From the President

Alaina Kennedy (nee Aroe, RGS 2001)

As of next month at the School’s Early Learning Centre; which continues my family’s long association with the School.

The friendships and connections made at RGS are life long and the PSA is a wonderful way for you to keep connected to both your fellow Grammarians and the School community in general.

The Association is looking at holding more past student catch-ups and networking opportunities across Australia over this next year. Get in contact if you’d like a get-together held in your town!

The Past Students’ Association fundraises throughout the year and is constantly looking at ways to give back to both the School and the Grammar Community. If you would like to be a part of this process, come along to one of our committee meetings. We would love to hear your ideas.

A few reminders; nominations for the 2017 RGS Distinguished Past Students Awards close on 7 October, 2016 (www.rgs.qld.edu.au/distinguished) and reunions for 2007, 1997, 1987, 1977 and 1967 are options for next year – get in touch (paststudents@rgs.qld.edu.au) for more information.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

Welcome

Welcome to the July 2016 edition of The Grammarian, your Rockhampton Grammar School Past Students’ Association newsletter. The Rockhampton Grammar School has a long and proud history since it was first established in 1881. This newsletter acknowledges the achievements, celebrations and news of the School’s past students.

If you have any contributions for future newsletters please contact editor Rachael McDonald on 4936 0776 or email rmcdonald@rgs.qld.edu.au

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Visit www.rgs.qld.edu.au to keep in touch with your School.

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Preparing to make his Olympic debut in Rio de Janeiro, Alexander “Sasha” Belonogoff (RGS 2007) will retain the same mindset he had years ago rowing on Rockhampton’s Fitzroy River.

“I was lucky at my time at Grammar to be around like-minded people in rowing,” Sasha said. “We were really competitive and wanted to get the most out of each other. We wanted to be better than the guy beside us.

“It was always about training smart, not hard, and when I raced all I thought about was being the toughest person on the course. I put myself in the hurt locker.”

Sasha will be in the same place in Rio – pushing himself to his limits against the best in the world.

Joining Sasha in the men’s Olympic quad scull is his doubles partner James McRae along with Cameron Girdlestone and Karsten Fosterling.

This crew knows it has the speed following national selection trials. Now it’s a matter of finding their feet together as a combination.

“I have a lot of confidence in this crew,” Sasha said.

The crew made the perfect start to their Olympic lead-up campaign winning the final of the World Cup race in Lucerne, Switzerland (27-29 May) and again posting a win in Poznan, Poland (17-19 June) which gave the crew the perfect opportunity to fine tune their racing edge.

The Australian squad has spent two months in Europe at their base, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) European Training Centre, in Varese, Italy.

However, one challenge that will be out of all the crews control in Rio will be the “pretty wild” weather conditions on the natural lake rowing course.

“We’ve been told to expect cross head breezes, then a cross breeze followed by a cross tail breeze,” Sasha said. “We’ll have to make sure we’re good at handling whatever is thrown at us and we’ll see who can row the best in the worst conditions.”

It is this constant challenge in rowing which keeps Sasha involved in the sport. Rowers climbing in their boats for the first time are working at finding the correct stroke. Nothing changes for the elite.

“In rowing there’s no such thing as the perfect stroke,” Sasha said. “There can be so many variables like weather conditions, your health and the other competitors. It’s an addictive sport in the pursuit of the perfect stroke.”

“In rowing there’s no such thing as the perfect stroke,” Sasha said.

“It is this constant challenge in rowing which keeps Sasha involved in the sport. Rowers climbing in their boats for the first time are working at finding the correct stroke. Nothing changes for the elite.

“Rowing at the Olympics has always been a long-term goal for Sasha, but at this point in time it is no more special for the Australian rower than also competing with World Championship teams.

“It’s part of the process,” Sasha said. “We knew we had done the work and had been in good place for the past four years to qualify for the Rio team. It’s all part of the grand plan and I’m sure at some point overseas it (the Olympics) will hit me. “My family always remind me of how far I’ve come and it’s great they help me celebrate these milestones, like throwing an Olympic themed party with family and friends. Sometimes, when you’re in the rowing bubble, you forget about your progression.”

Sitting on the banks of the Fitzroy River, where his rowing journey started, Sasha knows it is his competitiveness and commitment which has helped him reach the top.

“I remember when I made my first State team and thought if I want to do well at nationals then I’ll start doing all these extra crunches in front of the TV and not eat my Easter eggs,” Sasha said.

“It’s about commitment to the cause. I have a goal and I have to make my life conducive to achieving that goal. You’re always thinking how you can get that bit more out of yourself. More is more and that’s been my philosophy since school. Rowing is all about the more you put in the more you get out of it.”

The 2016 Olympic Games will be held in Rio from 5-21 August. The rowing is from 6-13 August, on Rodrigo de Freitas Lake, at Lagoa Stadium. Sasha’s family will be in the crowd to watch his Olympic debut.


Olympic Memories - Page 10
Madeleine Morris: Meeting a world of intriguing people

Madeleine Morris (RGS 1994) is now a reporter/presenter with ABC TV’s the 7.30 Report after spending over 13 years in the UK and US working with BBC’s World Service. Madeleine sometimes ponders why she is still in the journalism game but with every new story comes an opportunity to meet some new intriguing people. She still feels obliged to share their voice with the world. This is Madeleine’s story:

The nurse, the Australia Post union official, the domestic violence victim or the nun working with HIV sufferers in Africa…. these are the people that are keeping Madeleine Morris (RGS 1994) in the hectic world of journalism.

The ABC’s 7.30 Report reporter currently calls Melbourne home after 13 years living overseas. “I wonder if I should ever leave journalism and do something else,” reflects Madeleine as her multi-tasking skills seamlessly take over as she weeds her garden while being interviewed.

“I wish I was better at being more relaxed, but I’m always busy and incapable of not multi-tasking.

“Journalism is always busy but that’s the awesome thing about journalism, you meet so many interesting people and I just can’t give that up.”

After graduating from The Rockhampton Grammar School Madeleine moved to France for a one-year exchange programme before returning to Australia where she studied French and Journalism at the University of Queensland.

Madeleine had hoped to study Law but didn’t get the score she needed.

“I’m now so happy I didn’t get a high enough score.”

Still not totally sold on Journalism in her final year of university studies Madeleine did one day a week work experience with ABC in Brisbane and once finished with her studies she worked in the ski fields of France and the bars of Germany for a year.

Madeleine next ventured to London and worked on freelance journalism until an old family friend from Rockhampton, who was then working at the BBC, introduced Madeleine to the “graveyard” programme on BBC Radio.

“I just kept working hard and then managed to score a staff job with domestic news and then moved to world news,” Madeleine said.

“The world service was a good fit for me as I was always more interested in international news and I got to travel lots.”

Madeleine’s work has taken the form of a reporter and presenter while also taking her to all corners of the globe.

On returning to Melbourne and helping with some presenting on the 7.30 Report Madeleine has rekindled a love of live broadcast.

Luckily for Madeleine she has thrived on both the live element of broadcast media as well as the pre-recorded investigative opportunities.

“Meeting the people who do the work to help combat this disease was incredible and meeting the kids who were HIV positive was amazing,” Madeleine said.

“You hope that somewhere down the track it will help make some changes in their life.”

Madeleine has interviewed Prime Ministers and Presidents, but these are not the people that have captured her heart and her mind.

It is the everyday people in this world fighting their own battles or trying to make a difference in other people’s lives.

Madeleine recalls reporting on squatters camps around mines in South Africa where around 50% of the population was HIV positive. After her first visit she returned a year later to recapture their struggle.

“You hope that somewhere down the track it will help make some changes in their life.”

Sometimes the job does get to Madeleine and she needs some down time to reflect and re-energise.

Such a moment occurred earlier this year after hosting a National Family Violence Summit in Canberra where she also moderated sessions with family violence survivors.

“I was focused on keeping the conversations going for the audience. It was a full on two days,” Madeleine said.
Sharing life’s emotional journey

“Ordinary people do amazing things.”

“Then I met someone with an appalling story from her violent marriage but her trauma was worse from the lack of support she received from so many groups afterwards. It got too much for me. I felt down and had no energy at work. I had to have a day off and then I was back at work.

“I have a job where I get to share intimate experiences with people.”

Madeleine remembers people like Sister Georgina in Africa who has dedicated her life to helping women and children in Africa; Winston Zulu who was a HIV and tuberculosis activist in Zambia who helped changed the discourse of people in his country before losing his battle with HIV a few years ago; and Joan Doyle, the Victorian union official at Australia Post fighting for workers’ rights.

“Ordinary people do amazing things,” Madeleine said.

When Madeleine is not interviewing she has also been an author, publishing her book Guilt-Free Bottle-Feeding: why your formula-fed baby can be happy, healthy and smart in 2014.

“I was very proud of that book and it was really built on my own experiences of becoming a mother.”

Madeleine has no immediate plans of hanging up her broadcast microphone any time soon because there are still more interesting stories to tell about things that really matter in life.

Career:

- January 2014 - Present (Reporter, 7.30 report, ABC Television)
- August 2010 - Present (Moderator and host)
- May 2010 - March 2012 (Presenter, BBC World News Television)
- July 2011 - August 2011 (Presenter, BBC World News Television)
- August 2010 - June 2011 (Presenter, The World Today, BBC)
- January 2010 - July 2010 (Washington Reporter, BBC News)
- July 2008 - December 2009 (Senior Producer and Presenter, World Have Your Say, BBC)
- January 2005 - June 2008 (Senior Producer/Reporter/Presenter, BBC World Service)
- March 2001 - May 2005 (Producer, BBC News)

Stanley masters the hockey field

Sharon Coutts (nee Grierson, RGS 1992) still thrives on her passion for sport. Currently Head of PDHPE (Personal Development, Health and Physical Education) at Northholm Grammar School in Sydney, Sharon also continues to excel on the hockey field after joining the bronze medal winning Australian Over 40 Women’s team at the 2016 Masters World Cup in Canberra earlier this year.

“The tournament was outstanding and over six games I didn’t get subbed in any games. I was exhausted,” Sharon said.

Sharon first started playing hockey in Rockhampton as an 11-year-old and still loves the sport.

“I love the fact it’s a team sport, being able to share the ups and downs of the journey with your close friends,” she said.

“Like anyone, if you play sport for a long time you do it while you can because there will come a time when you can’t.”

Sharon has played division one hockey in Sydney but will focus on Masters hockey now.

After graduating from teaching in Rockhampton Sharon taught at RGS in 2002. Sharon is married to Aaron (RGS 1991) and she has three children, Jay (23), Coen (6) and Emerson (3).

The Rockhampton Grammar School has already honoured seven past students as “Distinguished Past Students”.

If you know someone worthy of joining this group of Alumni make sure you nominate them for the 2017 awards. Awardees will be presented at a dinner in March.

Letter to The Grammarian:

On reading the latest edition of The Grammarian Newsletter I felt a sense of pride being from the same school as these high achievers and movers. It certainly reinforces the excellent quality of the educational standard of RGS and the quality of the RGS staff. However, a word needs to be said about the effect of the RGS on those hundreds, nay, thousands of students over the years who do not achieve academic excellence or outstanding public acclamation. Many RGS graduates’ only ambition was to return to the family property or business, and are today successful property owners and businessmen. (I say businessmen, as my only frame of reference was from the pre-coeducational period, but I assume the same will apply to today’s cohorts). From my cohort — (graduated in 1965), there are also successful doctors, engineers, hairdresser (yes I said hairdresser), ADF officers, teachers, lecturers, senior public servants, and many others in responsible positions. Not all graduates had a sense of direction though and many did not find their place in society immediately.

How did the RGS experience affect them? A sense of morality, self-discipline, and willingness to work hard and achieve was instilled in most of us during those formative years. I can only use myself as an example. I completed the academic subjects with the absolute minimum score needed to enter University but having no idea where to go or do next. The only fixed point was that my father insisted I go to University. While at school I was in the army cadets for four years and at the same time joined the CMF (now the Army Reserve) for the senior years, and when I was interviewed by the guidance officer in Year 12, he thought hard for at least 2 microseconds and suggested I join the regular Army via RMC Duntroon, which in those pre-ADFA days offered engineering and arts degrees. Which I did.

After two years at RMC, the Army and I decided to part ways. I still had no idea of what I wanted to do in the future. However Dad still insisted on my attendance at Uni so I enrolled in engineering at the University College of North Queensland (now James Cook University). This only lasted for one year. I was still at a loss. My best friend at Uni was on a teacher’s scholarship which entailed first year at Uni in any subject, then teachers college for one year, coming out as a two year trained secondary school teacher. So I applied to the Queensland Education Department and was accepted into the new Townsville Teachers College (TTC) in the two year primary teacher scheme.

At this point I should mention that my teachers, especially Pat Ryan (Pickle), Jack Lanham (SOL), and Mr Deeth (Mr Deeth), should stop reading this as I don’t want to cause any heart attacks. I based part of my decision on the way these teacher had taught me along with Ken Gillam (Casey) at RGS.

After the first month I did a fortnight at prac-school in Townsville, and to my amazement, found I loved it. I completed the two year course and then was offered a third year at TTC to graduate as a three year trained High School teacher in Science and Maths. Maybe I should have told Mr Daniels to stop reading as well! I have recently retired after almost 40 years teaching, particularly Maths, Physics, Biology, and Computing in the senior school. I also studied externally for a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Physics) at JCU and CQU. You know you’ve done well when a delegation of Year 10 students ask you to reconsider retiring as they have chosen Physics as a subject on the advice of your senior students!

To cater for the military interest I joined the Airforce Reserve and established an Army Cadet Unit at my last school. At one point I held the ranks of Major in the Army and Squadron Leader in the Airforce at the same time!

I write this, not to blow my own trumpet, but to demonstrate that you achieve best when you find you fit in the jigsaw of life. Some know from early childhood, others, like myself, may take many years to find what shape they are. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to RGS, and in particular to the teachers mentioned above, for giving me the tools to succeed and the examples to follow.

Mel Dundas-Taylor

In Brief

Brisbane firm memories

In the March edition of The Grammarian we mentioned the RGS connection at Brisbane legal firm McCullough Robertson which employs Matt Bradbury (RGS 1995), Brad Russell (RGS 1983) and Alex Skilling (RGS 2009) (pictured below). This prompted a call from Gracemere’s Hugh Grant (RGS 1957) (pictured above right) who completed his Articles at the firm from 1960 - 1965 before returning to Rockhampton where he joined Grant & Simpson Lawyers, a firm founded in 1897 when Hugh Grant (Hugh’s grandfather) joined Robert Brumm in the partnership of R A Brumm & Grant. Hugh Chapman Grant was a partner with Grant & Simpson Lawyers until his retirement in 2006.

Correction: March Grammarian

Correction: In the March edition of The Grammarian, “Rory Robertson- 9/11 memories” it stated Rory Robertson completed his RGS education in 1992. This should have read 1982. A revised introduction is below:

Rory Robertson (RGS 1982) is still an economist tied to a desk in Sydney, but he enjoys four trips a year to his cattle block “Strathburn Station” in the middle of Cape York Pensinsula. His passion for big, open spaces began at birth in Alice Springs in 1966 and continued as a boy growing up in various parts of remote Australia. His family spent his high-school and university years based in and around Baralaba. Country Australia is a long way from his high-profile economist days with Macquarie Bank in New York. A time which coincided with Rory finding himself in the World Trade Centre on 9/11.
Andrew Bate: Embracing technology

Gindie's Andrew Bate (RGS 1995) is embracing technology to get back to the grassroots of farming. The founder of SwarmFarm Robotics was a guest speaker at The Rockhampton Grammar School/Suncorp Bank Breakfast Series at the RGS Rowing Club on 19 July.

Andrew and his wife Jocie farm 10,000 acres of dry land grain crops, such as chickpea, wheat and mungbeans, and run 1600 head of cattle at “Bendee”, south of Emerald.

SwarmFarm has been developing a small robotic weed-killer called Swarmbot. It’s about lightweight machines that can slow down when needed to apply herbicide accurately onto weeds. The Rockhampton Grammar School past student is in the early stages of helping develop this new technology as he looks for smarter alternatives to bigger machinery on properties.

Andrew said most people were looking for the biggest machine they could possibly get.

“Playing in the sandpit as kids we always wanted the biggest tractor, the biggest plough or the biggest bulldozer,” Andrew said. “With SwarmFarm instead of having one large machine we have multiple small ones. It’s a paradigm change for farmers. This is about thinking differently and opening your mind up to finding new ways of growing crops.”

Andrew said they were not trying to replicate what already existed, but it was about a different approach. “Thinking outside the square is what really engages the next generation coming through,” Andrew said.

Back in Year 12 at RGS Andrew was looking at either doing a trade or becoming a draftsman. He always liked building and designing things, but his post secondary school studies led to Gatton College studying Agronomy. He picked up new knowledge on agriculture mechanisms during his Gatton studies.

Andrew’s now back involved with those early passions - combining his love of agriculture with the design and construction of new technology for the traditional industry.

“Farming’s in your blood. You just love it,” Andrew said. This passion has also taken Andrew outside the farm gate and into the State political arena around five years ago.

The issue involved proposed mining developments on strategic cropping land in the Gindie area.

Andrew and others formed the group Future Food Queensland to promote the value of the small percentage of Queensland cropping land that was under threat from mining.

“I was green at the time and it was a learning experience for me,” Andrew said. “But we were successful. That was one of the first steps for me to get some knowledge outside of the farm gates and it gave me the confidence to do the robotics which I had been thinking about for a long time.”

It was about seven years ago when Andrew was sitting in the tractor cab and found himself thinking about where they were going and how they could do things better.

“We were right up there in the race for the biggest machine (a planter) but after owning and operating a machine that big I think we’ve gone backwards. We were doing more in a day but not doing as good a job as we used to do,” Andrew said.

Andrew is also grateful to his parents support to let him have a go at this project, and other things in the past. SwarmFarm was initially set up with global aspirations, but it is the project’s beginnings, that started in the paddock, that makes Andrew proud and determined to continue the adventure.

“We’ve bought robotic technology on board and we want to see that through,” Andrew said. “We’ve learned some good lessons and some hard lessons, but now it’s exciting times.”

For more information on SwarmFarm visit - http://www.swarm-farm.com/

Keeping up with the Live Export Trade

Fraser Young (RGS 2008) is always on the move with his job in the live cattle export industry.

The Austrex Northern Operations Coordinator, based in Brisbane, spends the majority of his time loading vessels at live export ports in Broome, Darwin or Townsville.

That means tracking the progress of over 4000 head of cattle from buying at the property gate, to road transport, overseeing health checks, loading ships and closing the books at their final destination.

Time is always of the essence.

Fraser returned to Rockhampton in mid-May to represent Austrex at the World Brahman Congress at the Rockhampton Showgrounds. In between fielding enquiries he was still on the job preparing for a mob of cattle to make their way from Charters Towers to Townsville and onto the south-east Asia market.

Buying cattle was taking place in Charters Towers on the Thursday. Their ship would dock in Townsville at 6am the following Tuesday. Once the ship docks over 300 tonnes of fodder is loaded onboard for the 8 to 9 day journey to Jakarta, Indonesia. Sawdust is loaded, pen sizes and requirements are finalised, the onboard stockman oversees the set up and the 8 to 10 member feeding crew also familiarises themselves with the next load.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) reviews the set up for around 2 to 3 hours.

While this is all taking place cattle are on the two hour drive from Charters Towers to the Townsville Port.

“It’s then pretty much eight hours of straight loading, with sometimes using between 25 to 30 road trains,” Fraser said. “The loading is always very stressful – it’s all about timing,” Fraser said.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has a final check over the ship before Fraser sits with the captain, shipping agent and stockman to discuss the impending voyage.

Then 10 to 12 hours later the plan is for the ship to begin its journey.

Fraser predominantly works with marketing, sales and operations for Austrex, overseeing the feeder/slaughter cattle section which equates for approximately 90% of Austrex’s business.

It’s the perfect job for someone who loves working with cattle and loves to travel.

After leaving RGS in 2008 Fraser was uncertain of where his future lay. He studied Business Management at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane for three years before working as a ringer on stations near Katherine, in the Northern Territory, and at Capella.

After an overseas holiday he found himself at Austrex.

Growing up on the family property near Emerald Fraser was aware of the live cattle export business, but never left the property to see the next steps.

“It blew my mind when I first saw a live cattle export vessel,” Fraser said. “I’d heard about the ban (of live cattle exports from Australia) in 2011 but now that I’ve seen it myself and done voyages myself I now realise you don’t believe everything you hear.”

Fraser is grateful he pursued business studies to enter the agricultural workforce.

“Even running a farm is like running a business,” he said.
The annual RGS Race Day was held at Rockhampton’s Callaghan Park on Saturday, 7 May. Thank you to the RGS past students and families who supported the day.

Class of 2006 past students (from left) Lewis McKee, Russell Moretti, Ashley Hodda, Chris Burrell, Daniel Hall and Luke Perkins.

Brooke Graff (nee Bryant, RGS 2003) and Justine Barrett.

Trent Halloran (RGS 2009), Miranda Bell (RGS 2009), Libby Johnson (RGS 2010) and Bridget Johnson (2009).

Maryanne and Mark Birkbeck (RGS 1982)

Amy (RGS 2004), Judy and Megan (RGS 2006) Thomasson

Class of 1986 past students (from left) Chris Dyer, Mark Olive, James McKenzie and Jason Hetherington.

Maryanne and Mark Birkbeck (RGS 1982)

Amy (RGS 2004), Judy and Megan (RGS 2006) Thomasson

Class of 1986 classmates Susie Hanson (nee Mills), Jane Hannaford, Leigh Pitts (nee Slater) and Christy-Lyne Clancy (nee Cossins)

Above: Myles Heath (RGS 2014) was on duty for the Rockhampton Jockey Club and was run off his feet all day!

Left: Katie Hadwen (RGS 2006) and Pam Hadwen. You can still find Pam Hadwen at RGS as Assistant Head to Senior School - Year 11. Geoff Hadwen remains Head of Primary at RGS.
RGS past students from across the decades caught up in Brisbane on 16 April at the Transcontinental Hotel. Thank you to Lance Currie (RGS 1959) for once again coordinating the annual event.

Left: Joining the attendees at the Brisbane function were (pictured left, left to right) David Gill (RGS 1965), Mike Thies (RGS 1963), Ian Geddes (RGS 1961) and Bob Sayce (RGS 1964).

Graham Cox (RGS 1961) and past teacher Jack Lanham. Class of 1975 past students (from left) Sandy Hawkins, Grahame Day and Thor Prohaska. Class of 1979 past students Steve Brown (left) and Seth Dickinson.

Class of 1976 students (from left) Peter Marshall, Paul Bickford, Peter Ford and Carl Scott. Jules Guerassimoff (RGS 1957), Barbara Grant (sister of Hugh Grant, RGS 1957) and Harold Barry (RGS 1956). Wally Reiman (RGS 1941) and Raymond Young (RGS 1942).

Ross Hansen (RGS 1961) made a long awaited return to RGS in June. Formerly a boarder from Ogmore, Ross later worked in the mines in Blackwater and is now retired in Brisbane. On his return visit to the School Ross visited the memorial to the nine RGS students who lost their lives in the air crash off the coast of Mackay on 10 June, 1960.

Marnie Hungerford (RGS 2014) returned to RGS in June with the Y Lead Team. Marnie worked with the current RGS Year 11s over a two-day leadership workshop preparing them to work as a team in the 2017 Senior Year.

Mia McDonald (RGS 2011) returned to the Rockhampton Golf Club and caught up with former teacher, and current Year 6 teacher, Jason Milburn. After leaving RGS Mia attended the Kelvin Grove State College Golf School of Excellence, where she was School of Excellence Girls Captain in 2012 and 2013. Mia is currently with the Indooroopilly Golf Club in Brisbane.
Olympic Memories

Lance Currie (RGS 1959) has never competed or even attended an Olympic Games however the opportunity in 1956 to participate in the Olympic Torch Relay will always be his own personal connection to the Olympics.

“I wasn’t even 16 and no one knew much about it” said Lance, who now lives in Brisbane.

When the word spread about the relay about 25 to 30 RGS boys would go on weekend runs, running the required mile distance in relay fashion to boost their chances of a call-up.

“You had to run a mile in under seven minutes,” Lance said.

Originally runners also had to be over the age of 16 but due to the distance between some towns they did not have enough runners so some of the younger students were called up.

Lance was dropped off at Roots Bridge (south of Rockhampton) for his mile leg. He would carry the torch across the Tropic of Capricorn.

“I just sat there and waved at every car that went past for about two hours,” Lance said.

“Frank Moran (Morning Bulletin photographer) then pulled up. He said ‘when you run past the sign (Tropic of Capricorn) put your hand up in the air like this’.

“I remember two Army guys turned up, jumped out of the truck and said ‘here’s your torch. They said ‘as soon as it (torch) starts to splutter away you go. They told me to make sure I put it up in the air because bits and pieces were flying off it so I had to keep it away from my face so it didn't burn me,'” Lance said.

Lance received the torch from fellow RGS student Sandy Bredhauer and then handed the torch to another RGS student Wayne Chapple.

“I was thinking I just had to get to the other end and if the torch got too heavy I just had to change hands,” Lance said.

“After the run they threw the canister away, I signed my name and got a medal. Hugh Grant's dad then bought us back to School in his brand new Holden.

“We just went back to School like any other day. We were in the middle of exams.”

Lance's mum and dad didn't even know he was carrying the Olympic torch.

“Dad was shearing at Yaraka when it was mentioned on the half past 12 news. Someone else also heard it on the news and told mum and she heard about it on the half past one news,” Lance said.

“They thought it was great but were not overly excited about it.”

Lance still returns to Rockhampton for Olympic Torch Relay reunions. The 60 year reunion will be held in November.

From the book “Carrying the Torch. 1956 Olympic Games”, Marcus Marsden:

“We pressed on with the Rockhampton torchbearers who carried on the good work. Rockhampton had trouble finding runners to cover this initial section, so the first group after the hand-over were twenty young lads from Rockhampton Grammar School. Of these schoolboy torchbearers, two were aged thirteen, ten were aged fourteen, three were fifteen, and the remainder were aged sixteen years. And what a mighty effort they made – practically all within the seven-minute per mile time, and many better. Fifteen Rockhampton Grammar School Old Boys’ Association torchbearers then took over and with the coolness of a beautiful clear evening, the flame was soon back on time as we approached Marlborough, at the southern end of the “horror stretch”.

Twenty-five students from Rockhampton Grammar School qualified. However, five of these runners ran with other teams in the Rockhampton District. They were: Bredhauer, J. A., Chapple, W. J., Clarke, G. R., Currie, L. F., and Richardson, W. P.

Several RGS past students have returned to their old school in recent months to both pursue their own careers and also help others find out more about possible careers post school. Here are their stories.

**Alessandra Ciol**

Alessandra Ciol (2011) was a familiar face on the RGS music scene during her school days and this passion has continued. Alessandra has returned to RGS – this time as a prac teacher. “I was at Grammar from Year 1 to Year 12 so I've been having lunch with my primary school teachers – it's so strange,” Alessandra said.

Alessandra is in her fifth, and final, year of a Music/Education Degree at the University of Queensland in Brisbane. “While at RGS I was involved in a majority of the bands and ensembles - from primary band, concert/symphonic band, stage band, jazz ensemble and string orchestra for a short period in Year 12. I played in the band for the musical in all of my five years of high school - played clarinet, saxophone and keyboard in various years,” Alessandra said.

The music lover also competed in the Eisteddfod for basically her entire schooling years and was awarded the ‘most promising woodwind performer’ prize alongside playing in the gala twice - a piano solo once and a piano duet the second time. Alessandra also completed AMEB exams in piano, clarinet and theory.

Alessandra was also fortunate enough to attend the first overseas RGS Music Tour to the US in 2011 and went to multiple State Honours Ensemble Programs, representing the School.

“The Music Department was always such a close knit group with everyone being so friendly and welcoming - both teachers and students alike. It was the experiences I had at RGS that really shaped my career path today - wonderful, inspiring teachers,” Alessandra said. “I suggest for music students to get involved with as much as they can. My playing ability really took off from my involvement in groups both in and out of school - the Rockhampton chamber music society, the Rockhampton youth orchestra, etc.

“RGS has so many more ensembles now since I was there five years ago, so lots more opportunities!”

**Annie Belonogoff**

The opportunity to help push children to do their best was the window Annie Belonogoff (RGS 2009) opened for teaching studies. Annie, who is nearing the completion of her Diploma of Education at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), returned to The Rockhampton Grammar School in Term 2 for science teaching prac.

It’s a shift from Annie’s original career ambitions. After school Annie studied a Bachelor of Speech Pathology at Sydney and Townsville before gaining employment in that field in Rockhampton.

“I learnt a lot more about children in that job and found out that teaching was what I really wanted to do,” Annie said.

Annie is studying with a Biology major, along with Mathematics subjects, with an aim of teaching Years 7 – 10 Science.

**Sam Atkinson** (RGS 2015) is doing the rounds of the RGS classrooms as part of his studies training as a teacher aide. Keeping a close eye on Sam’s work in the classroom is RGS teacher Aileen Kelly.

**Skye McKissock** (RGS 2015) flew home to talk to students about life in the Australian Defence Force Academy with the Royal Australian Air Force.

Among the past students’ watching the Year 12 Senior Formal on 15 April were Class of 2015 graduates (clockwise from left) Isabelle Johansen; Renee White and Ruby Daunt; and Rhiannon Ryan and Hayley Webber.
Robert Davis (RGS 1960) provided this photograph of his uncle Robert Lionel Hartley (RGS, enrolled 1924), who is pictured right wearing his RGS school hat, along with Robert Davis’ grandfather Robert Elliott Hartley. Robert Elliott Hartley was a former Rockhampton Mayor in 1919 and 1921. The photograph was taken in the late 1920s at the Hartley’s flower farm on Thozet Road, “Elands Vale”. The Hartley’s owned a florist shop at the time. The Hartley family has a long association with RGS. Robert Elliott Hartley’s grandfather, the Reverend Robert Hartley was one of the original citizens of Rockhampton who pushed for the opening of a Grammar School in the district.

RGS staff enjoyed catching up with RGS past students and parents during this year’s Central Queensland Show circuit. RGS attended shows in Bloiba, Capella, Clermont, Springsure and Yeppoon shows and AgGrow Field Days in Emerald. The Show Cattle teams also caught up with RGS families at Marlborough, Yeppoon, The Caves, Ridgelands, Mackay and Mt Larcom shows.

Lucy Blair - I am studying Business Management/Communications at the University of Queensland. One of the things I enjoy most about studying at university is being surrounded by such a wide variety of people.

I think it is exciting that I can be in the same subject as someone in third year who is 10 years older than me and studying a completely different course. I like the idea that everyone has completely unique backgrounds and career goals, yet we all share the common experience of that subject’s assignments, exams and content. Although nothing compares to school, what I most enjoy about life after RGS is the increased responsibility.

Whether that means paying rent, attending lectures or cleaning my room, I am much more accountable for my decisions and have more responsibility for what I want to achieve and how I spend my time.

Rylee Olsson - I’m currently studying a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in criminology at the University of Melbourne. I’m hoping to move into postgraduate work after completing it.

I’ve loved moving interstate. I’ve met so many interesting people and have been given the opportunity to try new and different things. I love the freedom and flexibility of University life, but I’m thankful that I have enough self-discipline from my time at RGS to make sure I get all my work done on time!

What I like most about life after RGS is being able to use the skills and life experiences I gained there to enable my transition into adulthood. And while I loved the feeling of leaving the nest, it’s also nice to know that the RGS gates are always open.

Keane Henderson - I’m currently studying a Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery at James Cook University in Townsville.

I’m really enjoying life after RGS as I’m able to study towards something tailored to my interests.

I’ve also been able to find more time for the sporting and social side of university/college life which is great.
Ekka Representatives
RGS students Remy Streeter (Year 11, pictured below), Brendan Jones (Year 12) and Grady Hansen (Year 10) impressed on the local show circuit during Term 2 to qualify to represent the region at the Brisbane Ekka in August. Remy will compete in judging while Brendan qualified in parading. Grady was selected as an Associate Judge for Brangus cattle.

Artists visit RGS
RGS Secondary and Primary students gained from some expert tuition during Term 2. The Secondary School Dance Class worked with representatives from the Sydney Dance Company while Primary students, preparing for their lead roles in their Term 3 musical, enjoyed some energetic tips from an Opera Queensland representative.

RGS Rowing Club launches new boats
The RGS Rowing Club launched two new boats following the opening Rockhampton Schools Regatta for 2016. Former Head of Rowing John Smyth returned from Sydney to launch the new eight named in his honour while current Australian under-21 representative Callum Chisholm (RGS 2014) also returned to Rockhampton to help launch the new double scull named in his honour. The eight had its first taste of racing at the Central Queensland Rowing Championships in Bundaberg in late June.

House Sport
Athletics Carnival - in 2016 Wheatley House has won the Secondary Swimming, Secondary/Primary Cross Country, Secondary and Primary Athletics titles. Is there another colour that will hold the Primary School Swimming title aloft in Term 4 of 2016?
Robert Davis: The TV Man

Robert Davis (RGS, 1960) has retirement plans in his sights after years dedicated to repairing televisions and radio – a passion which once landed him a spot on a national television program.

It was 17 November 1972 when Robert Davis appeared on The Inventors, aired on ABC television featuring inventors chosen from around Australia to explain their design before a panel of three judges who had expertise in science, engineering and design/marketing. The program aired from 1970 to 1982.

Robert’s invention was a pre-focused soldering iron light. Explaining the invention in The Morning Bulletin on 21 October 1972 Robert said: “Often you have to use a torch to see what you are soldering but this light solves all that and is pre-focused to shine where you want it. No batteries are needed to operate the light as it runs on the power of the soldering iron. The light is compact (no bigger than a match box) and was made at a cost of about $1.”

“It needed to be invented a couple of years earlier and I could have made a fortune,” said Robert, who was beaten to the punch by a major company.

Robert had some interest in his invention but the fast moving technology also attracted other tech-savvy inventors from around the world at the same time.

Robert long had an interest in electronics before he completed his Junior School studies at RGS in 1960.

“I remember being late for school one morning because I had been building a little generator for Mr Gillam. The Prefect picked me up for being late before Mr Gillam came along and said he’s OK,” Robert recalls.

“I was always making circuits and light systems for my electric trains.

“I always wanted to be a television technician.”

He achieved that goal after a five year apprenticeship along with a two-year advanced radio course and a four year colour television course.

“When I started my apprenticeships the television had valves and then transistors came in so they had to change the apprenticeship course half way through it,” Robert said.

Television was first introduced to Australia on 16 September 1956. The new phenomenon arrived in Rockhampton on 7 September 1963 and colour television arrived on 1 March 1975.

“It (colour television) was a real breakthrough,” Robert said.

“It was like seeing 3D for the first time. It was just ‘wow’ look at the difference.”

Robert did his apprenticeship with HG Palmers in East Street and would start his own business, Davis TV Sales and Service, in 1976.

Today’s work mainly has Robert fixing antennas before he flicks the switch on his long career.

Robert pictured above on The Inventors (the photograph was taken off the television by his family back in Rockhampton); and left on a memorable visit back to RGS.

In Brief....

Andrew Stars on West End
Andrew Conaghan (RGS 2002) is currently performing in the London West End production of Les Misérables. Andrew is playing the Bishop of Digne/Babet in the classic stage musical.

Sydney Stage Calls for Jaime
Jaime Hadwen (RGS 2009) continues to keep busy on the stage in Sydney. Jaime recently performed as Muse-Goddess Kira in Xanadu at Sydney’s Hayes Theatre at Potts Point. Jaime then returned to the stage in the role of Cinderella for the Bonnie Lythgoe Production of Cinderella, the pantomime also performed in Sydney.

Australian Rowing Success
Callum Chisholm (RGS 2014) joined the victorious Australian Under-21 Rowing Team at the first leg of the Trans-Tasman Regatta Series against New Zealand at Penrith in July. The Australian team next travels to Lake Karapiro in New Zealand from 8-10 September.

Jamie Misses NFL Draft
Jamie Keehn (RGS 2006) has missed the 2016 NFL draft despite several clubs making contact with the University of Louisiana punter. It was reported that Jamie was contacted by six NFL teams enquiring about the punting specialist. Jamie’s NFL draft ride included a trip with the Carolina Panthers. Before Jamie stumbled across American Football he excelled in rowing and athletics during his time at The Rockhampton Grammar School.

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Robert pictured above on The Inventors (the photograph was taken off the television by his family back in Rockhampton); and left on a memorable visit back to RGS.
VALE:

Alex Costello (RGS 1996) attended RGS in Year 11 and Year 12. During his Senior school years he proudly wore the red and black playing rugby union for RGS. The 37-year-old was the Gunnedah Red Devils rugby union reserve coach in New South Wales. Alex died suddenly after suffering chest pains on 9 April. He leaves behind his wife Emma Costello and three daughters, aged 7, 5 and 3 at the time of his death. After finishing school at RGS Alex became a school teacher in Cairns for many years before moving to Gunnedah.

(Vale: 1979 - 2016)

VALE:

Neville Hewitt (RGS, 1934-1936) Born in Theodore in 1920, Mr Hewitt passed away on 19 July aged 95 years. Recognised as a Rockhampton Grammar School Distinguished Past Student at a dinner in March this year, Mr Hewitt was a long serving National Party stalwart in the State seats of Mackenzie and Auburn. He was also a decorated airman serving with the Royal Australian Air Force in the Second World War, receiving a Military Medal for initiative, courage and fortitude, and the Air Force Medal. He also had a passion for horse racing, riding over 300 winners as an amateur jockey. In 1980 Rockhampton’s second bridge was named in Neville Hewitt’s honour.

(Vale: 1920 - 2016)

Babies:

Lewis McKee (RGS 2006) and wife Pia welcomed their first child Angus on 9 April in Rockhampton. The McKee’s live in Rockhampton where Lewis is Regional Manager, Central Queensland, for the Saunders Havill Group.

(WEDDINGS:

Meleisha Tennent (RGS 2003) married Stephen Lill at the RGS Rowing Club on 4 June 2016. Meleisha and Stephen’s celebrant was Zac Garven (RGS 2001). Mother and father of the bride, Karen and Barry (RGS 1976) spent the five months before the wedding carefully crafting pallet furniture for the reception, also held at the RGS Rowing Club. Rain for two days prior to the big day meant a quick change from the lawn to upstairs for the reception, but the blue sky broke through just in time for the ceremony. Special thank you to RGS staff Tricia Pratt, Twigg Wolfenden and Joh Sutherland for their assistance towards the special day.

Photographs: Reception (Zac Garven); Stephen and Meleisha (Zara Lane Photography)

Kate’s brave battle to help her daughter

Kate Beresford (nee Yewdale, RGS 1997) is doing everything she possibly can to help her young daughter Frankie.

Kate and husband Duncan were just like any other family. They were living in Rockhampton and their three-year-old daughter Frankie (Francesca) was attending The Rockhampton Grammar School’s Early Learning Centre. Frankie was then diagnosed with aggressive Acute Myeloid Leukaemia in late February 2016. It started with bruises which refused to heal, viruses, bleeding gums and ended with the diagnosis of cancer. Frankie remains in hospital in Brisbane receiving ongoing treatment. Kate and Duncan are constantly by her side - some days are better than others.

The RGS Theatre Council recently donated $500 to the Beresford family. Follow Frankie’s story on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/ Frankiefight2016/?fref=ts or further details on how you can help please contact Ms Reniece Carter at RGS at rcarter@rgs.qld.edu.au

Upcoming RGS Events

- 12 - 14 August - RGS Secondary School Musical - “42nd Street”. Performed at Rockhampton’s Pilbeam Theatre
- 6 - 7 September - ISPCA (Isolated Children’s Parent Association) Queensland State Conference in Alpha. RGS Families breakfast at the Alpha Golf Club on 7 September. Past students are welcome to attend. Contact paststudents@rgs.qld.edu.au for further information and to confirm your attendance
- 9 - 10 September - RGS Primary School Musical - “The Wizard of Oz”. Performed at Rockhampton’s Pilbeam Theatre
- 15 September - Kellow book launch at The Rockhampton Grammar School
- 1 November - Canberra past student breakfast
- 12 November - Class of 1996 Reunion (RGS Rowing Club). Email: Rachael at paststudents@rgs.qld.edu.au for further information

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