged to death by a kangaroo than torn apart by an unhappy grizzly bear.



My hope for all of you, if you are still reading this, is that you too are able to accept the present circumstances and not be consumed with what cannot, at the moment be changed. If you are finding yourself depressed, frightened, lonely or angry remember there are people in our communities that have the training and ability to give assistance, either financially or emotionally. Do seek help without any sense of embarrassment or fear.

In amongst all the bad things which are going on around us, take the time to see the beautiful things. In this edition of “Kinawah” we have the magnificent floral arrangements in New York. But we do not need to go to New York to get a pick-me-up. There is beauty all around us, generous people, nature, families and friends.

If you would like to phone for chat or information on available assistance please do so. My number is 0439 784 457. If I am unable to answer at the time of your call, please leave a message and I'll respond to it as soon as I can.

With best wishes and keep well, Rob Nolan.



# Staying connected with each other in interesting times...

**LINNETT COX MAY 12** I learned of Roberta Dukes death from the [May Extra Kinawah]. I loved doing rural and remote nursing at Baralaba, and I nursed with Linda, Roberta's daughter. Roberta asked me round for meals when I was there. I have fond memories. I contacted Linda who appreciated my call. Amazing just what happens isn't it? Kind regards Lin Porter St Catharine's 1957-59.

**JAN DOYLE MAY 12** A big thank you for the extra Kinawahs. I am enjoying reading *Brigalow*, *Billy Cans* and *Bottle Trees* by instalments. I have previously read the full story which I thought was a great read. I was pleased to see the 1963 Netball team as that was my first year at St Cath's and Carol and Mary were the seniors and prefects we looked up to. Thanks again. Cheers Jan Aldridge 1963-65

**DAWN CARSELDINE MAY 14** I wondered if anyone can remember an "old girl" getting married at the chapel - in either 1953/4. Dawn Bishop St Catharine's 1953-54



**ANDREW BODE MAY 14** That damper must have been something. Maybe you could have robbed the wild bees to put some zing in the damper. I look forward to the clearing of the land. Last Wednesday I eventually retired after 55 years teaching finishing up by teaching using the university collaborate ultra virtual classroom. I have been blessed to have been at Griffith for my last 20 years teaching and now it is time to write now that I am 75 years old. Regards Andy Bode Slade 1959-62

**PETER MOORE MAY 16** Just writing to thank you for your time and effort for these wonderful editions over the past two months. They have given us some very interesting reading during these strange times. Nina and I were on a cruise on *Queen Elizabeth* when the times were changing back in early March. Captain Inger Thorhauge, the first lady captain we've sailed with, made sure the ship was clean and spotless at all times so there were no sickness problems throughout the cruise. We were in port in Burnie, Tasmania, at the time of the toilet roll fiasco, the locals thought it a great joke as the wharves were covered in wood chip ready to be shipped to the mainland for the manufacture of toilet rolls. We had three ports of call in PNG and in the short time we had with the people there I understand your great regards for those from PNG who attended St. Cath's.

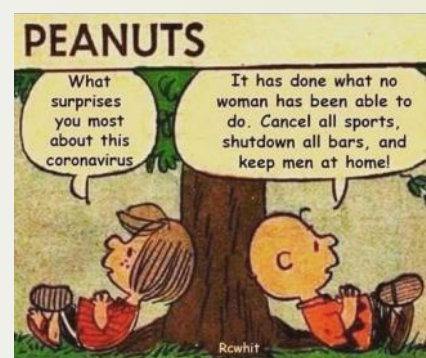
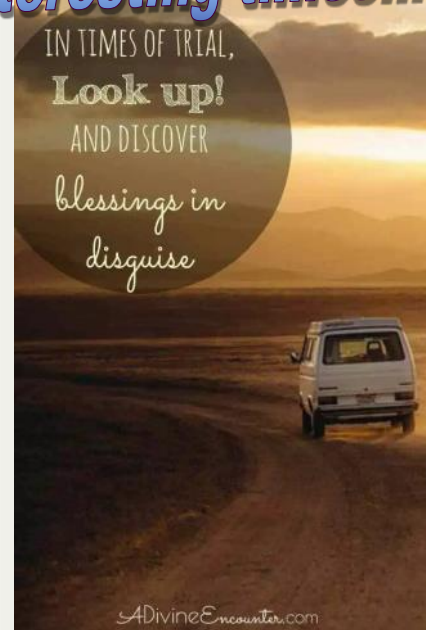
Among your interesting articles was 'Rowing at Slade 1930s' bringing back memories of how I came to go to Slade. Mum and Dad gave me the chance to choose between Slade and Ipswich Grammar. Slade won because of the rowing and that photo which was in the School Prospectus in late 1944. We had a rowing boat used for fishing in Kent's Lagoon a few miles from Kalbar. I'd helped in building the boat (most likely by being in the way) and I enjoyed the many days we went fishing.

In the previous edition in Chapter 2 of your book you mentioned those strange loaves of bread. My Dad was the baker in Kalbar so I know all about High Tops and Marrieds. They were very popular with the farmers for cut lunches. Also during and after WW2 there was no delivery so the bread was sent to the farm families in their cream cans on return from the butter factory. The marrieds were easier to pack into the cans especially when the orders were for eight or more loaves. I can remember two or three orders were for twelve loaves three times a week. Just in case you're worried, the cans had all been steam cleaned at the butter factory.

It's funny how these things come to mind with a little nudge. They were not forgotten just stored away safely. I'm attaching a couple of cartoons which may be of interest or you may have already seen them. Kind Regards Peter Moore 1945-50.

**DAVID CARSTENS MAY 26** I met Jon Stephenson for the first time in 1963 when our ship, *Nella Dan*\*\*\*, picked up the ANARE Climbing Expedition from Heard Island. Unfortunately they had had a rugged time on the mountain, Big Ben, and did not achieve the summit. This was after Jon's Transantarctic Journey in 1958.

\*\*\*MV *Nella Dan* was one of the famous 'Dan' ships of the Danish J. Lauritzen A/S Lines that were all but synonymous with ANARE (Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions) through the early years of Australia's official Antarctic program. The *Nella Dan* sailed to the Antarctic every year of the 26 years it was chartered by ANARE. On the *Nella Dan*'s last fateful voyage in December 1987, bad weather blew up during resupply operations at Macquarie Island. The *Nella Dan* dragged anchor and was driven aground just metres off the island. Although plans were initially made to salvage the vessel, the decision was eventually made to scuttle the ship. It was sunk in deep water off Macquarie Island.



# In our isolation: extraordinary times...

**STAYING ALIVE!** More about how gratitude can make us mentally strong from Patricia Cameron-Hill and Dr Shayne Yates...

**IN OUR MAY EXTRA KINAWAH** it was revealed how our thoughts and feelings associated with gratitude are able to change our brain for the better and improve our mood. The point was also made that it is more effective if we let our minds rest on the things for which we are grateful, so they really sink in. The “Six of the Best” gratitude exercise suggested a way of doing this.

There is a difference between feeling grateful and expressing gratitude, and to maximise our emotional well-being, we need to do both. This means overcoming our tendency to take for granted so much of what we have in our lives and making more of an effort to express our gratitude. There has never been a better time to do so.

In life threatening situations, when people recognize how fortunate they are to be well, the urge to give thanks arises. We have seen much of this during this great lockdown as people have found imaginative ways to express their feelings of gratitude through many forms of service.

On a personal level, we all know what it feels like not to be thanked. As much as we tell ourselves that we don't really mind, there can be a part of us that can't help feeling disappointed. Worse still, we know we ourselves are sometimes guilty of not thanking people.

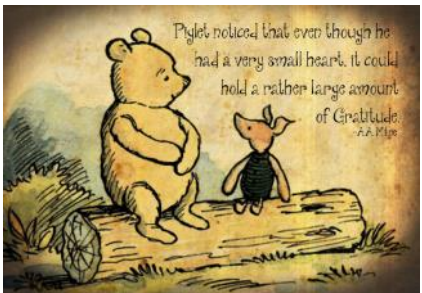
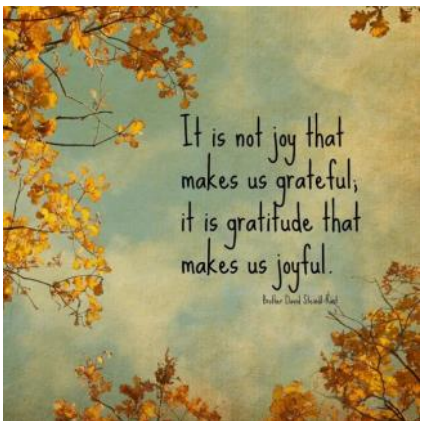
Saying 'thank you' is such an easy way to make someone feel good especially if we say why we appreciate what they've done. We all need to feel appreciated and to know that our life matters to someone. This feeling can build confidence and a desire to do even more for other people.

Many of us are suffering or feel deprived in some way right now, but we can always use that word “but” - in spite of everything, we still have much to be thankful for. Being alive; good health; enough food to eat; shelter; warmth; the garden; nature; living in an amazing country; relationships; things to do; our talents and skills and the list goes on. We each have our own list, and the more we give thanks, the more things we find to be thankful for. Shayne and Patricia have observed that being grateful seems to get easier as we get older suggesting that perhaps it's a hidden gift of ageing!

There are so many different ways to express gratitude. It means taking time to think about the people who need to be thanked, then do something about it.

For example:

1. Thank people who are continuing to provide services at this difficult time.
2. Thank the person or people closest to you for their continued love, support and tolerance.
3. When you're out and about, thank someone for giving way to maintain social distance... and a smile.
4. Small gestures let people know you are thinking of them.  
How about delivering a box of chocolates or hand cream to your local nursing home for the staff?
5. Thank people for their emails, especially if they have forwarded something of possible interest— even if it isn't.
6. Words have incredible power especially words of appreciation...
7. When you thank someone, include the reason why you are grateful.
8. Find things to thank your family members for – even if it is their job to do it. Write a note, send a text: “I am grateful for...” “I love it when you...” Give a surprise novelty. A hug.
9. Ask yourself each morning: “Who can I thank today?”



Quarantine has turned us into dogs. We roam the house all day looking for food. We are told “no” if we get too close to strangers. And we get really excited about car rides!

2019: Stay away from negative people. 2020: Stay away from positive people.

The world has turned upside down, Jokesters. Old folks are sneaking out of the house, and their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!

Day 7 at home and your dog is looking at you like, “See? This is why I chew the furniture.”

If there's a baby boom nine months from now, what will happen in 2033? There will be a whole bunch of quaranteens.

What should you do if you don't understand a coronavirus joke? Be patient.

With nail salons, hair salons, waxing centres and tanning places all closed...it's about to get ugly out there.



# Raymond recalls haircuts and hellions...

**AT SLADE, THERE WERE TWO THINGS YOU REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO HEAR:**

"You've got Detention!" and..."Get a Haircut!"  
 Detention you could live with—you could catch up on the previous week's homework (that you hadn't done), you could read the latest Ian Fleming novel or chat with your mates about your holiday plans (90% of the time, they were with you—usually having been involved in the misdemeanour that got you detention in the first place!)  
 This was usually supervised by a Teacher who didn't want to be there any more than you did; so you could get away with a fair bit. Haircuts were different:  
 The Seniors would stand at the bottom of the Dining Room stairs..."Get a haircut!"  
 "But—I got one ten days ago..."  
 "So what? - get a bloody haircut!"  
 The Barber (I forget his name) must have been a retired shearer—He had the same callous disregard for your well-being. It was pointless saying: "Just a trim thanks."—You got "Short Back and Sides" whether you liked it or not! You emerged looking like an escapee from San Quentin. This "Style" (if you can call it that) was the same all year. (You dreaded getting a haircut in the middle of Winter.) Senior year was a bit different—WE were now the ones doling out haircuts and could get away with facing the Barber for a bit longer. Then it was usually "Horrie" (Horace Whybird) who chipped you: "You're supposed to be setting an example!...Get that hair sorted by next week!"  
 Funny how you rebel against things you were forced to do isn't it? When I left Slade, I didn't get a haircut for about six months...I couldn't plait it...but it made quite a good pigtail! Just looking at photos of guys from that time makes me wonder: How long is it since you needed a haircut?  
 Now believe it or not, the tale told at right, **Ted's Downfall**, is true...and...believe it or not, the two boys went to Slade!

*T'was in the town of Angledool, down by the Narran's side,  
 Lived this fellow by the name of Ted—with his kids and blushing bride.  
 Now Ted—he brewed a "Jollop" of which he was justly proud,  
 A home-made, sure - fire remedy that stood out from the crowd.  
 It would purge the toughest blockage from horse or sheep or cow,  
 It was useful too—in smaller dose—on dog and goat and sow.  
 It was good for shining silver—gave brass a burnished gleam,  
 A remedy for coughs and colds—and an antiseptic cream.  
 As an all-round embrocation, it was known far and wide...  
 But it once was Teddy's downfall—that cannot be denied!  
 For Teddy had two sturdy sons—through the township known well,  
 Though angelic both to look at—they raised all kinds of Hell!  
 Both were in their early teens, when they devised a plan—  
 A fiendish stunt—a cruel joke—to take down their Old Man.  
 Now at that time—in Angledool—as in many towns outback—  
 The mode of sanitation was a "long drop" down the track.  
 One day when Ted was occupied, in the office sorting mail,  
 They fastened down the dunny lid with a sturdy six-inch nail.  
 Then wandered in all innocent—as innocent could be—  
 Presented Teddy with a mug: "Pa—would you like a cuppa tea?"  
 No prizes now for guessing what ELSE was in the brew,  
 A tot of "Jollop" big enough to purge an Old Man Roo!  
 Then down the back the rascals sped with barely-concealed glee,  
 And chose a handy vantage point beneath a shady tree.  
 Minutes later, Ted arrived—with urgent, desperate haste...  
 His belt unhooked—his strides undone—he had no time to waste!  
 He hurried with pants half-mast...and tried to raise the lid...  
 And louder came the chuckles from where the two boys hid.  
 His anguished yell was heard for miles...he tugged and tugged in vain...  
 With belly bubbling loudly, he doubled up in pain...  
 Then out the back he stumbled...he staggered twenty steps—and then—  
 The fearful "Jollop" did its work...and he squatted like a hen.  
 From the bushes came a chorus: "You dirty, rude old man!  
 Go and use the bloody dunny!"—Then for the scrub they ran!  
 Now that was many years ago—since then, the boys have grown,  
 To fine young men—now married—with children of their own.  
 Still they visit their Old Man, and reminisce o'er things they did...  
 And recall the day—with tears of mirth—when they fastened down the lid!*

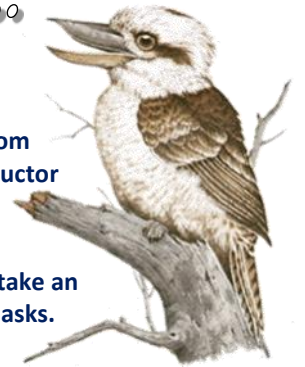
*Ted's Downfall* is from Raymond Hammond's poems of opal and the bush. *Digging Rainbows* © 2004

## And now, to jest for just a moment...

**What did the inflatable teacher say to the inflatable naughty student, from the inflatable school?  
 "Not only did you let me down, you let yourself down, and the whole school down!"**

**Concerned about fitness in my mid 40s, I enrolled in an aerobics class. To my dismay I walked into a room filled with much younger women and decided to combat my nervousness with humour telling the instructor I was there to do my postnatal exercises. She gave me an appraising look. "How old is your baby?"  
 "Twenty-six," I replied.**

**A Polish immigrant goes to the Department of Motor Vehicles to apply for a driver's license. He has to take an eye test. They show him a card with the letters CZWIXNOSTACZ. "Can you read this?" the optician asks.  
 "Read it?" the Polish guy replies, "Heck, I know the guy."**



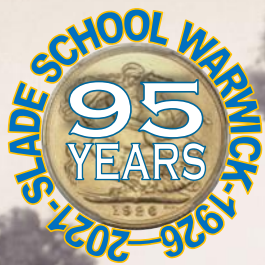
**Saturday, November 7  
 11.00 AM FOR LUNCH**

**2020  
 DATE**

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# Scouting at Slade, they blazed the trail...

## SLADE SCOUTS 1956: Lord Baden-Powell would be proud



**AN ARTICLE IN THE WARWICK DAILY NEWS DATED 10 NOVEMBER, 2014 named the Glennie Heights Scouts one of the largest scout groups on the Darling Downs and as having played a key role in the history of the Rose City. In December 2014, this modern day group of more than 60 youths celebrated 60 years of scouting with a dinner at the Slade School campus. Group leader, Rowan Cahill noted the importance of this occasion, stating at the time that the history behind the group was of great interest to him and that the scouts wished to acknowledge past members and leaders as part of this milestone celebration. Established as the 5<sup>th</sup> Warwick/Slade School Scouts in 1954, the Glennie Heights Scouts group was renamed and moved to Barnes Park in the 1960s. In 2014, although scouting across the country was in decline, the Glennie Heights group was continuing to grow. It was the only remaining scout group in Warwick with about 65 youth members and 15 adult members.**

**The photo above marks a landmark year for Slade, 1956 being Eddie Prince's first year on staff. Qualified as a teacher before his military service, and not long out of the British Army, where he achieved the rank of Major, he was exceptionally well equipped to step into a role as scout leader. He had prior extensive experience of scouting having served in a voluntary capacity as Assistant Commissioner of the Scout Movement in his home town of Barrow, Lancashire. Towards the end of his summer holidays in 1947, while he was a candidate for his Wood Badge course at Gilwell Park in Essex, Lord Baden-Powell's son, Peter, who had recently served in the Rhodesian Constabulary, was part of his eight man patrol. Eddie's superb scrounging expertise and organisational skills proved a harbinger for things to come for him at Slade where they were put to the test after he was appointed Headmaster in 1974.**

### The 5th Warwick Scout Group

Scouting in Slade is an activity involving more than a quarter of the School enrolment and most of the staff. We are a Scout Group consisting of two sections, the Boy Scout Troop (aged under 15 years) and the Senior Scout Troop. Robert Horner, Rex Morrison, Clifford Jurd and Ray Martin have been Patrol Leaders of the Boy Scout Troop throughout the year and each has trained and led a patrol of eight boys. This year sets a record for the Group (and possibly for Queensland) in that all thirty-two boys are now at least second class. Robert Deshon, John Roberts, Stuart Breden and David Baker lead patrols of five in the Senior Troop. Their training and activities are concerned with the completion of the first class badge and qualifications for badges leading to the Queen's Scout badge.

Such a course of training in citizenship through woodcraft and outdoor pursuits requires a large team of instructors, examiners and administrators.

Mr. Dan is chairman of the Group Committee, Mrs. Locke looks after the finances, Mrs. G. Taylor is secretary, Mr. G. Taylor is badge secretary and he has run a course for the Stalker Badge, Mr. K. Taylor has examined for badges at the Senior Scout Camp, Father Frost has organised and instructed all First-aid Tests and ordered, issued and accounted for uniform, Mr. de Garis has run a Messenger Badge course and Mr. Prince with Mr. Nussey's assistance has organised the weekly meetings for the two Troops and the two annual six-day camps. All other staff members have generously taken on extra work to allow the Scoutmaster's time at camp, and Mrs. Kelly and the domestic staff have arranged numerous rations for large and small camping and hiking parties. Matron's work is of course no easier with so much adventurous activity going on throughout the year. Behind us too, is the local Boy Scouts Association and Mr. Phipps, the District Commissioner, without whose help we would be unable to function efficiently.

It is impossible to estimate the value of Scouting at Slade, but we who are concerned with it are sure that the effort and work involved are helping to produce better citizens and supplementing that moral and spiritual training which is distinctive of Church Schools.

E.P.

### THE SENIOR SCOUT CAMP

"But Skip, I had it cut on Monday," said Peter when told that for his Backwoodsman's Badge he must first "catch your hare." He did not manage to catch one but showing more initiative than was comfortable for Skip, he borrowed a shot-gun and came back with two pigeons which tasted delicious after cooking in clay.

Meals without utensils are messy but good fun, and the same can be said for dealing with such emergencies as cliff rescues and imaginary sudden floods when water must be boiled fifteen feet above the ground in trees.

KINAWAH

From the solidly built watch tower, (a pioneer Badge project) on the hill, all approaches to the camp in the valley were well guarded and no inspecting commissioner could sneak up unawares: and the firm foot-bridge across the creek was another project of the Pioneering team. This bridge was really useful and almost a necessity.

Few of us had experienced the fear and thrill of finding one's way entirely alone and in the dark across a mile of unknown country with only the stars to show the course, but to do so was another step towards the Pioneer Badge; and what wonders we envisaged when briefed by Commando Wyatt for our Venturer Badge journey in pairs across young mountains, through thick rain forest (if we could find the one hidden path) and on to the deserted farmhouse above the dam.

It is satisfying to fall asleep on the peak of a hill protected from the wind by a bivouac of leaves and lashed spars, and to wake at dawn and see the sleeping camp below, the camp and bivouac both planned and built with one's cobbles.

A camp-fire, a dead forest giant ablaze where dreams of the future are seen in the flames: an absorbing half hour of bush lore and bush craft from Bob, the shepherd: John Buchan adventures of intrigue, guile, heart and muscle: darkness, "black as the pit from pole to pole" in the gold mine where an old bottle or empty packet of detonators were souvenirs of last century, and stalactites of greater antiquity: dark evenings in the shearers' quarters acquiring those parts of knowledge of camp craft, pioneering and venturing which books, maps, compasses, ropes and scoutmasters can give: and the awareness of nature which comes only from full days and nights spent close to it, the crack of dawn, cold nip of sunrise, the smells of wood and water, earth and fire: winter sun on sweating shoulders: muscles pleasantly aching and stretching and growing: deepening colours and darkening skies, and deep sleep—these are memories of our camp at Rokeby.





### Eddie Prince 1923 - 2011

The picture of the 1956 Slade Scout Troop and accompanying story on the previous page absolutely seemed to call for a snippet on Slade's longest serving staff member, Eddie Prince.

As we have noted overleaf, his first year at Slade was 1956. It is almost certain that when he left the land of his birth he had little idea that he would be effectively giving the rest of his life to a foreign school that was to become his home, his employment and his lifelong passion. Although it is also almost certainly the case that not

everyone agreed with him 100% when it came to some of the strategies he put in place as headmaster in later years, when he was fighting to keep the school open and on a sound financial footing, nobody is likely to argue that he could not have done more in his efforts to achieve this end.

Eddie, however, came from solid British stock and never faltered in his resolve or loyalty to Slade and it is for this that we remember him. Slade was primarily established as a facility where boys from the country and closer to Warwick could board as students and receive an education with a solid Anglican focus. Eddie Prince's tenure at Slade, 1956-1990 bridged two eras. He recalled listening as a child in England, sharing a headset with his sister, to a report of Amy Johnson arriving in Australia from her round-the-world solo air journey from Britain in 1930. As the son of a grocer's assistant (England was long referred to as a nation of shopkeepers) Eddie was born in 1923 in Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, learned to bake bread, won a scholarship to the local Grammar School and was accepted at St John's Teacher Training College in York in 1940.

He was a volunteer for the Royal Armoured Corps in 1942 and was transferred to the infantry in 1943, seeing active service against the Japanese until the end of the war. His last duties in the Army involved internal security in India in the dying years of the British Raj.

In 1947 he was demobilised, taught in a number of Lancashire schools and then came, by invitation, to Slade in Warwick. Hesitant post-war Britain, some apartheid experience in South Africa and stories from forty years of association with education and the Anglican Church of Australia fill the pages of "Yes Sir" the book written by Eddie and published in 1998. A few remaining copies of this book are still available for purchase if you are interested.

In 1974 Eddie was appointed Headmaster of Slade at which time, confronted with the results of the preceding years of crippling drought (remember that country-based clientele that was central to the school's establishment?), the abrupt closure of St Catharine's and questions of certainty about the long term future of Slade, set about reducing debt, securing funding for students from remote Australian communities and overseas and doing his best to preserve what he could of St Catharine's assets held in trust by the Anglican Church. He leaned his shoulder against the wall, so to speak, and never wavered from this purpose.

He relocated what buildings he could from the now disused girls'

campus including the two newest classroom blocks built in the late 1960s, the home science block and, to the undying gratitude of St Catharine's past students, young and old, the iconic Assembly Hall.

He personally manned information booths at overseas education expos disseminating information about Slade and securing new enrolments. He modernised the kitchen facilities at Slade and, when St Catharine's campus was eventually sold by the Anglican Church, with the proceeds of the sale, ensured that a brand new dormitory was built to accommodate the girls who were now part of Slade, entirely appropriately named Eddie Prince House.

Those of us who vividly remember Eddie from our years at school surely have a ton of memories to share about him. Many no doubt feel that he brought more than a little of his acerbic British Officer persona to school with him but no one will doubt his sense of profound loss and disappointment at what was thought to be the final closure of the school he gave the most productive years of his life to.

It is certain that he would be deeply grateful that the campus he worked at and loved for so long is again being put to use for the purpose of educating and moulding young minds.

"Yes Sir", Mr Prince, we thank you for your service and salute you in gratitude for your dedication to the school that is now our surviving common bond!



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# Those wonderfully rich PNG connections...



As we have mentioned many times the PNG contingent that was part of our fabulously successful celebrations in October 2018 had to jump through a great many hoops to satisfy Dept of Immigration and Border Security requirements to join us. From the time celebrations were announced the girls met regularly together to plan, organise and fundraise and frankly, they showed the rest of us what can be achieved when you care enough to make things happen. And when they came, they didn't come empty handed. The custom made, stunning wall plaque at right was presented to the Association at the lunch and took our collective breaths away. Vaili Kekedo (Vai Sisa 1966-68) took on much of the coordinating for all the girls, quite a task when not all of them have internet access. She did an outstanding job and her contribution to the souvenir booklet was one of the handful of former PNG students' accounts of their experiences at boarding school that made this one-of-a-kind publication so special.



*Carolyn Mom believes this photo is one where Koi's relatives attended to measure everyone up for the October 2018 celebration uniforms that they wore for the occasion. From left to right: Dawn Tam, Emily George Taule, Catharine (Gongi) Simon, Dawa Solomon, Petronella Akuru Kavanamur, Theresa Ioa Heni, Mabel Willie Gavera, Sibona Lohia, Koi Rima, Legu Bate Lee standing behind Koi, Vaili and Carolyn. The lady obscured in the far left corner and the one with the ukulele next to Petronella are Koi's cousins who sewed the very beautiful and distinctive traditionally designed reunion uniforms. There was a lot going on that day but the girls just blew us all away with all the effort they had put in.*



## Senior Class 1964 with Miss Cant

**BACK ROW:** Lesley Johnson, Ann Gardner, Flora Reis, Jennifer Baker-Finch, Miss Cant, Robyn Stephenson, Mary Roberts, Betty Reardon, Roslyn Fraser, Jennifer Reid, Madeleine Lo

**FRONT ROW:** Mary Bagita, Marion Knowles, Rosemary Fox, Jill Gardner, Penny Jones, Cathy Richards, Sue Coles, Sandra Stehr *and the dogs*

# Girl Guides at CEGS Warwick, a proud Company



**A** **S BEST CAN BE DETERMINED**, the opportunity to be part of Guides and Brownies at our school was offered between 1928 and 1952 with the last recorded Guide Notes appearing in the 1952 St Catharine's Chronicle. During that period, guiding enjoyed honoured status in the life of the school, gathering momentum in Warwick during the years of World War II when guides undertook training in First Aid and Home Nursing, instruction in tent pitching and Morse Code. Proficiency badges were earned in swimming and lifesaving. Older guides knitted socks, the younger ones hemmed handkerchiefs for soldiers serving overseas and efforts were made to collect clothing for refugee children. Rallies, campfires, guide singalongs and participation in church parades and Anzac Day marches were an important part of guiding camaraderie and our school's history. Guiding was an optional, extra-curricular activity operating for much of its time under strict wartime austerity measures and presumably this is why very few photos are available to us but several cups and honours were awarded to St Catharine's Guides at numerous rallies.

A peek at the yearbook celebrating 50 years of 1<sup>st</sup> Warwick Guides in the possession of Ann Henning, nee Gardner, reveals some of the origins of guiding in Warwick and also of how staff and students at the Church of England Girls' School and later St Catharine's formed a key part of it. Ann and Jill Gardner's mother, Val Lucas, was a student at St Catharine's around 1937-1940 and a guide leader for a time. Val was later District Commissioner for Guides when Barbara Brown-Beresford's father, Bernard Stuart Brown-Beresford, was Chairman of the Scouts District Commission while he was Senior Sergeant in Charge of the Warwick Police District and later promoted to Sub Inspector in Brisbane.

The following, captioned **FIRST DECEMBER, 1928 ENROLMENT OF COMPANY PICTURESQUE CEREMONY**, harks back to the start.

*An enrolment with colours of the First Warwick Company of Girl Guides took place on Saturday afternoon. Members of the Warwick Association, the Mayoress (Mrs Connolly), Mrs Deane-Butcher, Mrs Eagen, Mrs King, Mrs Stephenson, Mrs Moncrieff Scott, Mrs Welburn, Mrs Oakeley, Misses Phipps, Smith, Burton, Deacon, Wilkinson, Irwin, Spreadborough and Wheatcroft were present to witness the first enrolment.*

Several of these names are familiar threads woven throughout the history of our schools. They are Stephenson, Smith, Miss Florence Phipps, CEGS Headmistress and Miss Elsie Burton, CEGS sports mistress. Elsie Burton left at the end of 1928 to pursue her vocation with the SSA, returning to St Catharine's in 1965 as Sister Lois, Sister in Charge of the School. More familiar names followed. Captain Rooney was Miriam Rooney, later Sister Rachel who maintained her association with the guiding movement even after she was professed.

*The Commissioner, Mrs G Neal, enrolled Kathleen Watson PL and Nancy Millar Sec. Wattle Patrol: Ethel Gilliam, Gladys Mogridge – Kookaburra Patrol; Clarice Williams, Dorothy Millar – Blackbird Patrol; Jean Hyde and Wilga Morrison – Koala Patrol; Iris Pickering and Dorothy White – Magpie Patrol...The colours were marched on. The Colour Party being Lieut Drew, Guiders G Williams and P White; after which the guides marched into the horseshoe formation. Captain Rooney presented each guide, after making the promise, receiving the badge and being welcomed to the sisterhood, each leader was presented with a patrol emblem, on the Patrol Flag, and given the advice to prove herself a worthy leader. Then came the enrolment of the Brownies. A prayer for the King was said by the Rev. Mr Neal, and the Guide Prayer by Rev. Rycroft. The whole company then sang the National Anthem.*

With heavy hitters such as these listed at the outset, it is little surprise the movement got off to a fine start. The next year, in 1929 a notation in the school magazine read:

*During the year, the Guides and Brownies have made rapid progress. There are more second-class Guides. The girls are becoming more interested in the work for badges. We congratulate Miss Smith on her success in gaining her Captain's Warrant. Mrs Moncrieffe-Scott kindly presented the Company Flag which was dedicated to Mrs Neal, last year. B Rowland has been made First Lieutenant. As a Company, the guides attended the service at St Mark's on Anzac Day...On Ascension Day, after a service in the Church, our Annual School picnic was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Many visitors were present. The Guides and Brownies used this opportunity for outdoor work.*



CEGS Brownies 1933



PRESENTATION OF THE UNIT FLAG TO ST CATHARINE'S, 1959. Left to Right: Meta Williams, State Commissioner, Unknown, Sister Rachel, Lorna Church, District Commissioner and Miss Tilly, First Guide Captain in Warwick then Trefoil Member.

Miriam Rooney, here aged 22, as an attendant at her younger sister, Madeline's wedding 1923. Dorothy, remembered by many of us as Mrs Gillespie or Gebby, Miriam and Madeline Rooney lived in the Toolburra area near Warwick. Miriam was awarded a Gold medal for accountancy achievement in August 1927. She worked as an accountant at the Warwick Daily News and taught Sunday School at St Mark's, one of her pupils being Adrian Charles, Slade boy and later Bishop in the Diocese of Brisbane. 1927-45 Miriam belonged to many community organisations including the WWII Comforts Fund. In 1947 as a novice, she passed the Australian College of Theology examination with First Class Honours and was professed as Rachel, 30 March, 1948. She was Sister in Charge at St Catharine's 1959 –1964 acquiring a number of additional buildings for the school and travelling extensively through south west Queensland and northern New South Wales securing new enrolments. In 1965 Sister Rachel went on to be Sister in Charge at St Aidan's, Corinda in Brisbane 1965–1971 acquiring more buildings and enrolments there too. She died in 1975. 2020 is the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her birth.



# Exemplars of Excellence in Guiding at St Catharine's



**THE 1948 ST CATHARINE'S CHRONICLE, TITLED THE SAGA,** showed a photo of this group, **2<sup>nd</sup> Warwick Guide Company.** Acting Captain of the Company was Miss Fay Hesp, Company Leader was Maureen Wormwell. Patrol Leaders were Toni Brace, Margaret Jackson, Pat Dent and Jennifer Smith. Patrol Seconds were Wilma Donovan, Barbara Page, Beverley Gordon and Norma Porter.

**Back Row Left to Right:** Unknown, Marriane Haase, Thea Lawrence, Pat Martyn, Pat Dent

**Middle Row Left to Right:** Unknown, Margaret Jackson, Unknown, Alice Armstrong, Maureen Wormwell, Unknown

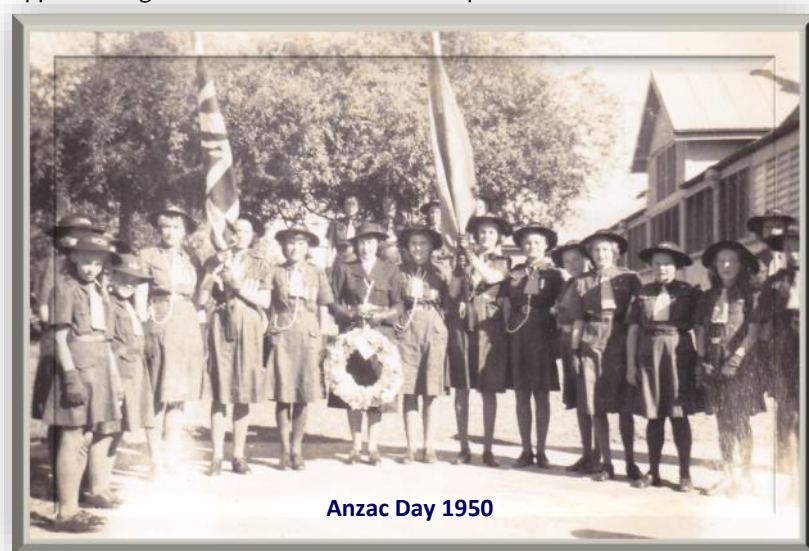
**Front Row Left to Right:** Karen Langford, Beverley Gordon, Lillian Cooper, Miss Fay Hesp, Ann Jackson, Unknown.

The **3<sup>rd</sup> Warwick Guide Company,** on the other hand, which we have no picture of, won the coveted Commissioner's Shield and secured the equally prestigious State wide Pike Cup in 1948.

This Company was made up of: Captain Miss Faye Bunton, Acting Lieutenant Cecily Davies. Patrol Leaders were Joan McDonald, Beverley Johnston, Eileen Poulsen and Betty Tweedie.

Other highlights noted in The Saga 1948 included the presentation of a book prize by Mrs Carstens, Guide Week with a Garden Party, Campfire, Church Parade, Procession and an Anzac Day Appearance.

Food parcels were sent to Britain, donations were forwarded to the Martyrs Memorial School in New Guinea, Guide Headquarters Development Fund, the Blanket Fund, Toy Appeal and Children's Holiday Appeal. The guides also collected used stamps and tin foil for the British and Foreign Bible Society and clothing for the Brisbane City Mission.



Anzac Day 1950



Miss Bunton and Miss Hesp

Guides were urged to remember that after leaving school they were still Guides even though they might no longer be wearing a uniform.

A Guide is a good citizen in whatever walk of life her footsteps lead.



Girl Guide Companies each had a Captain and at least one Lieutenant. To be either, the person needed to pass certain tests and then be awarded a warrant to hold that position. A Lieutenant was sometimes a Senior Guide who had been successful in qualifying through tests and proficiency badges. Within each Company of 20-30 girls there were 3 or 4 patrols of Guides, each with a Patrol Leader.

Brownie Packs were led by a Brown Owl and 1 or 2 Tawny Owls. Girls were organised into groups called Sixes.

In Warwick, for most of this period (it kept changing):

1<sup>st</sup> Warwick was a town company who met at Guide Hut on Sat afternoons

2<sup>nd</sup> Warwick and later 3<sup>rd</sup> Warwick were the CEGS/St Catharine's Companies. They met at the school on Monday afternoons.

4<sup>th</sup> Warwick was another town company that later joined up with 1<sup>st</sup> Company.

6<sup>th</sup> Warwick started at PGC in 1950.

Mrs Neal, and later Mrs Carstens and Mrs Gardner (Val Lucas a late 1930s old girl), all with strong St Catharine's connections, served as District Commissioners, this being a uniformed position, assuming leadership of all the units and responsibility for the training of leaders (Guiders). A woman of high repute in the community was usually invited to be Commissioner, especially if she had some experience in Guiding. All three of these women took to it with zeal.

Dorothy Carstens' son, David recalls there being two guide huts in Warwick named Tilly Hut (see previous page) and Dorothy Carstens Hut.

The Local Association of Girl Guides was a committee mostly of mothers, who raised funds, coordinated events, arranged the upkeep of the Hut or meeting rooms, arranged publicity etc. Members did not wear uniforms.

While requesting information on guiding at St Catharine's in order to put this article together, those responding who had been involved in it at school recalled with great fondness the time they spent camping, campfire cooking and singalongs and their contribution to the war effort. Chelmer Roots especially mentioned learning to rough it and remembered doughboys as a favourite food.



## **GIRL GUIDE MOTTO BE PREPARED**

*This means that Guides are ready to cope with anything that might come their way. The left handshake – This is the way members of the Movement greet each other. The left hand is the one nearest the heart, so symbolising friendship.*

# Valé

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

**Faye Bunton 1926-2018**

BUNTON, Faye Norma, late of Ashgrove, passed away peacefully 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2018 aged 92 years. Elder sister of Dawn and Pat and aunt of Christine (dec'd) and Sue and their families. A funeral service for Faye was held at St John's Anglican Church, Wardell Street, Enoggera Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Details for this notice are from the Courier Mail online dated 13/02/2018. FN Bunton was a member of St Catharine's staff 1944-1953 where she soon became guide leader. She took over leadership of the group 1944 after Lieutenant Bernice Harding left mid-winter and continued in this role until part way through 1952 at which time the guides programme came to an end. A Neal House mistress, she is still remembered fondly by those who were at school during her time there. Perhaps surprisingly, since this period takes in those tough times of World War II, there are quite a few still surviving among our ranks in both schools from those years. It would seem that tough times have a way of creating tough/resilient people! From family details contained in the notice above it would appear that, like many others we remember from among teachers on staff at our schools, that Miss Bunton was yet another who gave her life to her chosen career, a thing that we were blithely unaware of during our long ago school days.

**Fay Haase 1930-1986**


HAASE, Fay Rachel, nee Hesp, died in 1986 aged 55 years. Fay Hesp was a St Catharine's staff member 1947 - 1948, Crothers and Barnes House Mistress and Captain of 2<sup>nd</sup> Warwick Guide Company in 1948.

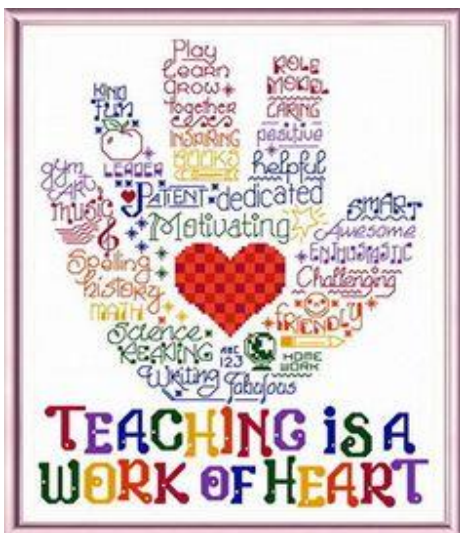
*Life is a song – sing it. Life is a game – play it.  
Life is a challenge – meet it. Life is a dream – realise it.  
Life is a sacrifice – offer it. Life is love – enjoy it.” Sai Baba Sathya*

Philippa Wetherell is a former member of the SSA who taught at St Catharine's, then Slade 1967-1970 and PNG for a time after that. She is an ordained Anglican priest who has worked in remote communities in and around the Eyre Peninsular. Although “retired” and now advanced to that elite fourscore community she still ministers in her local Parish in Melbourne and volunteers at a community kitchen. Recently, thinking to put together something appropriate for next day's parish service and to give some of those “locked in and locked out” 70+ parishioners a little something to chuckle at, she composed the following 29 April, 2020.

- Cursed be my spindly spine causing me to have to lie on hard floor, knees awry compelled now to be supine.
- Cursed be prolonged pandemic streaming, emailing, zooming, more, bulging disc, protruding sore, sitting, isolated, is systemic.
- Cursed be the ageing vertebrae, sagging muscles all in slumber inactive to support the lumbar naught but pain can I foresee.
- Cursed be the wretched law proclaimed but for the nation's good, shutdown, lockout, long have stood loss of gym I do deplore.
- Cursed be loss of walking out in the Parklands, Yarra Trail Forgoing joy and to inhale Autumn air so fresh, no law to flout
- Cursed be the need to lie if truth be told, I shall be bold. to exclude sitting and lying, both intrude, STANDING, surely, is but gold!

Lament for a Lumbering Lumpty





**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 forefathers*



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.



# St Catharine's/Slade School Facebook

Our Past Students' Facebook page is 371 members strong as of June 3, 2020...

## *Possible August 15 Reunion in the works...*

### **JOHN FARQUHAR ✂ CONVERSATION STARTER ✂ 25 MAY**

Well it looks like Friday 14-08-20 has been gazetted a public holiday for The Ekka and the Premier has instructed us to 'go west' and spend so I guess that almost makes it official. Would it be fair to say that Roma would suit the majority of would be participants? giving us the best options for accommodation etc. If there are no / not many objections I will ring a couple of pubs and see if we can organise a venue for 15-08-20. Can someone let me know where the last Roma 'get together' was held. That may be the logical place to enquire with. JF Top of Form

**Laurence Boyd** Typical. Roma getting priority over poor old Charleville.

**Barry Dixon** I'd vote for Charleville or St George

**Rick Wiseman** We can seek out a suitable venue as we get a bit more certainty around the numbers we are likely to get. I think it sounds like it might be pretty well supported.

**Frank Mckellar** I'll go anywhere, St George for a great river, parks, BBQing the river

**Paul Holland** We had a reunion in Roma several years ago, about three years before the St George reunion. It was at the time Basset's winery closed. The 'Noons' will remember it well. We held it at the "Library Coffee Shop" owned by a St Catharine's girl, since closed. We had a great time and I managed to get a few bottles of the best port I've ever tasted from the winery before it closed.

**Rick Wiseman** I think we should lock into Roma as it's just a bit easier to reach from Brisbane and Gold and Sunny Coast even from Townsville its only 10.5 hours when Charleville is 12.

**Rick Wiseman** We can seek out a suitable venue as we get a bit of more certainty around the numbers we are likely to get. I think it sounds like it might be pretty well supported.

**Barry Dixon** You won't please them all so go with it & anyone who wants to go will. 😊



# Brigalow, Billy Cans and Bottle Trees

Joan Clothier White published 2010

## *Chapter 4: Clearing the Land*

ONCE THE FAMILY was more or less settled, Dad turned his attention to what was for him the most important order of business—improving the land.

Another of the terms of tenure in taking up the selection was the condition that the brigalow scrub had to be cleared. One of the significant primary reasons behind the push to divide up the land for selection by ballot was this end.

Governments of all persuasions seem to thrive on imposing the filling in of forms by their hapless constituents. This was no exception to the rule and represented yet another prime example of bureaucracy alive and well and proceeding full steam ahead.

In this instance, a permit to destroy trees needed to be applied for and obtained before work could begin even though the conditions of occupancy of the land were contingent upon this point. Such official requests are seldom granted on the instant but eventually Dad had his permit in hand.

With the gleam in his eye sustained by his vision of things to come, he set about clearing the timber.

On the creek flats at the lower end of the property, trees were selectively ring-barked. On this part of the land the larger trees were chiefly poplar box, river gums, coolabahs and casuarinas (a family of trees that includes bull oak, she oak and belah). Dad kept some of the native red-flowered small-leafed baubins as shade for stock. Baubins was noteworthy to us for the delicately flavoured syrupy clear resin that the trunk exuded when the bark was bruised or cut. This was bush chewing-gum, Dad told us and, since we never had any of the bought kind, it filled the bill admirably.

Another shrub of interest to us was to be found near the middle of the property. Here wild limes grew in a scrubby little grove and, while the raw fresh fruit had a rather strong-tasting, tart flavour, Mum made it into marmalade and a refreshing cordial. This fruit was nothing like the limes that are found in supermarkets today. They were very thin skinned, small—perhaps a little larger than an olive—and quite firm, being all but impossible to squeeze like regular citrus fruit. The seeds and skin had a distinctive astringent quality.

This hardy native lime is the variety known as desert lime and is often found growing in brigalow scrub country. Harvesting the fruit might have been a tedious chore but for the simple solution we devised. Instead of picking each lime individually we laid bed sheets under the trees then shook the trunks vigorously gathering up the fallout in the cloth. We then bundled and toted our booty home to be processed. To use the flesh, the fruit had to be minced up first which required some effort.

The lime grove was left where it was. It more than likely would have been too small and resilient to be cleared with heavy machinery and, in any case, represented no more than a few square yards of usable land. We made good use of the fruit each year and grew to welcome the contribution it made to our diet.

Nowadays with the recent interest in bush tucker, plants like this that most European settlers once never knew about, have come into their own. I have wondered many times if some of the things that once grew on our land and other places like it might have held the key to unlocking some medical or other mystery. I don't suppose I shall ever find out but perhaps our children and grandchildren might.

The ultimate aim of clearing the land was that of grazing the cattle that would become our main income earner, or, as we always termed it, our “bread and butter”. A greater body of sweeter pasture grass was the desired outcome.

Dad's compromised health as the result of his war service meant that he was no longer physically capable of the demands of hard labouring that had been his stock-in-trade before enlistment. He had carefully weighed up all the pros and cons and was forced to the conclusion that raising cattle for beef was less labour intensive than other options such as farming, dairying or raising sheep.

Throughout our childhood Dad spent considerable periods away in Brisbane's Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital. Here he was treated for a range of problems which he chiefly blamed on contracting amoebic dysentery in the Middle-East.

As well as this he had been wounded twice while on active service. The shrapnel that embedded itself in his upper back—during the conflict at Merdjayoun in Syria on the first of these occasions, in June 1941—remained lodged there for the rest of his life. The second injury occurred in the battle of El Alamein after which he suffered what today would have been readily accepted as post traumatic stress disorder. In those days, however, real men did

not complain about such things. They were simply expected to resume their normal lives, somehow forgetting the horrors that they had seen and been party to, and be grateful that they were spared the fate of so many of their comrades in arms.

At various stages of his life Dad applied unsuccessfully for a TPI (Totally and Permanently Incapacitated) Pension. His own father, Isaac George, had been granted one after suffering gas poisoning in France in World War One and Dad hoped this dispensation might offer him some measure of future security.

Time after time, Dad was turned down in seeking his TPI Pension and finally was forced to accept that he would have to make the best of things whether he was fit for work or not.

Like so many returned servicemen, Dad was “not a well man” and the whole family had to accept the inevitable, knuckle down and make the best of things too. Many was the time he was heard to remark with some irony that, as long as the government kept stalling on this issue and others just like it, that sooner or later it would cease to be a problem. Sure as sundown the applicant could be depended upon to breathe his last at which time, *voilà!*—the difficulty would be resolved.

Now, aged fifty, Dad was faced with a career challenge that might have daunted many men half his age. He was heard to mention in later years that one of his life’s regrets was that the opportunity of his brigalow block had not come his way when he was ten or twenty years younger. Even so, he knew this was a unique opportunity to develop country with far more potential as grazing land than the sandier, forestry type of country that he had been trying to subsist on at Yuleba. He bit the bullet, took on the challenge and prepared to give it his best shot.

About half of the new selection was natural brigalow scrub which promised rich black soil, ripe with possibilities for development. No more than a few short decades ago, much of this same country had been overrun with that most insidious of introduced pests: prickly pear.

Various stories are told about how this cactus was brought to Australia. One version has it that it was needed as natural food for the cochineal insect. The extract from this insect was prized as an expensive and colourfast dye used in making the distinctive red coats worn by the British army at the time. A cochineal dye industry was planned to be established in the fledgling new colony from the days of the First Fleet. Others suggest that it was used as a hedging plant in the English style for fencing. Whatever the reason for its introduction, prickly pear soon spread rapidly and uncontrollably.

Many of the original European settlers in the area recalled their despair on return from overseas service in World War One at seeing much of the land they had left behind infested with this menace.

Stories were told of expeditions which took entire days cutting through the prickly pear to get to Juandah—later called Wandoan—or Taroom for supplies. This might be a journey of twenty-six miles or more with horses wearing breast-plates of thick leather and their riders kitted out in leather chaps for protection against the sharp spines of this invasive cactus. Thankfully, the introduction of the cactoblastis insect saw the prickly pear controlled in just ten years—far sooner than might otherwise have been anticipated.

The hall at Boonarga between Chinchilla and Brigalow on the Warrego Highway lent itself later on as a great opportunity for a history-cum-science lesson from Dad who delighted in passing on his knowledge about things he was most interested in. He told us that the Cactoblastis Memorial Hall was the only memorial in the world dedicated to an insect. At that time this was correct but there has more recently been a small monument built in the town of Dalby to celebrate this small creature which originally came from Argentina. It is still hailed as the world’s most spectacular proven success in biological control of a weed.

From time to time, one of these cactoblastis moths, characterised by pale mottled grey wings and vivid pink bodies, would be attracted to our lamps at night. Here was a great chance for Dad to expound on the fact that, but for the larvae of this modest little insect, Australia would still be in the grip of the prickly pear. It was tree-pear with the red flowers and edible fruit which often grew well above head height that had been the main problem and not so much the smaller variety with yellow flowers.

Tree-pear fruit, with the spines and fine prickles removed, was bush tucker. It could be eaten fresh or made into jam. A somewhat nettlesome episode starred this succulent food. Mum had been wanting some in order to test a new recipe and, as it was the season for it to be ripe and we were keen to try something new too, we decided on the spot to collect a few to take home.

While these practical decisions were being made by “we”, the younger fry, Dad was fully occupied nearby with a fence he was repairing. Of course we had not set out up the paddock with him equipped with the means of collecting fruit of any kind. Not to be deterred, we used Dad’s grubby canvas hat as a repository for our overflowing bounty and proudly took it home to Mum.

This was using the *make do* clause of the Boston Millionaires’ motto but Dad was far from impressed when next he came to put on his hat. The fine short hair-like prickles were almost undetectable to the naked eye and wasted no time in embedding themselves in his scalp proving almost impossible to see when it came to getting them out.

A crew of scrub-pullers, the James brothers, was engaged to begin levelling the brigalow, the greater part of which had to be cleared within twelve months from when Dad took up his selection under the terms of the settlement scheme.

The promise of rich pastureland, as yet in the future, was a huge incentive as well as being a government requirement for settling this land. The soil had been gradually enriched over untold centuries by the accumulated fall of leaf mulch as well as the natural infusion of nitrogen from the roots of the brigalow. Like all acacias, brigalow is a legume and has a typical wattle flower although I don't remember that it bloomed every year.

Before the scrub was pulled, Dad took us on walking treks through the native forest to see first-hand what it was like in its untouched state. We listened dutifully to the songs of birds that would no longer have a habitat to live in once it was gone. Red-capped robins, whip birds and blue wrens frolicked and sang in the bush and we were introduced to the prickly wait-a-while and wild Irishman growing in the vine scrub section along our south-western boundary line.

Dad pointed out scrub-turkeys' mounds and bower birds' nests which he told us we might never again see in the wild. Nature's treasure hunters, satin bower birds adorn their bowers with all kinds of eye-catching odds and ends. In them was inevitably to be found a plethora of large sun-bleached snail shells incorporated in the décor. We never saw any of these snails living but their less destructible outer shells provided ample evidence of their presence.

We had heard stories of finding watches, rings and other jewellery in these bowers but none were to be found anywhere near here. Nonetheless, the fact that western civilisation had come close was plain to see by the number of pieces of broken glass that glittered mysteriously from the birds' secret caches.

At the time we tried to take in all the words that Dad was saying as he explained to us that these things would shortly disappear but now I realise what a privilege it was to see it all before it was destroyed and that Dad cared enough to make certain that we saw it for ourselves.

As we undertook these nature rambles, we vainly searched the tree tops for koalas or evidence of koalas. We were reliably informed that they were native to the area. Bartlett Jerrard, on nearby "Yeovil", was the son of one of the original European settlers on this land and he recounted to us how he had made some handy cash as a young man trapping the furry marsupials since there was then a ready market for their pelts.

Regrettably, on our place we never saw a live koala although Dad did find a couple of dead ones in those early years. They were big old bucks and led Dad to suppose that perhaps there were no longer enough of them left here to keep breeding and guarantee survival of the species—even if there had been a suitable food source still available to them.

Into this virgin brigalow came the scrub pulling crew. Two powerful bulldozers, working together a short distance apart, thundered, clanked and growled side by side, snorting out thick diesel smoke and dragging a pair of heavy loops behind them. It was these loops that did all the damage. One was a thick steel cable and the other a massive steel chain with links each easily the length of a man's forearm.

Both machines circumnavigated the standing timber working from the outside in towards the middle in ever decreasing circles. The chain and cable uprooted the trees as they went and very little was left standing where they had been.

Nevertheless some trees proved impossible to defeat. The majestic old Dawson gums and some of the largest bottle trees—now recognised as companion trees to the brigalow—stubbornly stood their ground against the onslaught of man and machine and I distinctly remember the peculiar, pungent tang of bruised wilga leaves and branches.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century brigalow figures on our endangered native species list and not just this tree alone. A number of other plants, birds and animals that are companion species in native brigalow forests are also listed as endangered. It should be acknowledged that actions that could easily be viewed as environmental vandalism by today's standards were in fact being executed exactly in accordance with government policy and directives at the time.

Bauhinia, belah, sandalwood and ironbark all surrendered before the heavy machinery as it cut a relentless swathe through the scrub. Native yams were unearthed by the score and with the timber cleared, the gullies, undulations and melon holes in the land were clearly revealed. The heavy black soil had high clay content and the melon holes held water for some time after rain. We also found wild cucumber vines growing. The fruit of these was edible but had tough, horny, mottled skins.

A few groves of standing timber were preserved as shade for stock in strategic places as well as some of the biggest bottle trees. We were surprised to see and feel the oddly aromatic, moist, spongy texture of the pith inside the trunks of the smaller bottle tree specimens that fell victim to the bull-dozers and their chains.

Ludwig Leichhardt had remarked on the distinctive shape of these trees when first exploring the area in the nineteenth century and landholders tended to leave them until needed for emergency cattle fodder in future drought times. The fibrous pith may not have been a favourite food for stock or allow them to fatten but it served the purpose

of keeping them alive when there was no pasture available.

With the spectre of drought never far removed from those who make a living from the land, one is moved to draw the obvious parallel between the livestock and those who struggle to be responsible for them. So often, in drought time, living on the land is more a matter of surviving a dirt-scrabble existence than one of prosperity.

Dad always maintained that when it came to calculating income projections for budgetary and other purposes that it was wise to take into account that it is more often than not the good year that is the exception and that dry years were more likely to be the norm.

He noted that statistically it was reasonable for a drought to be expected every seven years or so and that this needed to be kept in mind when looking at average rainfall records. It should be pointed out that this was many years before the El Nino weather event and the whole SOI (Southern Oscillation Index) pattern was ever identified or talked about.

This was also his argument against overstocking but has proved to be prophetic in some of the protracted drought periods that have ensued from then until now. He also claimed that it was wise to factor in about 15% error when planning ahead.

Many might consider this thinking to be erring on the side of caution but this was the way, Dad maintained, you needed to conduct a business on the land without running things right down to the wire. Those who have followed his advice have subsequently proved it to be not too far wrong and have used it to their advantage in their own projections continuing until the present day.

As the scrub was pulled the animal and bird life was forced into the middle of the disappearing standing timber. On the final day, it was accepted practice for the scrub pullers to come equipped with shot-guns to perhaps bag a scrub turkey or other game in the last remaining timber. I cannot remember whether this happened or not but Dad had an ironclad rule of not allowing any shooting on his property so I believe that more than likely it did not. Dad always reasoned that the birds soon got to know where they could live without being shot at.

Over the years we experienced first-hand the company of emus, black swans, jabiru, plain turkeys—more properly called bustards—white-faced herons and several species of wild duck. We never regarded them as a regular food source so that, in an emergency, if we desperately needed one for food we might stand a better chance of bagging one.

There was one small area that was quarantined from the heavy machinery for the time being and that was a patch of vine scrub. The place was always affectionately referred to as “the vine scrub hill” even years later when the remaining standing timber, by then only a shadow of its former self, was eventually cleared.

Dad had done his best to conserve this tiny bit of vegetation that was growing naturally on his land but sadly there was not enough of it to begin with for it to survive in its original state once the rest of the brugalow was gone. At this time however, it displayed such oddities as a pair of twin bottle trees standing straight and tall. There was just enough room for a grown man to walk between them and the bird life that abounded here could have been an entire study all by itself.

There were also several species of fat colourful and impressive looking spiders, some of which I have never seen since. These were all fairly placid, no doubt having sat pretty for years, only needing to wait for their prey to come to them. They were something of a hazard for the unwary horseback rider making his or her way through the trees while mustering. I am here to tell you that there is nothing quite like a face full of spider and sticky web to contend with just when you are least expecting it!

All of this changed irrevocably with the pulling of the scrub. Man and machine prevailed over what had stood relatively undisturbed for centuries. For better or for worse, the curtain was brought down on the end of an era.

The look of the future bore little resemblance to the shadow of the past but Dad was optimistic that the old would make way for the new and he was committed to being right there in the mix when it did—with a controlling interest.

*Next Chapter: A Wider Schoolroom*