Welcome

Welcome to the July 2015 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 the newsletter 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.

From the President
Meleisha Tennent (RGS, 2003)

Welcome to the mid-year edition of the past students’ newsletter. The first half of 2015 has been jam packed with the excitement of Beef Australia, the Past Students Annual Race Day and various reunions and events. On Saturday, 21 March, 2015 we held the first, of hopefully many, Past Students’ Dinners where we recognised outstanding achievements and contributions by Past Students. Thank you to everyone involved in making this inaugural dinner a fantastic success. This is only the start and we can only acknowledge achievements we know about. Nominations for the 2016 awards close on 30 October.

The All Years Brisbane Reunion was once again held 2 May. Thank you to Lance Currie for coordinating another successful day and Stewart Norford for his attendance.

The Past Students’ Association Annual General Meeting was held Wednesday 10 June 2015. I was returned as President and congratulations to the following past students on their election to the 2015/2016 Executive Committee: Jason Smyth (Vice President), Alison Payne (Secretary) and Amy Thomasson (Treasurer). Committee - Alaina Kennedy, Lewis McKee, Lauren Shackleton, Brittanya Lauga.

Thank you to outgoing Secretary Scott Wilson for his long service to the Association.

Past Students’ Association meeting dates for 2015 are Wednesday, 3 August, at 5.30pm and Wednesday, 07 October, at 5.30pm. If you are interested in attending please email paststudents@rgs.qld.edu.au

Students remembered in France

RGS Head of Senior School Ms Denise Wright attended the ANZAC Day Dawn Service in France. During this time Ms Wright (pictured left at Captain Francis Fairweather’s grave) located the resting places and names of RGS past students who fought in World War I. At their final resting place she honoured their memory by placing an RGS pin near their name.

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It’s mid-morning in Wyndam, in northern Western Australia, and Peter Letchford (RGS 1977) is ready to sit down for a cup of coffee before inspecting cattle at the port for live export shipment to Indonesia. It’s already been a long day. Peter started at midnight, driving 300km to a cattle station for protocolling, applying internal and external parasite checks and inspecting the cattle to ensure they were fit for the live cattle trade journey.

“Knock off time is – who knows,” said Peter, who owns a veterinary practice in Kununurra in north-east Western Australia. Peter and northern Australia’s cattle industry are “making hay while the sun shines” in the live export industry after turbulent times.

“The industry’s really positive at the moment, but it’s always politically sensitive,” Peter said.

“There’s currently great prices and strong demand but everyone knows things could change at any time.”

Home for Peter is Kununurra and his work area covers around 1000km in both directions, to Derby in the west and midway through the Northern Territory to the edge of the Barkly Tableland in the east. Thanks to Peter’s aviation studies at The Rockhampton Grammar School his pilot’s licence comes in handy. (story, page 3)

This country is a lifestyle Peter has called home since 1992 when he arrived in Kununurra and purchased a small irrigation block. Peter is somewhat of a visionary who has somehow managed to combine his passions in life – veterinary work, flying and his Christian faith. His family, which includes wife Belinda and four children, have all shared this journey. The former RGS School Captain, who had the “dubious honour” of leading the School in the first year it returned to co-education and still proudly recalls opening for the First XI cricket team, arrived at the RGS from the Central Queensland region of Theodore before his family moved to the Dysart and Middlemount area. That was in 1975 before the mining towns were established.

After graduating Peter studied veterinary science at the University of Queensland before graduating in 1982 and working in a private practice. In 1984 he was introduced to the Ord River region of Australia when he joined the Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign.

“When I saw the Ord Valley I thought give this place 10 to 15 years and it will take off,” Peter said.

“Back then it was a white elephant that had potential.

“When I came back nine years later I liked what I saw. I saw the future of agriculture in the north – the government has finally caught up with me.

“It’s a fascinating area. It has scenic diversity and a diverse economy with cattle, irrigation, mining and tourism. I found the people up here were very innovative with a can do attitude.

“It’s just where I’ve put down my roots. You have to do it (establish yourself) somewhere.”

Irrigation farming was the reason Peter moved to Kununurra – his veterinary career has “happened by default” as station owners called in his assistance. Station owners would also call on Peter for expertise in another field – Christianity.

Growing up in a Christian home Peter found his own personal faith during his boarding days at RGS. Today he is still involved with local churches and his family’s Christian faith is expressed in the way they serve their community. The combination of his veterinary skills and faith struck a chord with his clients. “I’m out there doing big jobs for them (station owners) and they see you as a real person in their world,” Peter said.

“They see you going about things differently and look at the way you conduct yourself and talk about things. In difficult times or tragedy I get called on to help (with Christian work). I’ve been asked to do funerals over the years.

“They connect with you. I’m there to support and encourage them at difficult times and in between times. In the bush that’s what you have to do – you’re a jack of all trades and a more rounded person.”

Peter’s children were all home schooled but now leaving home to follow their own dreams.

In the meantime Peter is still clocking up the hours – as a father, husband, irrigation farmer, vet and minister.
Taking life one day at a time

Country lifestyle keeps life real for Gayle

Living on the land is in Gayle Shann's blood and a life changing accident almost 13 years ago only confirmed her passion for rural Australia.

In August 2002 Gayle Shann (nee Atkinson, RGS 1992) was renewing the fence around the house at “Cantaur Park”, two hours north of Clermont, when Gayle’s glove caught on a release pin and she became entangled in the post hole digger’s shaft.

Gayle lost her right arm and the nerves that controlled her left arm were torn out of the spinal cord leaving that arm paralysed.

Now almost 13 years on from that day Gayle still faces health battles. Ongoing headaches, caused by a spinal fluid leak, have resulted in numerous surgeries, the last in December last year.

With the headaches continuing Gayle is now planning for further MRI scans in July which she suspects could lead to further surgery.

Standing by her side, helping her every step of the way, has been husband Mac.

"Looking back it’s incredible to think we have been married for three years of my old life and now 13 years in the state I am now,” Gayle said.

Their love and courage featured in the ABC’s Australian Story, first shown in 2003 and recently aired again – still capturing the attention and support of a nation.

"It’s been a long process,” Gayle said. "I've come along in leaps and bounds. Watching that old footage on Australian Story I can see how far I've come. "At the start it was just getting by day-to-day. Life was slow and difficult. Now we’ve figured out our routine and our lives are back to being very busy. Keeping busy is good for both of us. “Lucky for me Mac wanted to put his hand up and wanted to help so we didn't have to move. It's not easy and there’s times it’s really draining on Mac.”

Gayle and Mac Shann still live on the “Cantaur Park” property, working their performance horses and the family’s Droughtmaster cattle. The couple grew up on the land, Gayle near the headwaters of the Burdekin River and Mac near Collinsville.

“It was very important for us to stay on the land,” said Gayle, who arrived at RGS midway through Year 9 and was dux of agriculture studies in 1991 and 1992. Gayle’s time at RGS was some of the few years she had ever lived in town.

“It was a great School and I had a great group of friends.” But straight out of School Gayle was back to what she always wanted to do, contract mustering and helping on the family property.

“I don't know any different (living on the land),” Gayle said. "Before the accident we did so much work together in getting this place tidied up and set up. We did all that work together and couldn't walk away from it.” Despite the setbacks Gayle is still determined to help when she can. Mac welded handles low down on the slides in the cattle yard to enable Gayle to use them and she has also learnt to work the drafting gates with her feet. Friends have also modified work vehicles so she can get around the property, either on the 4WD quad bike or other vehicles.

“It has helped give me some independence.” Gayle just keeps taking each day as it comes and continues her love of living in rural Queensland.

Stepping back in time

Flying is a means of transport for Peter Letchford (RGS 1977) to cover his extensive veterinary work in Western Australia and the Northern Territory - and it’s not just the terrain below that is currently familiar to Peter.

With his regular plane out of action he went to pick up another plane to continue his work.

“The plane’s rego looked really familiar and then I discovered it was the old plane I did my first solo flight in as a student at The Rockhampton Grammar School,” Peter said.

“I checked the log book. There it was, 21 July 1977.” The plane was part of the Rockhampton Aero Club fleet which is where he continued his flying training when the School’s aviation programme wound up. Peter studied aviation in Years 9 and 10.

“It’s still the same. The main difference now is I can see over the dashboard. I used to have to sit on a cushion to see over the dashboard at school.”

Pictured left: Peter and daughter Nomi and the plane back in the 1970s.
Rowing: Edwina still has passion for the sport

Dr Edwina Luck (RGS 1984) has rediscovered her passion for rowing, and is now winning State and Australian rowing titles at masters regattas.

This passion started back in 1980 at RGS.

“I was grade 9 at RGS. I’m not sure exactly how I fell into rowing, but a grade 10 girls lightweight 4+ needed a cox,” Edwina said.

“The Fitzroy River was a wonderful river to learn tocox and row. Wide, very long, fresh water, and while there were a few ski boats, there was definitely no ferries or tinnies to contend with like I row with in Brisbane!”

The Leichhardt Rowing Club, on the banks of the Fitzroy, had both RGS and RGGS rowing programmes, as did the high schools and TCC.

“Over the next two years, our crew (with only one member changed in 1981 from 1980), competed very successfully in many regattas throughout Queensland, and in those days, races in SEQ took place on The Hinze Dam, while many State Championships were also held on The Fitzroy River,” Edwina said.

“There were also regattas in Bundaberg and Maryborough. While I can’t exactly remember specific details, of regattas, our crew went on to win Head of The River Rockhampton in both 1980 and ’81, Qld Lightweight Schoolgirls 4+ in 1980 and 4+ in 1981.”

After a 30 year break from the sport Edwina, a Senior Lecturer in the QUT Business School (Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations), now rows for Commercial Rowing Club in Brisbane.

Edwina’s daughters had started rowing in Brisbane and after telling her story at a rowing regatta Edwina was soon approached to cox a men’s masters 8 for Commercial.

“I asked myself, would I want to get up at stupid o’clock and sit in the cold for two hours telling lyca-clad men what to do?,” Edwina said.

She jumped at the idea.

This would lead to the fun of the Head of the Yarra and coxing the women’s state masters 8.

Edwina chased higher goals.

“Many, many hours were spent sitting in the cold. Many hours being on the Brisbane River. Many beautiful sunrises. Many hours reading rowing blogs and watching rowing videos,” she said.

All the time she kept learning from Comercial’s rowers.

“Learning to row helped me to understand my calls and just how strong rower’s minds are (or crazy!),” Edwina said.

Several crews and regattas later Edwina found herself coxing the Queensland women’s 8. Their interstate journey culminated at the Australian Masters Championships in Penrith earlier this year.

At the start line Edwina told her crew, “You’re not going to like me, but I’m going to ask you to give me more. It will hurt but I know you will give it”.

Racing their “hearts out” the crew won the title.

“I have learnt so much about a rower’s character from sitting in the ninth seat,” Edwina said.

“How you overcome pain, and the power of giving more. How you won’t let down your crew, and the ability to dig when you just want to stop.”

This is what makes rowing so special among past and current RGS rowers.

Where are you? Past Students upload your contact information so we can take every opportunity to stay in touch with you! Go to www.rgs.qld.edu.au/psa-my-details
The Rugby World Cup 2015 will capture the attention of rugby fans around the world from 18 September to 31 October. One person sitting back in Australia closely analysing the play will be former Wallabies representative Jules Guerassimoff (RGS 1957).

Jules (pictured right with the Queensland 1963 touring team) played 12 Tests for Australia after making his national debut on the 1963 South African tour. He also played a record sequence of 74 games for Queensland starting from 1962. His final test for Australia was in 1967 against France, but he would not play his last competitive game of rugby until he was 50-years-old.

“I had a long career and everything just fell into place. I would still be playing now if I could,” said Jules, who turned 75 on 28 June. “I just enjoyed the game so much and kept fit. And I was lucky. The only injuries I sustained were dislocations or sprains which are just a part of rugby.”

Jules was born just 10 days after his Russian migrant parents arrived in Australia and would live in the Thangool and Yarwun districts. His first introduction to any form of football was playing rugby league at RGS.

“I was a 13-year-old when I played my first game of rugby league at Grammar and it wasn’t until 1958 that I played my first game of rugby union when I started university in Brisbane. I still played well in the rugby league ranks. I played for a Queensland Country team against City in a curtain raiser to an Australia and England game at the Gabba.”

The talented athlete was also a Queensland schoolboys javelin champion for three years in his RGS school days. Following School Jules studied at the University of Queensland where he played at breakaway flanker (the position he played his entire career) in the seconds and three games later the 17-year-old had broken into the firsts line-up.

“I really took to rugby and I thought it was a fantastic game.”

The 1960s were a different era of rugby and Jules still questions the impact professionalism has had on the sport.

“We used to play for a cause, for country and state, but now it seems to be more about money and contracts. That worries me a little and it doesn’t just happen in Australia.”

Jules was very passionate about playing for his “cause” and didn’t take anything in life for granted.

“When I first started school I didn’t know what was in front of me. I grew up on a farm in Central Queensland in a poor family, until things picked up when dad had a winning 30,000 pound Golden Casket ticket. That win provided a whole new financial pathway for our family.”

And just as his parents ventured across the seas to new beginnings the world would also beckon Jules – through both rugby and work.

Rugby tours were not quick visits back in the 1960s. Jules recalls his first 3 ½ month tour of South Africa, a five-week tour of New Zealand and a 6 month tour of the British Isles, France, USA and Canada.

“It was marvellous and we met all the top people in society – Elizabeth (Queen Elizabeth II) and Prime Ministers.”

Jules work as an agricultural scientist also had him travel extensively around the world from Asia to Europe and North and South America.

2015 World Cup Analysis

The Wallabies are ranked sixth entering the 2015 World Cup. In their quest to make the finals they will first have to get through Pool A games against England, Wales, Fiji and Uruguay.

Here is Jules’ analysis leading into the Wallabies campaign:

“They’re not playing very well at present and will have to show something in the next two to three months to justify being considered contenders for the top spots.

“The team needs to improve their ball possession skills from set pieces, the scrum is not as good as it should be and they have to reduce their mistakes like dropped passes, they are just schoolboy errors.

“A good player needs to have speed and anticipation. Don’t wait for something to happen – you have to prepare yourself before your opponent starts his manoeuvre. The halves will be keys to the Wallabies success. Will Genia and Quade Cooper are the keys. We have not a bad back row, they’re quick.”

Jules predicts a New Zealand and South Africa final with the All Blacks coming out victors. He also “hopes” Australia makes the semi-finals.

Jules Guerassimoff is in the final stages of finishing a book on his life - family, rugby and work.
When Emily Pryor (RGS Dux 2014) accepted her TJ Ryan Medal this year for her exemplary secondary school studies it also provided a link to the past. Mr Thomas Joseph (TJ) Ryan (1 July 1876 – 1 August 1921) was a teacher and Second Master at the School from 1901 to 1903 before leaving to pursue a barrister and political careers. TJ Ryan was admitted to the Queensland Bar in December 1901.

Slowly his legal practice grew and Ryan's advocacy in workers' compensation cases was building his reputation among the trade unions and awakened him politically. In May 1903 he joined the Rockhampton Political Association and on 3 June became president of the Rockhampton branch of the Australian Natives’ Association. He would soundly lose the seat of Capricornia in 1903 having stood for the Deakinite liberal persuasion party. He joined the Labor Party in 1904. He would lose the battle for the State seat of Rockhampton in 1907. It was in 1909 that Ryan settled upon Labor endorsement for the western State seat of Barcoo – a seat he easily won that same year.

Originally hailing from Victoria and having taught at several schools in Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland, TJ Ryan would later become the 19th Premier of Queensland (May 1915 – October 1919) before he resigned to enter Federal politics. During his time as Premier TJ Ryan was instrumental in leading the fight against conscription in the referendum launched by Prime Minister Billy Hughes.

His early political aspirations started when he ran for the federal seat of Capricornia and the state seat of Rockhampton. He was defeated on both occasions. In October 1909 he was elected as Labor member for Barcoo, retained that seat for 10 years and was elected Labor leader in 1912. In the years after TJ Ryan's passing a memorial fund collected money to erect the three metre bronze statue which stands in Queen's Park. Queens Gardens is a heritage-listed park located on a city block between George, Elizabeth and William streets. The statue was unveiled in 1925 (pictured below right).

The words on the plaque describe TJ Ryan as: Scholar-Jurist-Statesman. A Ryan medal was also struck for candidates obtaining the highest pass in the annual State scholarship examination. Past winners of this medal have also included RGS past students – Zemma Holmes-Story (RGS 2007) and Megan Kwong (RGS 2003). The Medal was first presented to secondary school students in 1927. No awards were made from 1971-1992. The Federal seat of Ryan, in south-east Queensland, was named after TJ Ryan. TJ Ryan died in Barcaldine on 1 August, 1921. Ryan was married to Lily Virginia Cook, who he married in Rockhampton on 30 March 1910, and they had a son and daughter.

Grammar School Chronicle – No. 8 December 1903: “To Mr. Ryan’s ability and enterprise the school must always remain indebted; and his pupils all recognise how much it has been to him that they have owed their success. He consulted the interests of the school not only in work but in play; for though not himself a player he ably represented the Grammar School at all athletic meetings and councils.”

Congratulations on RGS political presence

Congratulations to Brittany Lauga

Greetings to all students, past and present, from Sir John R. Kaputin, RGS 1956-1959. As a former MP for 30 years in PNG (1972-2002) and Secretary General of the ACP Group of States, based in Brussels, Belgium, 2005-2010, may I take this opportunity to congratulate the newest Member for Keppel, in the Queensland State Parliament, Hon. Brittany Lauga (RGS-2003).

Welcome to the arena of politics and all best wishes for your new challenge and your much appreciated agenda. For RGS representation in federal politics, I also extend my special greetings to Hon. Ken O'Dowd (RGS 1968) Member for Flynn and Hon. Stuart Robert (RGS 1987) Member for Fadden and Assistant Minister for Defence in Canberra. As a former Minister (National Planning and Development, Finance, Minerals and Energy and Foreign Affairs, among others) life in Canberra is not easy but achieving your goals for your respective electorates can be enriching spiritually and satisfying. As I said in my 2006 Speech Night Address at RGS, “whether as voters or participants in politics, the onus is upon all of us to ensure that we accept our responsibility for influencing policies and the political processes for the welfare of our respective citizens”.

May RGS continue to have its representation in politics, whether State or Federal. To Brittany Lauga, Ken O'Dowd, and Stuart Robert, good luck and all best wishes from a fellow Grammarian and a former member of your fraternity.

Sir John Kaputin KBE, CMG, PhD(Hon) (RGS- 1956-59)
Matt follows family polocrosse tradition

Polocrosse has long been a part of life for Matt McAlister (RGS 1996) and it’s a sport not for the faint-hearted.

Matt has not only seen fellow players sustain some serious injuries, but has himself had many a sore body and his fair share of close calls.

That has not stopped Matt in becoming one of Queensland’s leading polocrosse players.

The adrenalin rush of a polocrosse game is enough for Matt to clock up thousands of kilometres each season to hit the field.

Playing for the Tansey Polocrosse Club open men’s team, the Bouldercombe-based player will average between 5000km and 7500km over 13 carnivals this year.

“For me polocrosse is all about the adrenalin rush and chasing the big game,” said Matt, who will also travel to Darwin in August to play against a Northern Territory team at the Darwin Show.

“I’ve always been pretty competitive at sport and I guess I’ve been good at polocrosse because of my length and reach,” Matt said.

“The challenge is also getting a strong combination between horse and rider.”

Luckily for Matt this combination over the past eight years has involved “Terry”, with a growing list of accolades to the stock horse’s name.

These honours include Terry being named Best Australian Stock Horse (South East Zone) and Best Queensland Stock Horse.

“Polocrosse is 85 to 90% about having a good horse.”

Matt’s parents Glynis and Bruce McAlister have played polocrosse for the past 45 years and it was their love of the sport that first had Matt on the field as a 10-year-old. He would play with Bauhinia and Alton Downs polocrosse clubs in his early days.

Matt’s brother Dan would also join the competition.

“Mum has always been a horse lover and dad learnt to ride horses when he started going out with mum,” Matt said.

“It was a lot more popular with youth in this area back then with lots of kids playing and lots of friends from properties involved in the sport.

“We were also lucky we could get good horses growing up.”

Drought took its toll on the sport in many areas forcing many clubs to close down.

Matt’s determination to play against the best in the State found him at the Queensland and New South Wales championship club Tansey, home to Queensland and Australian polocrosse representatives.

“Everything is played at flat gallop in those big games.”

Matt has no plans of slowing down in chasing the “big games” around the Australian countryside.

Sharing the polocrosse journey by Matt’s side are wife Kelly and sons Ben and Ethan. (pictured below)

Army graduation

Congratulations to Liam Marbach (RGS 2014) who joined his Australian Army march out parade at the Wagga Wagga barracks in New South Wales in June. Liam is now posted to Albury Wodonga for the first 18 months of his diesel mechanic trade.

Netball: On court and courtside

Ella Lawrie (RGS 2012) was back in Rockhampton during May playing for the Brisbane South Wildcats in the Mission Queensland State Netball League.

The centre court player was back to play against her former team mates, the Capricorn Claws, which included current RGS Year 12 students Mikeeley Hoch and Mariissa Buchanan.

Catching up with sister Mikeeley Hoch (RGS Year 12) at the Capricorn Claws State League Netball game were her twin brothers Cormac (left) and Lachlan Hoch (RGS 2011).
The annual RGS Race Day, hosted by The Rockhampton Grammar School Past Students’ Association, was held at Rockhampton’s Callaghan Park on Saturday, 16 May. Racegoers were treated to music from RGS music students and quality service from the RGS student/staff hospitality team. The day also featured two races on the programme including the Diana McLellan Memorial Race, in honour of RGS past student and Association Past President Diana McLellan who lost her battle with cancer last year, and The Rockhampton Grammar School Race.

Thank you to everyone who supported this year’s event and we hope to see you for the 2016 RGS Race Day in May next year.

Fashions of Field winners: (from left) Judge Mrs Kerry Peel, Toni Bourke (Best Dressed Lady over 30), Dirk Baxendell (Best Dressed Man), Michelle Kitchen (Milinery), Carmen Fox (Best Dressed Lady Under 30) and judge Mr David Peel (RGS 1973).

Pia and Lewis (RGS 2006) McKee.

Alaina Kennedy (nee Alroe, RGS 2001) and Ross McLellan.

RGS teachers (left) Jodie Moore and Michelle Rundle.

Class of 1993: (left) Sally Kuhl (nee White) and Angela Dever (nee Wells).

RGS Librarian Jan Kennedy with Nicole and Tony (RGS 1995) Kennedy.

Tanya Cottam and Renee Carr (nee Messer, RGS 1992).

Right: (from left) Brittany Lauga (nee McKee, RGS 2003), Russel Claus, Matt McGahan and Sharon McKee.
In pictures - Beef Australia 2015 (4-9 May)

The Rockhampton Grammar School welcomed the opportunity to meet with the School’s future, current and past students and families during Beef Australia 2015 in Rockhampton. The School was strongly represented with an information stand and the School’s Show Cattle Team also competed strongly, collecting placings in Schools judging and age division judging. During Beef Australia the School also hosted a Breakfast at the RGS Rowing Club and drinks/canapes for current families at the Rockhampton Showgrounds.

Left: Dysart's Lauren Finger (RGS 2014) has already started her own company, La Shae Cattle Company. Lauren has been busy competing on the Central Highlands Show circuit since Beef Australia.

Bush Poet, Baralaba’s John Major (RGS 1958) performing on stage at Beef.

RGS past board chairman Mike Duggan (2002 - 2009) and wife Kaye.

Billie-Jo Mayes (RGS 2014)

(From left) Emerald's Josie Volck (RGS board member and past parent), Zilzie's Charlie Wilson (past parent), Brisbane's Barbara Bishop and Zilzie's Kaye Wilson (RGS board member and past parent).

Mark Coombe (RGS 1980) with his artwork.

Tamara Finger (RGS 2011)

Left: Rockhampton Milne Bros' Dale Walters (RGS 1988).

Billie-Jo Mayes (RGS 2014)

RGS past board chairman Mike Duggan (2002 - 2009) and wife Kaye.

(From left) Emerald's Josie Volck (RGS board member and past parent), Zilzie's Charlie Wilson (past parent), Brisbane's Barbara Bishop and Zilzie's Kaye Wilson (RGS board member and past parent).

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(From left) Emerald's Josie Volck (RGS board member and past parent), Zilzie's Charlie Wilson (past parent), Brisbane's Barbara Bishop and Zilzie's Kaye Wilson (RGS board member and past parent).

Rockhampton's Roll Oxenham (RGS 1944). Roll was also a member on the RGS Board of Trustees (1965-66) and a RGS Resident Master (1955-1960).
Mel’s determination to remember WWII soldiers

Mel’s determination to remember WWII soldiers

Meleisha Tenant (RGS 2003) has a strong connection to the past. The RGS Past Students’ Association President not only has a passion for her old School, but a visit to the Solomon Islands has also confirmed her passion for family.

In June 2014 Meleisha joined her father Barry (RGS 1978) on a Rotary Club volunteers visit to the islands. Visiting the Munda region Meleisha was surrounded by remnants of World War II. Oceans and jungles littered with reminders of the war.

Among the relics were six dog tags belonging to US soldiers. Through the encouragement of her father, and a love of history, Meleisha began a personal mission to return to the dog tags to the soldiers’ families.

“It is the only way I know how to honour the sacrifices that these soldiers and their families made so that we could have the life we now lead,” Meleisha said.

Meleisha, 28, has connected with four of the six families. The results are months of research which included contacting US government departments, charities set up to return dog tags, scouring birth and death records, contacting people on Ancestry.com and Facebook.

In search for the family of Moses Turner, Meleisha turned to Facebook and messaged people with the same surname living in the same town. She was disappointed to hear that she knew of anyone in the town who was African American, “Meleisha said. After locating an Emily Turner two weeks ago, she was disappointed to hear Emily was of no relation to Moses.

“I managed to stumble on an entry from one of my soldiers in the 1920 and 1930 census which showed that his race was African American,” Meleisha said.

“I immediately emailed Emily to find out if she knew of anyone in the town who shared her last name who was of African American descent.

“She emailed me back almost immediately advising me that ‘you wouldn’t believe it, but dad is here having dinner and I shared with him your story.

“He was a Vietnam vet and he fought with a soldier named Norman Turner who is the son of Moses’ brother Jesse.”

Remembering their legacy

Alan Roduner (RGS 1947-1948) made a return to his old school in April as an official representative of the National Servicemen’s Combined Central RSL Sub Branch.

Mr Roduner presented the School with 2000 poppies and commemorative ribbons for RGS Primary and Secondary students, and staff, to wear at ANZAC Day ceremonies. The symbolic items were purchased by the School’s Red & Black Association. The Association’s purchase supported the work of Legacy, the charity that provides assistance to Australian defence force families.

Teacher in Profile: K C Gillam

K C Gillam resonates with past students’ over many decades as a teacher, role model, Deputy Headmaster and Acting Headmaster from August 1964 to January 1965, following the sudden death of Fitzroy Jardine.

Kenneth Charles Gillam first taught at The Rockhampton Grammar School in 1928 before returning from 1930 - 1942. He then served in World War II and returned to RGS from 1945 - 1972.

One of his past students from the 1940s, Lawrie Waller (now in Sydney), said “K C Gillam, the man who showed me the beauty of Maths which still delights me even to this day.”

“K C, as he was respectfully known by us all (but never to his face) was a great favourite of all the class which is quite an achievement for a Maths teacher. He had a great sense of humour coupled with a sense of strict propriety and was a firm, but very fair disciplinarian. But above all he was a great teacher.”

Mr Kellow was Headmaster when K C Gillam first arrived at the School to teach Physics and Mathematics.

The Headmaster reported to the Board of Trustees, “Mr. Gillam has made a good start, and I think he will turn out well”.

And that he did giving over 50 years service to the School. His only breaks from the School were to complete his Master of Science degree (1929) and when he joined the Royal Australian Air Force (1942), where he served as Education Officer and rose to the rank of Flight Lieutenant.

Prior to joining the RAAF on a voluntary basis he established an evening class for many more years. K C Gillam would also become a Life Member of the Queensland Association of Teachers in Independent Schools.

He would curiously ask new students if their father previously attended the School. In 1971 a young Neville Weir mentioned his grandfather, Angus Weir, had also attended the School. Angus Weir was a student of K C Gillam’s in 1928.
David Dunlop celebrates 100 years

David George Dunlop (RGS 1924-1933) still has strong memories of his long years at The Rockhampton Grammar School. David, who celebrated his 100th birthday in Canberra on 3 June surrounded by family and friends, started Kindergarten at the Rockhampton Girls Grammar School before moving to The Rockhampton Grammar School (then an all boys school) the following year. Here he would stay until his final year of secondary schooling in 1933.

“I still have very good memories of the School,” David said.

“I remember the School, the playground and the scrub all around the School. “I started in the Primary section. I recall my teacher’s name was Cook (W.R. Cook). He was a great teacher.

“I remember the Headmaster (Kellow). He was a good Headmaster and teacher. He was pretty good with that strap and when he wasn’t available to teach us we would go outside and pick up stones off the playground. We didn’t mind getting out of the classroom.

“I was one of the “terrible four”. We were all reasonably bright but in those young days we used to play up a bit.”

Cecil Hadgraft was a very good teacher (English, French, Latin) and KC Gillam was my maths teacher. He was good at throwing a piece of chalk if you weren’t paying attention. I was always good at Maths but Patterson (E. G. Patterson) was always good at English, and Maths.

“Jardine was another of my teachers. At 9am we would march in from near the flag pole to assembly. I also remember the girls school would visit on a Wednesday afternoon and march down the driveway. We weren’t allowed to look at them.”

The Rockhampton Grammar School in David Dunlop’s days consisted of the main building and a gym.

David later recalls the construction of the septic tank and toilet block, providing much improved facilities, and the chemistry lab. The School’s swimming pool would be constructed later in his schooling.

“There was a bottle tree next to the grandstand on the playground where they played cricket. Quite frequently there were lots of goats on those grounds.”

David also remembers the Chelmsford Cup days between The Rockhampton Grammar School and Maryborough Grammar School where boys would compete across four sports, rowing, tennis, football and cricket.

“They would play two matches in Rockhampton and two in Maryborough,” David recalls.

David was the first child of Edwin Arthur Dunlop (train driver) and Mary Ann (nee McCamley). Sister Dorothy was born in 1917 and brother Doug was born in 1925. After completing his schooling at RGS David moved to Brisbane where he successfully completed his first year of a science degree at the University of Queensland before relocating to Canberra to take up employment in the Commonwealth Public Service (Department of Interior).

“The Headmaster of the School (Kellow) and the Principal at Emmanuel College (University of Queensland) both thought it was a bad idea at the time switching from science to commerce,” David said.

“I remember my mother saying to me ‘just do what you think is the right decision’.”

Commerce was the decision and it would prove to be the right one, providing a long career path. At this time he also commenced his ongoing membership with the Canberra Baptist Church in Kingston where he held the position of Church Secretary from 1958 to 1970.

In 1936 he was awarded a Commonwealth Public Service “Free Place” to study commerce (after work) at the Canberra University College.

David graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce (University of Melbourne) in 1941 and qualified as an Accountant. That same year he commenced military service where he rose to the rank of Army Sergeant.

In 1942 he married Gwethy (Peg) Piper on 28 February in Canberra during three days Army leave. In 1943 he was discharged from the Army to work as a Cost Investigator in the Minister of Munitions in Sydney.

Between 1944 – 1952 David became the father of three children – Barbara (1944), Marion (1948) and Stuart (1952).

In the 1940s David lectured part time in accountancy at Sydney Technical College and Canberra University College, where he continued until 1964.

David spent most of his working life with the Public Service, reached the level of First Assistant Director-General in 1965 before retiring in 1978.


David and Peg celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 2012 before Peg’s passing later that year.

While 100 years was fast approaching David was also keeping up with today’s technology. In 2014 David gave his first talk-back radio interview and appeared on Facebook. His focus was his long time dedication as a Sydney Rabbitohs supporter.

He was recently also acknowledged in Canberra for 70 years service with his Masonic Lodge.

“I’m still enjoying life to the full,” David said.

Letter of thanks

Dear Dr Moulds (Headmaster)
Thank you for your letter of 1 June 2015 congratulating me on my 100th birthday and for forwarding birthday wishes from The Rockhampton Grammar School Community.

I was very honored to receive these messages and also to be given a school tie. I have wonderful memories of my time at the school and have always appreciated the excellent education I received there.

The highlight of my birthday celebrations was a very enjoyable party on the 3rd June with family and close friends. However, I have also been touched by the many kind thoughts and wishes from others as well over the last few weeks. This has been a very special time for me, one that I will look back on with great pleasure.

Thank you again for your kind wishes and please pass on my thanks to the School Community as well.

Yours Sincerely, David Dunlop
Music - RGS recording artists

The Jelly Kids

Peter Schravemade (RGS 1995) always had a passion for music - and now it's become just one of his careers. In 1998 Jelly Kids was the brainchild of Peter and two close friends and musicians who met at university (QUT). Peter, Heidi and Natasha were best mates who challenged themselves to make a commercially viable children's band as part of a University subject. “Driving the core ideals was the great amount of research and data emerging about the importance of quality music on developing children,” said Peter, now a father of three. “As recently as last month I ran into friends who were complaining about the type of music their children had on repeat from Rockhampton to Brisbane,” Peter said. “I believe there is a disconnect from the perspective that parents are not as discerning about the music their children listen to as they are about their own music collection. “For the parent it means that you might have to do a bit more digging to find quality music, but the internet means that this is so much closer. So the central goal was to still include fun/educational lyrics, but make the music stylistically diverse with high quality musicians.”

After University the friends went their separate ways. The second part of the story came 15 years later when they met and discovered they faced a similar dilemma. “However, now we were motivated by the fact that the three of us had children of our own (the tally now at eight between the three of us) and actually struggled with the idea of what to give them to listen to,” Peter said. That was in 2012, the same year they were Queensland Music Award Finalists for the first time. “As a composer/lyricist, a lot of the songs you write never actually see the light of day beyond the piano/guitar they are fashioned on,” Peter said. “For songs we had written to be recorded and sent in to a panel of industry leaders judges and have them pick yours amongst the best is a strange but exciting feeling. It actually made me wonder whether it was a fluke. But it happened again the next year, with a newer song we had written… So maybe not?”

Peter said the whole project is just so much fun. “We absolutely love the enjoyment we see on the faces of the children we entertain. And children in general are awesome to work with. “Their carefree attitudes when it comes to singing and dancing is always refreshing. We are inspired by just how much music means to children, and devote a fair portion of our time to entertaining children through hospital events.”

The trio are just finishing up in the studio for a second album which will hopefully be released before Christmas this year. Peter credits his past teachers at The Rockhampton Grammar School who had a huge amount of input in the direction his life and career would take - Acting Headmaster/Deputy Headmaster, Anthony Vincent and Head of Music Department Bridget Cuyler. “Mrs “C” was in a strange situation as I remember it,” Peter said. “I think I out-ranked her at the time as far as Australian Music Examination Board qualifications on a chosen instrument were concerned. But as I fondly remember, Mrs Cuyler was amazing from the perspective that she would constantly look for ways to challenge myself and my contemporaries to look beyond what the syllabus had put in front of us. In doing so, I believe, fostered the first real music extension class (without actually having the name).”

Peter now lives on the Sunshine Coast and is the proud father of three children, who actively participate in his Jelly Kid's gigs. “In fact they struggle to understand sometimes that the other gigs I do at pubs, clubs and functions are probably not suitable for a 5 to 10 year old age demographic.”

The Judge tunes into music career

For the past 40 years Ian Dearden (RGS 1973) has been a passionate musical performer. From his RGS rock band to university folk clubs, in solo, duo and band configurations, Ian has performed and busked at clubs, pubs, town squares and festivals throughout Australia, UK, Ireland, Europe and the USA. Ian's repertoire that includes original, traditional and contemporary songs. In December last year he released his debut album, What Took You So Long? containing 12 original songs. The opening track is called Freedom, a song written when Ian was a 16-year-old boarder at RGS. The album can be purchased online at www.trystrecords.com.au or downloaded from iTunes, CD Baby, Amazon and a range of other digital download platforms. The CD is independently produced. When Ian Dearden is not following his music passions his day job is as Judge Ian Dearden in Queensland courtrooms.
Daniel experiences a new world of planning

Town planning student Daniel Krause (RGS 2011) is welcoming new challenges. Daniel and fellow Bond University studies travelled to Kirakira in the Soloman Islands to undertake a scoping study, assessing the project before it comes live.

The group did community consultation and site analysis, including using a drone to capture aerial footage of the town, to identify potential projects to take back to the team at Bond University.

Arriving in Kirakira, Daniel was greeted with extreme humidity and the sounds of people talking, birds calling, waves rolling in and fires burning.

He was “disconnected” from the rest of the world with no mobile phone service and minimal internet connectivity.

“The lack of distractions from the devices we all so heavily rely on allowed me to be more observant of my surroundings and really enjoy my time in Kirakira,” Daniel said.

Projects identified were the development of a new hospital and the redevelopment of the marketplace, and creation of a new library, Education Department office and teacher training centre, and a community cultural centre.

Daniel’s team presented their project to Solomon Island leaders and Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) representatives.

Daniel said there was no real identity within the architecture of the Solomon Island.

“Many remote villages utilised more traditional design and building techniques while in towns such as Kirakira there was a shift away from these techniques, largely due to the influence developed nations such as the United Kingdom and Australia have had in the Soloman Islands,” he said.

In his third year of his Bachelor of Sustainable Environments and Planning (Urban Design and Planning) at Bond University, Daniel recently won the University’s Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Award and was runner-up in a Minister’s Planning Award.

His topic was - The rise and fall of the traditional main street: A study of the effects of suburbanisation on the traditional main street in regional centres with an application of urban renewal in Rockhampton, Central Queensland.

Catching up with RGS Past Students

Hayley gets a different perspective on RGS

Hayley Quinn (RGS 2008) is getting a different perspective on her former school. Hayley has been on practical teaching duties at RGS as part of her Post Graduate Education studies through CQUniversity.

“It’s weird and takes a bit to get used to,” said Hayley, who previously boarded at the School.

“It’s all about getting to know the students and helping them develop. Until you’re standing at the front of the classroom teaching students you don’t realise what’s behind everything with teaching – the planning and frameworks. It’s a lot of work.”

Having graduated with a Bachelor of Accounting, Hayley is now completing an extra year of education studies to gain her teaching qualifications. The School’s Business Studies Department welcomed Hayley’s arrival.

Hayley was also taking in the familiar and new sights at the School.

“There’s a few new buildings and Boland used to have the business classrooms (now it’s girls boarding), but generally it’s still the same school which is nice.”

Hayley arrived at RGS in 2004 from her family’s property at Middlemount. I have lots of good memories from boarding,” Hayley is also following in her family’s teaching footsteps. Her mum Beverley is formerly a teacher and her sister Lexie (RGS 2011) is completing her final year of primary school teaching studies.

Hayley gets a different perspective on RGS

Merv London (RGS 1949) at the Capella Show, Merv recalled some talented RGS tennis players from his day - Australian players Mal Anderson and Rod Laver.

“I always thought Mal was the better player because I never beat him and I beat Rod at School - although he (Rod) was eight years younger than me.”

Joining the YLead team to assist at this year’s annual Year 11 Leadership Workshops were 2014 graduate, and School Captain, Marnie Hungerford and former School Prefect Tom Brady (RGS 2012). Marnie is now studying at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in Perth and Tom is completing his engineering studies at CQUniversity in Rockhampton.

YLead helps empower young people to live positively and be active leaders in their schools and communities. In 2014 the YLead organisation worked with more than 27,000 students from 275 schools across Australia.
Here is a snapshot of what is happening at your School today:

**Inter-House Sport**
Wheatley House claimed back-to-back cross country titles at the RGS Cross Country on 2 April. Wheatley won from Wheatcroft, Jardine and Kellow houses. At the Athletics Carnival it was Jardine’s turn to celebrate the top honours finishing ahead of Wheatley, Wheatcroft and Kellow. At the Primary School Athletics Carnival Wheatley won from Wheatcroft, Kellow and Jardine.

**Beef Australia 2015**
RGS was strongly represented at Beef Australia 2015 at Rockhampton in early May. The School’s Show Cattle Team competed in the Schools team judging, gaining an equal third placing, and also competed in parading and judging. The School was particularly successful in the judging age divisions winning second, third and fourth placings. The Show Cattle team has also competed at district shows including The Caves, Callide and Ridgelands.

**Red Shield Appeal**
Almost 300 RGS students and staff gathered on 31 May to help raise funds for the Salvation Army’s annual Red Shield Doorknock Appeal.

**RGS students and staff rally to help families**
RGS secondary school staff and students raised over $4000 to purchase two fully equipped survival kits to help families in Nepal following the country’s earthquake and in Vanuatu following that country’s tropical cyclone. Coordinated by the Rockhampton Rotary Club, the survival kits included a tent for 10 people, cooking and repair tools, water purification, cooker, drawing books and pencils for young children and thermal blankets. Each kit is designed for immediate survival.

**RGS rowers among Australia’s best**
RGS rowers returned home with three medals from the Australian Rowing Championships at Penrith. The Schoolgirls Coxed Quad crew of Lucy Blair, Imogen Storey, Georgia Saunders, Briony Mueller and cox Georgia Henderson won a silver medal. Lucy also combined with a Somerville House rower to win silver in the Women’s Under-19 Double Scull while Max Napper and Robert Sinclair combined with Cathedral rowers from Townsville to claim bronze in the Under-17 Men’s Coxed Quad Scull final. Lucy, Imogen and Georgia also joined the Queensland Schoolgirls 8 at the Australian rowing trials at Penrith in April.
Reunions: 2005, 1985, 1975, Brisbane

Class of 1975

(Right) Back Row: David McCartney, David Foxlee, Wayne Preston, Mark Horn, Paul Millroy, Stephen Beard, Robert Munday, Barney Kann, Donald Bridgeman, Craig Barlow, David Lommsay, Leslie Paton, Neville Kath, Rod Machan, Steve Rudorfer, Rodney Wolfenden, Grahame Day, Brad Beasley

Front Row: Alan Fisher, Mark Hawley, Andrew McCamley, Mick McKendry, Thor Prohaska, Michael South, Mark Bawden, Sandy Hawkins

Insets: Steve Berry, John Picton, Lindsay Jones

Class of 2005

Class of 2005: Ashleigh Norford and the Class of ’05 hits the RGS Race Day.

RGS Reunions

The Rockhampton Grammar School welcomed home the Class of 2005 on the weekend of 15-17 May with a BBQ dinner and the RGS Race Day.

Also returning in May was the Class of 1975. The Old Boys held a dinner in the School’s Memorial Assembly Hall and a RGS All Years function was held in Brisbane in early May.

The Class of 1985 reunion was held over the June long weekend.

In October the School welcomes back the Class of 1990 (17 October) and Class of 1995 (31 October).

For assistance with reunions contact Rachael McDonald at rmcdonald@rgs.qld.edu.au or phone 4936 0776.
Births, Vale and Marriages

**BIRTHS:** Steve Deaves (RGS 1987) and his wife Megan welcomed their first son Fletcher Brian Deaves on 1 April, 2015.

**WEDDINGS:** Justine Whouley (RGS 2007) and Trent Cawthray (RGS 2007) were married at the Stamford Plaza in Brisbane on 14 March 2015. The bridal party included Ashlee Whouley (RGS 2011), Mitchell Collins (RGS 2007), Cooper Nobbs (RGS 2007), Geordie Cawthray (RGS 2010), Benjamin Fleming (RGS 2007), Serena Sullivan (RGS 2007), Kayti Allen (RGS 2007), Jade Cawthray (RGS, Year 12) and Rhianna Whouley (RGS, Year 8). Justine is the daughter of Kathy and Lawrence Whouley and Trent is the son of Shelley and Gavin Cawthray.

**VALE:**
Karem Dunne (RGS 2012) - 23/5/2015
Lindyl Davey (nee Hetherington, RGS 1983) - 8/6/2015

Email paststudents@rgs.qld.edu.au or share your news or photographs of RGS past students.

Music to our ears: RGS Musicals

RGS musical talent continues to evolve over the years.

This year’s Secondary School musical is Beauty and the Beast (Pilbeam Theatre: 7, 8 and 9 August).

In the 1993 Capricornus teacher Mr Warren Segal wrote of the School celebrating 10 years of RGS school musicals:

“Ten years ago the first furtive steps were taken to produce a musical at The Rockhampton Grammar School. The show was “Sheik, Rattle and Roll” and I am the only survivor left to tell the tales. We had virtually no set, the play itself was simple and especially designed for high school students, but we were young and enthusiastic and what we lacked in experience we made up for in gusto and brashness. We actually took our modest little show on a tour out west. We opened in Duaringa, then on to Blackwater then on to Rolleston (we got some laughs out in Rolleston) and closed in Baralaba.

Our next two shows were of the same calibre, but with each we learnt and each was a little more sophisticated. “Bats” and “Man of Steel” were great, fun musicals to learn the ropes from, and audiences of the day had a great time with the slapstick and the corn. However, thespians do not live by corn alone and the time seemed right to tackle something with a lot more depth and heart. We chose to perform Sandy Wilson’s West End hit of the fifties, “The Boyfriend”...... The next year .... we staged “Bugsy Malone”. The show was a great training ground to nurture the talent for future productions and featured Roger McCutchan’s “splurge” guns and a finale involving over 100 “custard” pies being hurled about the set (and the odd one at the audience).

The time was ripe to tackle Broadway head-on. We decided to do a Cole Porter show. “Kiss Me Kate” is Porter’s greatest work and it was marvellous to perform his sophisticated songs ...... For the big tenth anniversary extravaganza, a light hearted and melodious Cole Porter show was realised. “Anything Goes” proved to be the penultimate Grammar Musical and was a most appropriate way to finish ten years of quality entertainment.”

Pictured: Grease (RGS 2008 production)

* In 2015 School Librarian Mrs Jan Kennedy will produce her 21st musical for RGS.

Upcoming RGS Events

- 7 August - Ballymore Cup State Final in Brisbane (Open Rugby)
- 7-9 August - RGS Musical Production at the Pilbeam Theatre - “Beauty and the Beast” (tickets available online at the Pilbeam Theatre website)
- 8 September - RGS Suncorp Breakfast Series (Thriving arts: Thriving city)
- 9 September - Sydney past students function
- 17 October - Class of 1990 (25 Year Reunion)
- 31 October - Class of 1995
- 3 November - Canberra Breakfast