PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Can you find a fellow student of WWTC? Can you help? Have you done your homework? Have you any WWTC memorabilia?

As President of the WWTCAA these questions have been the challenges issued over the past year to our membership. I am pleased to report that the responses to these challenges have been fantastic. We have found more members and traced some of those lost to the mailing list. There are more alumni actively involved in organisation and operations of the association. Homework submissions for publication in Talkabout have come from a broad range of our membership and many of our retirees are digging into their garages and cupboards to find memorabilia for archives. How good is Talkabout? The contributions from members always make this publication an interesting read. Expressions of appreciation are always forthcoming. It certainly serves the function of keeping people informed and in touch with their colleagues and provides a forum for disseminating information about our association’s activities. It was pleasing to have reports from three of our most recent scholarship holders as they complete their course and commence their careers in education. Our Association has been able to increase the amount offered from $6000 to $8000 to the successful final year student(s) in education thanks to the support of our members.

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There has been an increasing interest in developing and enhancing the Wagga Wagga Regional Archives on South Campus with WWTC memorabilia. Funds have been allocated for the digitalising of various hard copy items and most of the Talkabouts produced over the time of the College’s existence. These originals were held by Winifred Wilcox, an editor in her time at College.

It has been pleasing to receive various reports from group reunions with photos. It is a function of Talkabout and the WWTCAA to provide the forum to assist groups in coordinating and organising their “trips down memory lane.” I encourage others to get involved to continue the connections and make further reconnections. College days are certainly times to remember and as articles come through the various journeys in life make for interesting reading.

This year we have been most fortunate in being able to utilise a printing source significantly reducing the costs of the hard copies. However mailing costs have escalated by over 100% and in 2016 each mail out copy of Talkabout will be $2.00. The Secretary’s report identifies the current nature of our membership in relation to electronic mail and postal distribution.

The WWTCAA opted for two projects in 2015. These were the WWTCAA Education Scholarship with CSU and CSU Regional Archives. It was also decided, that given the benefit of a significantly lower cost for printing, a regular donation to The Indigenous Scholarship Foundation of a school is made.

Our Association elected to make an edited print re-run of Nancy Blacklow’s “South Campus A History”. This book traces the formation of the Wagga Wagga Teachers College from the original agricultural base to the WW2 RAAF Hospital and then through to the end of WWTC (1947-1971) and the beginning of RCAE and CSU. The campus now has been rezoned as mostly residential and is the site of CSU Regional Archives. Gone are the playing fields and most of the wooden buildings as housing development takes place. Copies of the book are available from WWTCAA Secretary for $20 including postage.

We continue our relationship and liaison with Stacey Fish, the Faculty Advancement Officer of CSU Division of Marketing and Communication. Matters relating to our Scholarship Foundation Trust, scholarship selection and use of the CSU Alumni website for the electronic posting of Talkabout on the site all occur through Stacey. There will always be a need to manage these linkages to ensure that the objectives of our association are not compromised by the seemingly endless modifications being made to University operations and funding. It is important to ensure that the funds from our association are being best utilised to support the best candidates wishing to enter into the profession of education. It is also hoped that CSU will be prepared and able to contribute support for the planned 70 Year Reunion of WWTC in October 2017.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the foundation work of our pioneering alumni group who initiated this Association in 1997. The current Management Committee, still comprising some of our pioneers, has continued to make valuable contributions through their ideas, work roles, advice and support over the past twelve months. The WWTCAA is well and truly functioning.

I wish to extend special thanks to Lindsay Brockway for his attention to detail with the accounts and finances; Brian Powyer for his work in preparing Talkabout, Bob Haskew for his productive liaison with CSU Regional Archives and Lesley Forbes for her diligence in maintaining a data base and handling all of those pieces of correspondence and keeping the conduit open.

Finally, may we as a committee acknowledge and give consideration to those fellow WWTC compatriots who are no longer with us. We have lost some near and dear friends over the past twelve months. Our Association extends our sympathy and support to the families and friends of those who have departed and perhaps we can recall memories of our friendships and associations as a fellow student of WWTC.

Bruce Forbes
President WWTCAA
Thank you to the many alumni that have contacted me since our last edition. I am sure that other members will appreciate your thoughts and memories.

Ken Little (1969-72) Thank you for the latest edition of Talkabout. It's always good reading, informative, humorous, and sometimes sad. Good to see the stories about scholarship holders and their positive words about teaching and the future. The selection committee has done its job well. Sad about Lew's passing. Although the connections with the past are being stretched by the passage of time, they are being kept alive by yours and others’ good stewardship at Talkabout and so we will remember them.

Hope you both had a really enjoyable trip. Heaven knows how many WWTC alumni you might have passed on the way.

Have a happy and blessed Christmas for 2015, (gosh, another one has slipped past). Looking forward to the next edition and more reading about teaching experiences, news and reunion reports. Ours at the Mercantile last September for the '69-'72 session was a joyous occasion where goodwill, (and a bit of amber) flowed. Great credit goes to Neville and Hoggy for organising it.

Sue Hazel (Perry) (1966-67) LOVE the story about Coad's Tank ... they came to the Combined Sports' Day that was held at Balladale every year. Minor blast from the past. Thanks for the Talkabout.

"It was a golden afternoon, and the smell of the dust they kicked up was rich and satisfying." Kenneth Grahame

Mary Dunn (Crabtree) (1950-51) I'm told I'm very good at organising "events" - or was!!! Older age and all its problems are really catching us!! College life at Wagga (50/51) was a truly wonderful experience for me. After 38 years at the coal face my husband (Gene) and I retired in 1991 after teaching in Queanbeyan during the coming of the displaced people from Europe, certainly a difficult time for all concerned.

Then into Canberra to open several new schools during the development of the Woden Valley and Weston Creek area. Our farewell dinner with 500 plus people in attendance including many of our ex pupils especially some from the early days in Queanbeyan gave up a fitting farewell. We still keep in touch with some of these European families and their families in Europe.

I married Gene in 1956 on 7th January and we have, just this week past, celebrated our diamond anniversary (60 years for you younger people). My beautiful AND large diamond is gorgeous!!!

I really do enjoy reading all the news from Wagga - please continue the correspondence.

Colin Yarham (1947-49) Thanks Lesley. You have no doubt read of the problems we are facing in Chennai. Going for a month with 24hr rainfall up to 25cms (No not mms).

The situation in the city is deadly, with waist deep water and more in places with 200 dead from drowning & electrocution. We are lucky here with water to doorstep.

The city releasing water from dams to prevent them from collapsing and that just adds to the fury in the city of 10 million. Prayer needed for street children and elderly.

All education places closed by state, with police inspecting to ensure closed.

Our problems include storage for 30 boxes of Teachers Manuals and books; have sent 8 boxes by ship to Aus.; to ship 6 boxes, printer and desk etc. to Anuja in Ghaziabad; have given two large piles to the Corporation schools and CSI school system; sold most of furniture but washing machine, desk, etc. Have to sell to raise funds for moving stuff. Difficult to obtain money. With power outs, everything has to be cash. Constant challenges, so the answer is not to get up-tight but to solve the next problem.

Then there is the problem for Gurunathan and me of getting enough food, drinking water, with supply short, shops rushed; power frequently cut; - and the sewerage system - you can't imagine the streets.

No way can I get out of here on 8th (sic Nov.) as ticketed; not permitted to change on line and
Kevin Rioli (1955-56) Our 1955 -56 Group have a reunion every year. This year it was organised by Graeme Phillips and we had the reunion at Moss Vale about 2 months ago. We had about 60 in attendance. Laurie Orchard, our Music Lecturer came, as he does every year. Laurie was one of our men’s wardens.

It was decided that we would continue to have the reunion each year from now on at Moss Vale as it appears to be central to everyone.

Elaine Saunders (Hardy) (1962 –63) Please pass on my congratulations to all concerned re the last fabulous extended issue of Talkabout.

Patricia Lee (Jaggar) (1960-61) I was particularly interested to read Helen Kidd’s (nee Yabsley) article in Talkabout. Before

Ted Brill (1958-59) Have a happy and blessed Christmas for 2015, (gosh, another one has slipped past). Looking forward to the next edition and more reading about teaching experiences, news and reunion reports. Peter Kidd was my maths teacher at Wagga High School in 1955. The late Bill Grant was the principal of my first school at Urana in 1960. I greatly admired both of them.

I think the last Talkabout for 2015 is one of your best ever! Congratulations to all concerned.

Noel Haberecht Interested to read about Col Kohlhagen who was South Wagga PS Headmaster (OK Principal) when my old Primary School celebrated its centenary in 1991. If he was a Wagga boy (non-resident student at WWTC) I think I know his parents. Most of the one-teacher schools mentioned throughout are familiar to me – except Coad’s Tank. Darcy Tosh was in my session. As was Helen Yabsley.

Lesley Forbes Secretary

The archives team have made excellent progress with the WWTC digitisation project.

With the $5,000 grant from the WWTCAA we have been able to digitise 134 documents, 142 editions of Talkabout (from 1947-1971 although there are still some gaps I think) and 2,300 photos, negatives and slides from the WWTC collection housed at the Archives.

We have now also uploaded in excess of 1,300 of these digitised images and Talkabout issues into our new digital gallery which anyone can now access. The web address for the new gallery is:

https://csuregarch.intersect.org.au

This new site is still a work in progress, and we would welcome any feedback about the site, which we have had set up specifically to allow users access to digitised collections housed at the CSU Regional Archives.

Kind regards,

Wayne Doubleday Manager CSU Regional Archives & University Art Collection
The last edition of *Talkabout* caused me to go back to my college photo album, where I was able to find a few snaps that showed the campus as it was in ‘61 and ‘62. I’m afraid Myrtle did not feature but the rotunda did. Despite the old dorms in the background, you will note the grounds were well-maintained.

I resided in Ipai, one of the old dorms. Winters were freezing. I recall I used seven blankets. Wall partitions didn’t reach the ceiling so any warm air one was able to accumulate dissipated into other rooms, as did the noise.

For over 50 years now I have been helping my husband run a mixed farming enterprise east of Junee. We have 4 daughters three of whom studied agriculture and the fourth did Art/Law.

For eight years after leaving WWTC I taught at Berala, Finley, Culcairn and Junee. Perhaps you would be interested in an experience in my first year out.

It was the long weekend in June. I was going home to my parents farm near Cootamundra and my boyfriend at the time was going to travel several miles to be there also. With this in mind, I had stayed after school to prepare lessons for the Tuesday, as my train back would arrive not long before school. About four o’ clock a telegram boy handed one of the cleaners a telegram which she asked me to put on the Head’s desk. I saw it was for me and duly opened it. I was being transferred to Moulamein to start Tuesday morning. Travel options were to catch a train to Melbourne Sunday night, then another train back to Moulamein on the Monday or go on South West mail to Hay on the Monday and catch the mail car direct. The move was shortening my long weekend so I chose the latter option.

The trip to Hay was very pleasant sharing the company of two girls from college who shared a flat in Hay. We parted company on the platform and I went looking for the mail car. Eventually someone asked me why I was looking lost. The situation was duly explained and he gave a chuckle. There had been such a mail car but it had ceased two years earlier. However, he ran the mail car to Balranald 84 miles away but as he would be travelling via Oxley the trip would be well over 100 miles. If I travelled with him he knew I could get a mail car from there to Moulamein. He would not be leaving till the shops closed but would drop me at the flat of the teachers he had seen me with and pick me up from there.

Just on sunset he did so and told me he had kindly rung Mrs Butler at the Shamrock Hotel to tell her I would be arriving late and needed a room for a few days. There were two other passengers and I noticed they put a pair of gumboots in the back while I was still wearing high heeled patent shoes with nylon insets. One was Jackie a labourer on the weir being built at Maude. He had had his first trip to Sydney for the weekend. When the mail-car...
man asked what he had done we were told several times that he got off the mail train found his way to the Wynyard Hotel and did not remember anything till he woke up on the train at Naranderra that morning. Great trip Boss. Great trip.

At Maude his seat was taken by a young man, the shire clerk at Oxley. Coming up to the road junction to turn north towards Oxley he suggested we take the shortcut across the plain. There had only been ten points of rain over the weekend and his family had driven over it the evening before. We did not get far before we were well and truly bogged. When all else failed the mailman said we would have to pluck saltbush and make a carpet to gradually inch the vehicle forward. How I wished I had gum-boots that cold frosty June night. We did not get far before we were well and truly bogged. When all else failed the mailman said we would have to pluck saltbush and make a carpet to gradually inch the vehicle forward. How I wished I had gum-boots that cold frosty June night. We were very late as he put mail in McFarlane's box some 20 miles south of Oxley but would not let the cook get out despite many assurances that she would be collected. He said they would find mail and know to go to Oxley to collect her. I thought that sounded a bit unreasonable till he told her there was no way he would leave a young lady at a mailbox 17 miles from the homestead.

By the time we reached Balranald I had asthma so he delivered me to the hospital and said he would let Mrs Butler know. The only bed was a share room with a lady who had just given birth to a son.

By Tuesday afternoon I was fine again but the mail car for Moulamein would not be leaving till Saturday morning. Mr Schultz the hospital secretary suggested it would be to my advantage financially to stay on as a public patient if I would be prepared to take around the lunch and afternoon tea trays. Cost would be the same as The Shamrock with the addition of all meals. This offer was gratefully accepted and between times I walked all the town area.

Saturday’s transport was a large ute with myself and a portly gent as the passengers. The latter would get out at the property entrance, take his bag off the ute and have a long neck of beer while mail was being delivered to the homesteads. Just as well we reached our destination by late lunchtime.

Monday I arrived at the school to find my position had been filled by a local who had decided to return to work and they had no idea I was coming. After a few phone calls to the area office it was decided I should stay the night then go on to Finley. Two direct mail trips would get me there with an overnight stop in Deniliquin where I spent my 20th birthday.

At the end of the week I arrived at the Finley school. Yes the Headmaster had advised area office that Mrs Small, who was married to a bank manager, would be leaving for Sydney BUT not till the end of term. More phone calls and a decision made I could be a general useful person around the school till the end of term before replacing Mrs Small.

Some twenty years later my husband bought sheep at the June Hay sale. They were delivered just on dark and as usual we offered the carriers dinner. Television had reached Junee but not Hay. The men explained they usually did not stop but if I could serve dinner quickly they would like to watch the news on TV. The carrier turned out to be the mailman who had taken me on that first trip, Peter Harrison. He had progressed to owning his own transport business. For many years he delivered our purchases until killed in an accident.

Firstly, a disclaimer; this was not my idea. Neville Keeley asked me to write something for Talkabout. So after you read this, hurl all your abuse at him.

Secondly, if, while reading, you get the distinct impression the author did little more than have a whole lot of fun during his years at Wagga Wagga Teachers College you are very perceptive and therefore should have studied Level One English. If indeed you did study Level One English, ya haven’t lost it baby!

Thirdly, the friendships forged during those amazing years have endured beyond 45 years, and that is remarkable. (More on this later).

Fourthly, there is no fourthly, so it’s now down to serious business.

BOYS AND GIRLS COME OUT TO PLAY - George Manojlovec 69-70
Wagga Wagga Teachers College years 1969 to 1972 enjoyed a reunion at the Mercantile Hotel, Sydney, on Friday September 11, 2015. A fine time was had by all. (More on this later). So ends the serious business.

There is a show on television. You might know it. It’s called ‘Who Do You Think You Are?’ This has nothing at all to do with what I’m writing, but mentioning it now could come in handy later. You see, each word in the title is monosyllabic and therefore the tone and intent of the sentence is dramatically altered depending upon which word is emphasised or which syllable stressed. In the wrong situation this could be challenging. A bit like that wonderful Aussie sobriquet, ‘You old bastard.’ (More on this later).

But, most importantly, this is what I had learned at WWTC:

a) How to responsibly drink beer with friends. Stop laughing.

b) How to throw a tennis ball at a brick wall, underarm, at a velocity tantamount to escaping Earth’s gravity.

c) How to accept the fact that if I refused to eat what was euphemistically described as food, dished up in the dining hall, (more of this later), I would starve to death as the paltry $18.20 per fortnight barely covered point (A).

d) Confining 17 to 20 year olds in dormitories is fraught with danger. Indescribable things happen.

e) How to avoid/evade Cecil. Cecil was a sort of security guy. He would prowl the nocturnal campus charged with his own challenge, which was to keep the erotically-inclined at least 300 metres apart. His weapon of choice was a torch, which he wielded efficiently and leeringly. The fastest torch on the porch, he will forever remain the most reviled personality on campus, along with the other 21. (Now I’ve got you guessing, haven’t I).

f) College girls were the most desirable humans on planet Earth and if the reunion is anything to go by, they still are. That, fellas, is how to earn a truckload of brownie points.

g) To try to get between a college boy and his most desirable human on planet Earth would elicit an exclamation of aforementioned TV show with stentorian stress on word number 5. (See, I told you it would come in handy).

h) The Riverina is beautiful.

i) A Pass was as good as a Distinction. Much better, in fact, as it required less effort.

I relate this story because I’m leading up to something very important. You see, all of this challenging occurred directly after I had graduated from WWTC. Which just goes to show what a fortress of learning that fine institution was.
Anyhow, after learning all this at WWTC and precious little more, I was posted to a remote one-teacher school called Gidgell. (More of this later). I was quaintly called Teacher-in-Charge. I put this to a policeman stationed some distance away and suggested that if he arrested me I would go from Teacher-in-Charge to Teacher-on-Charge. He failed to see the funny side of it. I tried the same gag sometime later on an electrician. I got the same response as the policeman. But I digress. Bear with me, because now it gets really interesting.

In those days, the Department of Education, 33 Bridge St, Sydney, very magnanimously offered young teachers jobs everywhere. Everywhere far, far from civilisation as I knew it. There was a sword of Damocles called The Bond. The Bond was the equivalent of a king’s ransom. $1000 then, a very considerable sum.

It went a bit like this:
DEPT: You have been offered Gidgell Public School.
ME: Where’s that?
DEPT: We don’t know. That’s why we’re sending you to find out.
ME: But what if I don’t want to?  
DEPT: That will cost you $1000.
ME: OK. When does the train leave? 
DEPT: Train? What train?

I was also offered Cavan Station. Try finding that on a map. Worse still, after accepting the appointment, I knew I would have to teach Kindergarten how to read. I also knew I didn’t know how to do this. I still don’t, and never will.

As luck would have it, my only Kinder kid (German tautology there), was extremely bright. With minimal assistance from me she was smart enough to teach herself to read. Fluently, virtually overnight. Suddenly, utterly undeservedly, I was God. Her mum and dad worshipped the footprints I embedded in the red dirt. And Lo! The word spread of the remarkable new teacher who could teach kids to read fluently virtually overnight and who could throw a tennis ball underarm further than anyone could imagine.

“My goodness!” they exclaimed, “Little Sharon didn’t even know which way to hold a book when she started school!” My head swam. How proud was I that I’d taught Little Sharon how not to read books upside down.

Come lunch time, Sharon’s mum would reward me with a plate of delicious, hot, farm-baked roast. When I described ‘shark attack’, ‘train smash’, and ‘Arab’s armpit’, the ‘food’ I’d endured in the college dining room, she tut-tutted, took pity and threw on another potato.

Meanwhile, Little Sharon had taught herself to count to infinity, so I started getting dessert as well. But, in all modesty, I do consider myself lucky. Had Little Sharon been an under-achiever, her dad, who was built like one of those railway siding wheat silos, would probably have run me down with a harvester and consigned me to an auger bin.

I arrived at that outpost of progress in February. It was mercifully hot. A local farmer greeted me and very thoughtfully presented me with a shotgun. “Keep this at the school,” he growled laconically, “it splatters the crap out of the brown snakes.” I saw many snakes, but never used the gun. Though little Johnny in year 3 sorely tempted me many times.

There was a pub 30kms away. Here I was able to hone the skills of aforementioned point (a). You could drink and drive then. What egregious insanity that was.

Life at that remote school was lonely; so every weekend I spent life somewhere else. This sometimes meant meeting up with fellow WWTC compatriots who had also been consigned to solitary confinement in realms far, far away. Imagine how surprised and relieved I was to discover that they, too, didn’t have a clue about teaching reading or maths or anything for that matter. Except, of course, how to propel a tennis ball underarm at mind-numbing speed. Perhaps during college lectures our thoughts had dwelt too often on aforementioned point (f).

I felt genuine remorse for those young teachers who didn’t have Kindies who are now rocket scientists at NASA. They inevitably would have been run down by a harvester and consigned to an auger bin.

Propelling tennis balls underarm in the absence of a brick wall presented its own problems. A projectile with that velocity can traverse several paddocks and can take a bit of retrieving.
Which at last brings me back to the reunion. Over lunch and drinks we were retrieving, not tennis balls, but memories, quite unique and wonderful ones at that. There were about 50 of us, survivors of challenges only teachers know. Many, like me, had survived not knowing how to teach anything but doing it very well. Wagga graduates had a well-earned reputation for being the world’s best teachers of nothing in particular (OK. OK. TV show title again. I didn’t think it would be that handy). Many had aspired and succeeded. Others had given up along the way in pursuit of whatever.

The Kabi boys were famous... or was it infamous, for their social and fiscal commitment to the future prosperity of Turvey Tavern. They were also known for their singing ability that they thoughtfully shared with Turvey Park residents on every second Thursday night after Turvey Tavern had closed. Then you could hear the Kabi boys' choir in the distance, subtle at first but compelling in volume and vigour and building to a crescendo just as they reached the Milky Way. Yes, those three blind mice really rocked.

Yet, unsurprisingly, those erstwhile ghosts chortled, giggled and guffawed like it was all just yesterday. Big, happy, greyer kids. The genuine delight on the faces as good friends embraced and back-slapped was throat-lumping stuff. There was a lot of ‘you old bastard’ too, with various degrees of syllabic emphasis. Age is....well,...age. But nothing a name tag won’t fix.

I felt strangely hollow travelling on the train home that evening, an odd, profound sadness. Perhaps it was because no one had brought a tennis ball or there were no radishes in my salad. Maybe next time. There’s bound to be a next time. It was too special a day for there not to be. I’ll talk to Neville about it. If he’s still talking after all the abuse he’s about to receive.

George Manojlovic
1969-70

So we gathered on Friday the 11th, fifty or so in number; some travelling long distances, others from Sydney's surrounds and others who lived close at hand. We gathered with one thought in mind, to enjoy each other again, to relive great and not so great moments, (I still hate snow), to share stories and experiences and not insignificantly, because we just liked each other and still do. No big-heads, no egos. Just big kids who grew up but never lost the spirit of the child in all of us.

It reminded me of the night of our college revue in '69. I started the proceedings with my Spray Fresh Ad – somewhat apprehensively but when I stepped on to the stage the spirit in the place was magic. No cynical or smug looks, just happy faces, flashing smiles, shiny eyes, enthusiastic people just waiting to be entertained. That goes for the student body as well.

So why should we do it again?

A lot of people have avoided reunions since college finished believing that that part of their lives is over and it's a time and place they don't care to revisit. That was understandable ten, twenty, thirty years ago when we were more busy and heading in different directions. But now, we're at a time in our lives when we can slow down, stop and smell the roses and look back to those times and remember when life was simpler and a bit exciting and relationships and attitudes were forming. We should also remind ourselves that we're not immortal and if we don't, we may never see some old 'friends' again.

The only thing missing on the day was that a lot of 'our girls' weren't there. You meant a lot to us back then and still do. We missed you. It was great to spend time with the ones who were there. You reminded us of the times our hearts used to beat
a little faster when we passed you on the way to lectures or joined you on the dance floor as Nanna’s Passion Poem belted out Eloise or The House of the Rising Sun.

I’ll finish this missive now with three compelling reasons girls, why you should keep in touch and make an effort to come to the next reunion.

Firstly, remember Wait Until Dark. Were you there that night? Did you shriek when Alan Arkin dived across the set knife in hand in a vain attempt at plunging it into a blind Audrey Hepburn? I have to confess I wasn't, I was at church but came back to a dorm full of nervous fellows standing around in groups talking in whispers. But I did support my roomy, Ross, when he needed someone to accompany him to the toilet. (That's what roomies did for each other as you all know.) Indirectly girls that means I supported all of you as well. Who walked some of you back to the girls' dorms and no doubt even offered to stay the night with you if you needed further comfort and protection? The fellows of course.

Secondly, what about the time when there was a blackout and rumours of a prowler prowling around (apart from Cecil). Who drove up with their headlights blazing and torches flashing and lit up all the girls' dorms for the sole purpose of protecting and comforting 'our' girls and by so doing out torched Cecil? Yes, it was 'your' fellows.

Finally, who graciously accepted three invitations to go out with three different girls on Sadie Hawkins week ends and nobly ate all your spare chops at dinner time and sometimes lunchtime as well? Yes, you're right, us again. I could go on but I'm sure you get the point.

We would love to see you again and take time to smell the roses with you - and yes, even if you married an Aggie. You have been forgiven.

It would also afford you the opportunity to look at name tags and finally know how to spell Manolo ... Manojov ... George's surname.

Ken Little 6913 - 7023 - 7150694 - 12345678910 (the last one being what my little grandson can count to.)

COREEN DISTRICT TEACHERS WHO SERVED IN WW1
Col Kohlhagen

In the last edition of Talkabout I wrote about my experiences at Coads Tank School in 1962-63 in the Coreen District. At various times during its early history, Coads Tank had operated as a half-time school with two nearby schools, Wheatlands and Emu Park. This contribution recalls the journey of two teachers who were appointed to those small rural schools and later enlisted after having been involved, albeit briefly, in the Coreen District to the north of the Murray River. They were obviously not graduates of WWTC but they, and their peers, paved the way for many beginning teachers from our era who found themselves in similar situations.

As we acknowledge the centenary of the 1914-18 War and the sacrifices that were made during that horrific period of Australian history, it is appropriate to reflect upon their lives.

These accounts, taken from official Department of Education files and their service records, would be typical of many young teachers who found themselves at Gallipoli or on the Western Front during this terrible time. One was fortunate enough to return home and pick up the threads of his life while the other gave his life in the service of his country.

Corporal Ambrose Mason
Number 3402 [1st Battalion/ First Brigade/First Division]
Ambrose Mason was born in July, 1894 and his first teaching appointment was as teacher-in-Charge at Plentyanna, one of the schools in the Coreen closer settlement district in October, 1913. When it closed in early 1915, he spent a few weeks at
Corowa before he was appointed to Coad’s Tank on 26 March, 1915 when Wheatlands and Coads Tank Schools were first linked as half-time schools.

Mason left the district later that year and enlisted at Liverpool on July 12, 1915. His enlistment papers gave his father’s name as Samuel Mason, Crown Road, Riverstone which was where he was born. This would have been a rural area north west of Sydney in 1915.

He was 5 feet 7 inches [170 cm] and 10 stone [63.5 kg] with fair hair and blue eyes.

Mason arrived in Egypt in January 1916 and left for Marseilles on 22 March, 1916. The First Division troops were stationed around Hazebrouck in Belgium where they received their final training and were introduced to the realities of warfare in an area affectionately known as the “Nursery”. He would have taken part in raids on the nearby German lines as part of the preparations for the disastrous Fifth Division action near Fromelles in July.

During the remainder of 1916 the First Division saw action in the Fromelles and Messines sectors in Flanders and at Pozieres on the Somme. Mason survived the heavy fighting unscathed in all these engagements and in September the First Division was transferred back to Flanders near Ypres where it was planned that the First Division troops were to spend the winter, recover and re-group. However, due to an unexpected German offensive, they were almost immediately transferred back to the Somme between Bapaume and Gueudencourt.

By this time Mason had been promoted to Corporal. On the night of November 5, 1916, he was ordered to lead a small raiding party from Number 10 platoon to attack a dugout which had been training fire on the Australian forward positions.

None of the five-man raiding party returned as reported by Sergeant A.R. Hynes, the NCO who had issued the raiding party order. Mason was subsequently recorded as missing in action which caused his father to write a series of letters claiming that the family had received letters from their son dated after he was supposed to have gone missing. Mason’s father was to write later claiming that the Red Cross had received information which suggested Mason was a prisoner of war. None of the issues raised by Mason Senior were satisfactorily resolved for some months.

Two official inquiries were held, one at Lavielle on June 7, 1917 and another on 28 November, 1917 at Divisional Headquarters. The mystery was finally resolved when a more thorough search of the 1st Battalion records from its time at Gueudencourt showed a burial party had in fact examined the area in February 1917. Several bodies had been identified by examining identity discs and pay books found on the bodies. Ambrose Mason was one of these and his body had been buried about 400 metres north west of Gueudencourt in the British Grevilliers Cemetery. In 1921 the Commonwealth Graves Commission was able to provide a more definitive statement saying that his grave was in [Section 8, Row AA, Plot 15] of that cemetery.

Sergeant Robert Allen Number 18113 [1st Trench Mortar Battalion Reinforcements/ Moun-ted Corps]

Robert Allen was born in June 1892, and entered the NSW Teaching Service in January 1911 when he was appointed to Bago Lower which was operating as a half-time school with Tarradale. These schools were near Tumbarumba and closed in March 1913. He next spent short periods at Yanco and Uranquinty before he re-opened the Emu Park School in the Coreen District at the start of 1915. Allen was to remain there until the end of 1916 but did not return to start the new school year.

Allen had enlisted at Sydney on February 23, 1915 and was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, AIF. He was transferred to the 1st Trench Mortar Battalion on November 26, 1916. He was later transferred to the 1st Trench Mortar Battalion Reinforcements and then to the Mounted Corps. Allen arrived in Egypt in January 1916 and left for Marseilles on 22 March, 1916.

The AIF Cemetery at Gueudencourt near where Ambrose Mason is buried.
January 19, 1917 and his enlistment papers give his address as 190 Smith Street, Summerhill. He was aged 24 years and 7 months, was 5 foot 6 inches [165 cm] in height and weighed 116 pounds [53 kg] and he was born in Sydney, possibly at Darlington. His mother, Johann, was listed as his next of kin.

He was placed initially with a light trench mortar unit which was training at the Moore Park Camp in Sydney. Allen left Australia on May 9, 1917 and arrived in Egypt in June on September 17, 1917 when he was transferred to the Signals Section. A month later he found himself assigned to an “airline section” attached to the Desert Mounted Corps. By this stage of the War, General Allenby, had at his disposal aircraft, railway systems and motorised units all of which assisted in the supply and deployment of the various Light Horse Units. The contribution of the various Signals Units, often working from a mobile base, was a vital factor in the success of the Sinai and Palestine Campaigns.

A very interesting item of correspondence in the school files from this period was sent from the Desert Mounted Corps in Palestine on 13 May, 1918. Sapper R. Allen wrote to the Head Office of the Education Department asking for the Education Gazette to be sent to him in Palestine because, as his letter stated, “I should like to keep a little in touch with the schools”. A clerk had written “Coads Tank H.T.” [Half-Time] across the top of the letter and the name “Emu Park” had been added in different handwriting. Coad’s Tank and Emu Park had operated as half-time schools from February, 1918.

The file does not reveal if Allen’s request was granted. Towards the end of his service in Palestine, it appears he may have been promoted while in a training role as part of an Army Education Unit.

Robert Allen served with the Desert Mounted Corps until he returned to Australia in September 1919 with the rank of Sergeant. He was discharged a month later and was almost immediately appointed as a relief teacher, at Bombo [near Kiama] and Bullenbong Road [Wagga]. Wootton near Bulahdelah was his first longer term appointment in July 1920 and this was followed by Woollahra, Auburn, Ashfield and Cowra Intermediate, the latter as First Assistant in 1933. It appears from his service card that from that point Allen remained in Secondary Schools as he subsequently taught at Parkes Intermediate, Crows Nest Central which became Crows Nest Secondary in 1944, the year in which he was promoted to Deputy Headmaster.

Robert Allen retired on his sixtieth birthday, July 1952 and lived in Sydney until he died at the age of 84 in 1976. He never married.

COVER STORY - 65 YEARS ON AND GOING STRONG - 1950-51

Our cover picture for this edition features the 1950/51 Infants' Section who decided to play football with the Small Schools' Division.

At a recent gathering at the Swissotel in Sydney six of those team members were present. Jeanette Cowle, Pam Clayton, Decima Wheeler, Marjie Bourke, Gladys Chapman and Marg Wallace. Those in the 2016 photo are Jeanette, Gretchen Brownlie (Bob Brownlie's wife), Pam, Ella Redpath, Decima (with a needle case the young ladies had to make to teach sewing), Marjie, Gladys, Marg and Narelle Matthews.

Ella Keesing (Redpath)
A late scholarship, one week to prepare, 16 years 5 months old and off to W.W.T.C. Born into a family of teachers, father, aunty who lived with us, my oldest brother, John, oldest sister, Barbara, both graduates of WWTC.

College was great but too much fun caused me to fail first year so I repeated. I was diagnosed with mumps the first day of the repeat year exams, so had to come back the following year and sit for all the supplementary exams. Probably saved me. Finally graduated 1962 after three great years of mateship and learning.

During 62, Lynn Pavitt and myself were invited to join the staff at the Demonstration School for 3 weeks because of a staff illness which probably gave me the greatest insight into teaching above all other experiences.

My first posting was to a rural school at Wanganella with 13 students two of whom were doing secondary correspondence and only two years younger than myself. An unusual coincidence that my grandparents, whom I never met, were married in the hall at Wanganella. I spent 2 years there with Ray Petts as my neighbouring teacher.

Both of us were then transferred to Deniliquin to be the inspector relieving teachers. This led us to be sent to the Finley School because of a tragic accident which took the lives of six of their teachers returning from a conference in Deniliquin. The following year we both resigned to take up teaching positions in Canada mid year. Unfortunately I couldn’t gain a passport because I had a car under hire purchase, couldn’t sell it and therefore had to cancel my trip. My grand children and Christopher Skase find that hard to believe. I worked the remainder of the year in shearing sheds and then in a hotel over the Border in Cobram Victoria.

During my time at the school for the blind I was granted an overseas scholarship to look at the integration of handicapped children into mainstream education. This took me to Europe, the U.K. and the U.S.A. culminating in the International Conference for Educators of Deaf and Blind Children.

The old adage that you should never take extended leave came...
into play when I returned from overseas and was undermined by a staff member, had altercations with the Board of Directors, fought with The Catholic Education Office and the Church Hierarchy but to no avail. The institution is more important than the individual and despite staff support, parents support, newspaper comments and talk-back radio, my time at the school for the blind was over.

My frustration was so great that I would not take up an offered position with The Catholic Education Department, resigned from teaching altogether and have since followed a career as a hotel manager, a restaurant manager, R.S.L. manager and since retirement as a relief hotel manager which I currently still do.

On a personal note, I married a Catholic teacher in 1968, had 3 children. Unfortunately when my youngest daughter was 11, she died as a result of a bicycle accident. My first wife died a few years later [I believe as a result of the loss of our daughter].

I have since remarried and gained 2 stepchildren and live happily on the Mornington Peninsula surrounded by a large extended family including grandchildren.

I have kept in touch with many of the 60, 61, 62 graduates from WWTC. Their friendship, my good health, and my family are a great recipe for a happy and long retirement.

As a post script, it would be remiss of me not to mention that from time to time I play on vinyl the recording of the Collegians of which I was a member. For those graduates who don’t know, a group of us cut a record whilst at college in 1961.

Bill Frost (1963-64) I passed all my exams / teaching practice sessions but somewhere along the line fell foul of Maurie Hale who decreed myself and about 4-5 other capable teachers should forfeit seniority by doing an additional one term of unsupervised practice teaching. We still attended the Grad Ball but didn't appear on list of graduating students. Lecturer support and Teachers’ Fed could do very little and I spent from memory one term of unsupervised teaching at South Wagga at my own expense with nary a visit from college staff or the esteemed MEH.

A fellow course mate, Steven Hill was killed in a Sydney road accident in May holidays and I was assigned to his class at Appin for remainder of 1965. At the start of 1966 National Service intervened and five years in army saw me train as an army pilot, then serve in Vietnam and New Guinea.

Went commercial flying in choppers after this and spent next 15 years working / living in Asia and Middle East.

Ready to settle, I bought my small farm east of Tumut, married and raised two children. Returned to teaching after retraining in TAS and spent 8 years in Campbeltown, Gundagai, and Tumut before spending my final ten years in the local Tumut Catholic High School teaching Indonesian and Woodworking skills. A very happy period which even saw me as a former Methodist unbeliever teaching religion for 3 years. No questions asked so no offence given! Retired in 2007 at age 63, love retirement and the chance to read and remain active at my own pace.

Have always maintained contact with several long term friends from the course and have attended a number of reunions in Wagga and Canberra. However, I prefer the informal drink at an afternoon get together so never continue on to the formal dinner, which is the norm.

There is a picture of myself at the reunion in the November 2004 Talkabout. To be frank, I stay in touch with several former friends but find that I never had much interaction with many who now attend reunions. The same applies to former army and flying courses or even old school mates back at Manly.
I have just had a very enjoyable few days reading through the sequential 17 years of Talkabout placed on line as PDFs. Many I had read over the years but never all and certainly not sequentially. Gives a slight feeling of mortality as you identify with some of the early authors only to then read their obituary ten years later. I have made a few walkabouts around the old Wagga college over the years and am well aware of its decrepitude. However I have not visited the Archives so have put this on my to do list over next few months.

Thank you for assuming the mantle of coordinating the future publications of Talkabout. It is a great interest but it also comes with a responsibility and I am sure you never look forward to publishing deadlines. I wish you all the very best in the future and hope you are aware that many eyes follow you even if their pens do not participate.

Margot Madden (1947-49) died on 15 August 2015 after a long illness. Margot was my bridesmaid and a close friend from college days.

Marie Ellicott


June Armytage

Alex Lindsay Alex passed away at home in Manly on 22/11/2015. Thank you to Alan Smith and his wife Helen who came to the funeral.

Margaret Lindsay

Down at East Gosford Post Office, while Bruce and I were updating our passports, the lady beside us was using a Teachers Credit Union Visa card. Bruce commented, ‘a teacher too’ and it turns out she is a ‘pioneer alumnus’, Beverley Atwell-Harris, whose whereabouts had not previously been noted, even in Anne Smith’s extensive list. She is healthy and hearty and begins each day with the SMH cryptic crossword. We had a chat about David Astall’s challenger on Fridays.

Lesley Forbes

AUSTRALIA POST DELIVERS

EDITOR

In this the first edition of Talkabout for 2016 I get to have the last words.

Thanks to all those who have forwarded articles another bumper edition has been possible. I still have a very small number of stories that I will include in the next edition.

Additional material is still needed for the next edition. So, now is the time to put your fingers to the keyboards, don’t delay any longer.

When submitting articles please consider sending along photos as they add to the story. Whilst older photos help enrich the story more recent shots are appreciated by those reading your article.

Brian Powyer
OBITUARY: Alan Moore 1956 - 1957

Alan Moore (1956-1957)
Alan was born in Penshurst Sydney in 1939. His family had few moves and he attended Sans Souci Primary School and Wyong High School. He loved electronics and after high school started an apprenticeship with AWA.

He hated the repetitive work of putting nuts on bolts and enrolled at Newcastle Teachers’ College. After one year his parents moved to Henty and he was able to transfer to Wagga Teachers’ College. He loved living on campus at Wagga and formed many enduring friendships. On his very first day, while on a conducted tour with his roommate, he met his future wife Anne Weaver.

After graduating from college Alan received a telegram stating ‘Report to Logie Brae, teacher-in-charge’. He couldn’t find it on a map but somehow, with the help of his parents, carrying an overnight bag and the NSW Department of Education Curriculum was delivered to a school that was being extended.

Logie Brae was a one teacher school and he anticipated 12-18 students but found there were 28 enrolled from K-6. This grew to 41 by the end of the year. He boarded with parents on a rotational basis and would hitch rides with these families until he could put together the deposit for a VW Beetle.

In 1961 he moved to Griffith and taught at Griffith High School. In May of that year he married Anne. Anne and Alan had three boys – Geoff, Andy and Rob.

In 1968 the family moved to Canada where Alan took up a position teaching geography in Windsor, Ontario. In the 2 years the family was in Canada they visited a fair amount of Canada and most of the states of the USA. Their return to Australia was by way of a 3 month campervan tour of UK, Europe, the Soviet Union and Japan.

Back in Australia Alan secured a job at Campbell High in Canberra. He loved his sound and lighting student crew who provided a service not only for their own school but also other schools in the area. He also taught at Dickson Evening College where his Geography class was so popular he had to split it. After 3 years at Campbell he moved to Canberra High where he remained for 10 years as head of the Geography Department.

In 1983 he moved from Canberra High to the ACT Department of Education to assist in the implementation of a Student Records System. This was a manual system and he soon went about developing a computerised system to manage school ac-
counts. The system Alan created was used by all ACT schools for 10 years. Alan retired in 1995.

Alan was industrious, ingenious and inventive. He was always building or improving things. Whatever the task he would roll up his sleeves and have a go, invariably with commendable results. He loved technology and gadgets and bought his first computer in 1978 and almost immediately set about increasing its power. He bought books and taught himself to computer program. He was the go-to man for people with computer problems.

In 1989 Alan’s youngest son Rob was diagnosed with a very rare and aggressive brain tumour. His death two months later affected Alan deeply. In 1996 Anne was also diagnosed with a brain tumour. Alan cared for her at home and she died in 1997.

In 1999, Alan married Carol a friend and former colleague of Anne’s. Carol and Alan travelled extensively, within Australia in their caravan and overseas. Alan died doing what he loved. At the time of his death he and Carol had enjoyed 5 wonderful weeks in South America and were on the Galapagos Island three days short of the end of their holiday.
The Association's accounts for 2015 have been audited and found correct.

The past Financial Year for the Association highlighted again the generosity of Alumni members. Association funds as at 31/12/2015 held a credit balance of $20,119.71. Total income for the year was $11,942.95, which included $5,460 of membership contributions and donations for the Scholarship Fund ($2,546), for Alumni Projects ($1,355) and for General Funds ($2,385).

Expenditure totalled $13,147.48. Major areas of expenditure included Audit Fees $220, Postage $1,951.15, Stationery $489.74, donation of $200 to the Teachers Federation for use of their rooms for meetings, transfer to the Scholarship Fund $3,000, the Alumni Project Digital Archives $5,000 and purchase of 100 copies of *South Campus a History* $1,430. As mentioned last year, our Secretary was able to continue printing *Talkabout*, on a cost for materials only basis, resulting in a total cost of $218.14 for three editions. As this printing was sourced through Abbotsleigh Girls School, the Committee resolved to donate $200 per edition to the Abbotsleigh Indigenous Scholarship, for as long as the printing of *Talkabout* was able to be completed at the School. $500 was donated in 2015. Unfortunately, costs for Stationery and Postage increased in 2015 because Australia Post were unhappy with the Committee posting *Talkabout* by the previous method.

The Committee expresses its appreciation to the 160 members who were able to donate varying amounts above their annual subscription. During 2015 approximately 33% of members made contributions by electronic means. Eight copies of *South Campus a History* were purchased towards the end of 2015, at a cost of $20 each including postage.

The WWTCAA Scholarship Fund had a credit balance, as at 31/12/2015, of $90,652.80. During the year there were two direct deposits to this fund totalling $500. A donation of $3,000 was made from WWTCAA funds. This included funds deposited in our account specifically designated for the Scholarship Fund. The fund distributed two scholarships of $3,000 each in 2015 and requested CSU to increase the scholarship to a total of $8,000 from 2016.

Lindsay Brockway  
Treasurer WWTCAA 2015

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

The Alumni Committee acknowledges those who have made substantial contributions in years gone by. The committee welcomes those members who have recently joined the Association. Thank you. The Alumni Association wishes to acknowledge the following members, who have contributed substantial amounts during 2015 and up to March 2016:

- J. Bensley
- C. & J. Blake
- N. Bland
- D. Farmer
- K. Farrell
- J. Fletcher
- A. Foggett
- G. Forrest
- G. Gorman
- V. Hough
- W. Hyett
- B. Kregar
- L. Luke
- N. Mauver
- R. McDonald
- W. McLachlan
- R. McNab
- A. McNaughton
- J. Pankhurst
- A. Petersen
- R. Robinson
- A. Semple
- J. Thompson
- P. Van Bergen
- M. & J. Whittaker
- G. Wilson (47-49)

Lindsay Brockway  
Treasurer WWTCAA
ADVANCED NOTICE

WWTC 1961 – 1962 (+or-) SESSION

DATE: February 28\textsuperscript{th} – March 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2017

LOCATION : FORSTER

CONTACTS:
Terry Dwyer - terence.dwyer@bigpond.com
Mick McGrath - mickrob@bigpond.net.au

BOOK ORDER FORM

Orders for South Campus: A History by Nancy Blacklow can be ordered using the order form (opp) or by direct contact (phone/email) with the Secretary. If payment is by electronic transfer please include “NameBook”: “ForbesBook” as reference and then email Secretary.

NB: South Campus was the site of WWTC.

South Campus: A History
(South Campus was the site of WWTC)
Cost $20.00 (including postage)

Surname ________________________________
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Electronic payments please indicate “NameBook” e.g. “ForbesBook” and email Secretary.
Cheques Payable to WWTCAA

REUNION ROUNDPUP

Ex-Students of Wagga Wagga Teachers College

50 Year Reunion
Years 1965-66, 1966-67, 1967-68

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Email: bruceles@bigpond.com

Ex-Students of Wagga Wagga Teachers College

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FOR YOUR DIARY

70 YEAR CELEBRATION OF FOUNDATION WWTC

27th-30 OCTOBER 2017

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Further Details Next Newsletter

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IMPORTANT NOTICE
MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

To ensure the continued financial viability of the Wagga Wagga Teachers Alumni Association the following membership contributions and services will apply from 1 January 2016.

a) Electronic Membership:
   Receive all information and three (3) copies of Talkabout electronically. $10.00 p.a.

b) Standard Membership
   Receive all information and three (3) printed copies of Talkabout via standard mail. $20.00 p.a.

In addition to either Electronic or Standard Membership members may choose to make additional contributions from the options below.

c) Additional Contributions
   i. general donation to the Alumni for ongoing projects e.g. digitalise archives from $10.00
   ii. specific donation to the WWTCAA Scholarship Fund from $10.00

Opposite is a contribution slip for 2016.

WWTCAA CONTRIBUTIONS 2016

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TOTAL CONTRIBUTION 2016 _____________
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TALKABOUT
(Including Photos)

Please email contributions for Talkabout to
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