



Re-Connect

A Publication of the
Gatton College Past
Students' Association Inc.
Issue 1, JULY 2003

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STOP PRESS

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MACKAY CELEBRATES 55 YEARS OF PAST STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

The Mackay Branch celebrated its 55th Annual General Meeting at the West Rugby League Club in February. At the meeting, the contribution of long-serving president of the Gatton College Past Students Association (Mackay Branch) was recognised.

Col Story was presented with a framed parchment recognising his achievements. Mr Story was instrumental in the formation of the local branch in 1948, and has served as president of the association since 1984. Five of the original 1948 members were present.

Mr Story is also well known for his long service to the sugar industry between 1935 and 1982, his community service via Rotary, Legacy, P&C Associations, Whitsunday Anglican School and Rural Youth Clubs.

Col has recently received the Prime Minister's Medal for his contribution to the community. He joins Doug Anthony, Keith DeLacy and Graham Roberts-Thompson as recipients of the Bicentennial Medal.



1948 Mackay Past Student Association Originals. (From left) John Rowe, Jock McLean, Colin Story, Neville Head, Ken McKay.

MACKAY BRANCH HISTORY

First meeting held 22 June 1948 – 23 were present – N E (Norm) Goodchild (1920–21) the first elected President. The oldest member present was W H (Harry) Gillham, a College student in 1898.

In the 55 years of the branch, there have been 7 presidents and 13 venues for annual reunions.

**Contact Peter Amiet on
(07) 4955 3288.**

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Brab Brett. A Gold Medal recipient in 1992 (see tribute on page 12).

David Crouch. 1968 Diplomate (Agriculture), who became Emerald's first district fire inspector, died in Dysart 15/2/03 after a motorbike accident, aged just 54.

(Jock) John Gordon Dean. Passed away 20/5/03 aged 80 years, Senior Farm Hand-in-Charge – worked at Darbalara Farm.

Terry O'Dwyer. Employed at QAC for 32 years where he worked as a butcher, retired in 1991. Terry passed away 4/7/02.

Eddie Pembroke. A former resident of Mackay and strong supporter of GCPSA, died in Brisbane after a long illness.

Bill Wuth. 1977 BAppSc (Rural Tech). Half back in A Grade Rugby side. After graduation was a pig producer but later moved to an engineering workshop. Died of cancer, February 03.

May they rest in peace.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Mal Ferguson,
President GCPSA

Janet Seddon is now employed by the Association & the Campus to perform assistance to the Association's Executive and cataloguing of the Historical Collection stored since the Campus centenary.



Janet Seddon,
Administrative Assistant
GCPSA

Welcome to the first copy of "Re-Connect", the newsletter of the Association.

The Executive feels that this is an excellent title for a publication which will be produced twice a year. It has been a long time since the Association has had an Executive that has given a commitment to send out news about past students as well as developments on the UQ Gatton campus. I congratulate and thank Craig Tunley as the editor of the newsletter and look forward to many similar quality publications in the future.

This copy of "Re-Connect" is being sent to all past students with an application form for membership of the Association. In future, the newsletter will only be sent to those who have taken up membership. Please support the Association by returning a completed membership application.

There are a number of things that the Executive has achieved and will try to achieve over the next few months. I would like to list these:

1. The appointment on a six-month trial basis, a part-time secretary. Janet Seddon spends one day a week working for the Association and one day a week working for the University on the Memorabilia Display. Through Janet's efforts, branches will be better informed on the Executive's discussions and there will be action on the establishment of a proper Campus Museum.
2. The establishment of better relationships with UQ Gatton. Currently I meet with Stephen Weller, UQ Gatton Campus

Manager, on a monthly basis. It is through these meetings that Janet's trial appointment and the joint mailout that you are now reading has been possible. There is still a lot more that can come out of this co-operation between the University and the Association.

3. The promotion of the Campus as a good training ground and where you have fun getting your qualifications. At last year's Open Day, several successful graduates were profiled in the first Past Students display for an open day. This will be repeated again this year and if possible, extended to include a Past Students display at all places where UQ Gatton promotes itself.
4. The establishment of better relationships with the current student body, including the development of a student mentoring program. The Association has a wealth of experience and knowledge that if shared could greatly enhance the learning experience of the current students. One of the ways that this could be achieved is through a mentoring scheme. I ask you all as past students to consider if you could contribute in such a way.

There will be further developments so please ensure that you are a member of the Association. I believe that the future of UQ Gatton is in good hands and I hope that the Association is displaying, by its leadership in many new areas, that it is also in good hands and deserves your support.

*Mal Ferguson
GCPSA President*

UQ GATTON – UNIQUE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

PROFESSOR WAYNE BRYDEN'S ADDRESS TO THE GCPSA AGM – 2002

UQ Gatton is providing unique agricultural education, according to Professor Wayne Bryden, Head of the School of Animal Studies, who addressed GCPSA members attending the 2002 Back to College Weekend.

“In all of the previous agricultural colleges, with exception of Gatton, the agricultural disciplines at a degree level have largely been subsumed into science based programs” Professor Bryden explained. “UQ Gatton has been able to increase its science base and retain its agricultural and natural resource focus which will allow the Campus to develop into a modern agricultural hub and retain many fine traditions of the past” he said.

Professor Bryden believes that the motto of the old QAC “Science with Practice” is just as relevant today to the courses at UQ Gatton as it was in the past. “Following the decision to maintain UQ Gatton, there has been considerable expenditure on all of the necessary resources to allow students to develop scientific agricultural knowledge with the addition of field practice” he said.

Professor Bryden observed that, “Dr Mac Morrison stated in 1996 that, on his arrival at QAC in 1979, this campus was the envy of Agricultural Colleges in other states because of its rich resources, excellent buildings, facilities and sound financial standing”. Professor Bryden went on to say “As a recent



arrival to this Campus, I found the situation similar today with the financial commitment of the University to the Gatton Campus the envy of similar institutions in Australia”.

To illustrate the point, Professor Bryden listed the building and facility developments with a combined cost in excess of \$15 million and new staff appointments that have occurred recently (see shaded box).

Professor Bryden concluded the address by reporting that a number of projects have now been approved for the Gatton Campus:

1. Centre for Native Floriculture funded by the Queensland Government
2. Centre for Nutrition and Food Sciences
3. Centre for Rural & Regional Innovation where agreement has been signed between UQ and QDPI.

Buildings and Facilities:

1. Natural and Rural Systems Management Building
2. Laboratory refurbishments in Animal Studies and in Agronomy & Horticulture
3. New Microbiology Laboratory
4. New Dairy Facilities
5. Refurbishment of the Feed Mill
6. A Wind Tunnel for pesticide application investigation
7. Improvement in the facilities for large animals and fencing
8. Improvement in Computing & IT facilities
9. Development of Distance Education from the Campus.
10. New Equine Facilities
11. New Poultry Facilities

Staff Recruitments:

1. Professor Margaret Gardner, Pro Vice Chancellor, Academic
2. Professor Roger Swift, Executive Dean of the NRAVS Faculty
3. Professor Wayne Bryden, Chair in Animal Science
4. Professor John Taylor, Director of Rangelands Australia
5. Professor Michael D'Occhio, Research Director
6. Professor Ockie Bosch, Chair in Systems Management
7. Professor Helen Ross, Chair in Community Development
8. Mr Terry Ryan, Head of Halls of Residence
9. Professor Clive Phillips, Chair in Animal Welfare to be based on Campus.

THE ANNUAL 'BACK TO COLLEGE' WEEKEND

The feature of the weekend was the Reunion Dinner in the Gymnasium on Saturday night.

For further information on the 2003 'Back to College' weekend, contact Graham McClymont.

*Email:
g.mcclymont@bigpond.com*

*Phone:
(07) 3378 0201*

LAST YEAR

The Association held a very successful "Back to College" weekend on Saturday 30 November and Sunday 1 December 2002. The feature years were those who graduated from High School or with a Diploma, Certificate, Associate Diploma, Degree or any other qualification in 1952, 1962, 1972, 1977 and 1982.

The reunions commenced on Saturday morning and the feature of the weekend was dinner in the Gymnasium on Saturday night. Many of those who attended stayed in the halls of residence on Saturday night with breakfast served in the dining hall on Sunday.

All of the feature years were well represented with the 1952 and 1977 years particularly well represented and a wonderful time was had by all. People travelled from Fiji, Tasmania, Melbourne and North Queensland for the weekend and a number of past staff also attended.

THIS YEAR

This year we are highlighting the 50th, 40th, 30th, 25th, 20th and 10th anniversary groups, so that students who completed their studies at Gatton in 1953, 1963, 1973, 1978, 1983 and 1993 are especially welcome. Those from other years are also encouraged to attend. Students who did not complete their course are welcome to participate in the weekend. Past and present staff are also welcome as are the partners of all attendees.

If you are not able to attend the whole weekend, we would recommend Saturday afternoon and evening as being the highlights of the weekend.

Accommodation is available in the Halls of Residence. There are a limited number of motel units available on the campus, which will be particularly attractive to those requiring greater comfort or convenience.

Further details and a registration form will be sent to all in the feature years during October.

2003 PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY

6 DECEMBER 2003

Morning

Registration at the annex next to the N W Briton administration building. Morning Tea served on the lawn outside the Dining Hall. Campus bus trip leaving the N W Briton administration building when sufficient people assemble for the tour.

Lunch

BBQ lunch at the Lawes Campus Club.

Afternoon

A walking tour of the academic area of the campus. This includes an address from a member of staff on the changes and the future direction of the campus.

Afternoon Tea on the lawn outside the Dining Hall. Fellowship at the Lawes Campus Club. Annual General Meeting for financial members of the Gatton College Past Students Association Inc. at the Lawes Campus Club.

Dinner

Pre-dinner drinks in the Foundation Building followed by Reunion dinner in the Dining Hall.

SUNDAY

7 DECEMBER 2003

Morning

Breakfast in the Dining Hall. If sufficient interest is indicated, a tour of the Lockyer Valley will leave the N W Briton administration building. The tour will take about 2 hours. Morning tea on the lawn outside the Dining Hall.

Lunch

Lunch in the Dining Hall. Depart at leisure after lunch.

A GCPSA BRANCH UPDATE

CAIRNS – The Cairns Branch held a reunion dinner and branch meeting over the Queen’s Birthday weekend to coincide with the NQ Field Days. Fifty-four Past Students and spouses attended. More information about this event will be given in the next newsletter.

STATE – The GCPSA Management Committee meets on the first Monday of even months. For further information contact Janet Seddon. Ph: (07) 5460 1724 or gcpsa@uqg.uq.edu.au

GOLD COAST – The newly formed Gold Coast Branch held a reunion luncheon at Conrad Jupiters on Sunday, 16 February 2003.

Association President Mal Ferguson headed a quality group of 42 past students and their guests, Association Patron Stan Petherick

and our own Branch Patron Bill Laver.

Guest speaker for the occasion was Professor Wayne Bryden, Head of Animal Studies at “The College” who gave a very enlightening talk on the present and future of his domain at Gatton. The Branch intends to hold its next reunion on Saturday, 9 August, 11.30am at Food Fantasy, Conrad Jupiters. **RSVP: Friday, 1 August.**

For more details contact Peter Douglas. Phone: (07) 5546 6350 Email: koalamen@bigpond.com



Discussion at the Gold Coast Branch lunch around GCPSA President, Mal Ferguson. Guest speaker was Prof Bryden (right).



Lunch with the Past Students Association – Gold Coast style

THE CULTURE OF PARTICIPATION

EDITORIAL – CRAIG TUNLEY

The Gatton College Past Students Association has existed in some form since the first general meeting on 14 December, 1926. Over the years, both the Past Students Association and the beloved institution in Gatton have undergone massive changes. I am a relatively new graduate (1999), but have no less appreciation of the value of a Gatton education and experience. As we prepare to embark on another chapter in the life of the Past Students Association, I challenge the culture of participation.

So often in today’s fast paced society, the culture of participation is quite simple, don’t bother, someone else will.

Quite often, someone else doesn’t, culminating in a fatal deterioration of the desire and enthusiasm of those who do participate. Thankfully, the Past Students have not reached this level, although the long term future of the Past Students Association is dependent on all of us. It is time for us all to adopt a new culture of participation.

My own experience tells me that participation brings reward. The potential for reward within the membership base of the Past Students Association is as diverse as the individuals who make up that membership. Participate, enjoy the rewards and invigorate the culture of participation.

So often in today’s fast paced society, the culture of participation is quite simple, don’t bother, someone else will.

RANGELANDS EDUCATION UNDER DIRECTION OF PROFESSOR JOHN TAYLOR



Professor John Taylor,
Director,
Rangelands Australia

*Rangelands Australia
has a broad charter
to coordinate,
develop and deliver
flexible learning
programs.*

*“There is a need to
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education offerings
with what people say
they need, and we
will endeavour to do
that.”*

UQ Gatton is set to become a national centre for excellence in rangelands education under the guidance of an accomplished old boy, John Taylor.

Professor Taylor has been appointed the inaugural chair of Rangelands Management at UQ Gatton and is director of the newly formed group Rangelands Australia.

Rangelands Australia has a broad charter to co-ordinate, develop and deliver flexible learning programs for a sparsely populated inland which comprises three-quarters of the nation's land mass.

Professor Taylor has been establishing the hub of the network at UQ Gatton over the past 18 months and consulting widely with the rangelands community.

The first modular short courses are expected to be offered by distance education in the second half of 2003 with postgraduate courses starting in 2004.

Professor Taylor graduated from Gatton with first class honours in Applied Science, Rural Technology in 1972 and went on to complete his PhD at the University of New England.

His career of more than 20 years as a rangelands ecologist with CSIRO in Darwin and as a research manager in Brisbane have equipped him well for the challenging new position.

“We've had the luxury of being able to do our homework on the education and skills people living and working in the inland are going to need in five years time.”

“Our task now is to deliver the sorts of programs they are going to need to be successful in the future,” Professor Taylor said.

“We didn't want to re-invent the wheel so an early part of our work has been to conduct an audit of rangeland, agriculture and resource management courses being offered by tertiary institutions across the country.”

“There is a need to better match education offerings with what people say they need, and we will endeavour to do that,” Professor Taylor said.

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VALE – MARY NORRIS (NEE ARNDT)



Mary Norris

It is with great regret that the Association Executive reports the death of one of its honorary life members, Mary Norris, one of the “two Marys from the dining hall”. Mary, also well known as “Aggie” by numerous users of the dining hall, gave 35 years of service to the College and Campus. It was a result of this friendly service that Aggie and Mary Quinn, who are cousins, were given life membership of the Association.

Mary was born on 24th August 1946 and was reared on the family farm at Mt Sylvia. Her life was an example of service to others. With the assistance of her parents, she raised her son Gary, who was born on

3rd June 1963. She also had a major role in raising two well-known adversaries of Gatton College Students, Rodney and Warren Radditz. Unfortunately Gary predeceased Mary, who in December 1978 married Terry Norris. Sadly, this very happy union was not long enough as Terry started to develop dementia soon after his retirement.

Mary had a great sense of humour. She was a very proud and keen beef producer. She was an excellent mother, grandmother, step-mother, step-grandmother and great supporter of UQ Gatton.

Mary will be sadly missed.

GATTON GRADUATION 2002

The UQ Gatton graduation included students from a range of disciplines.

Among the first class honours graduates was David Campbell of Hervey Bay and Rebecca Yarrow of Miriwinni in far north Queensland.

David, who starts a career as a horticultural agronomist in Bundaberg this year, studied zero tillage planting equipment. His work looked at the most effective equipment to establish new crops through the trash residue from the previous planting.

Rebecca studied four serious incursions of exotic weeds in tropical north Queensland, all of which are under active eradication programs.

An outstanding class of agribusiness graduates was led by Queensland Cotton Award winner, Sarah Jones-Trifelly of Mackay.

A number of students were presented with higher awards including PhD graduate Leonie Pearson of Melbourne. Leonie is the daughter of a former Director at UQ Gatton, Professor Craig Pearson.

Among the first class honours graduates was David Campbell of Hervey Bay and Rebecca Yarrow of Miriwinni in far north Queensland.

A PAST STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Dr Ken Jackson graduated with First Class Honours in Rural Technology in 1971 and subsequently commenced work with QDPI as an agronomist at Biloela in January, 1972.

Ken conducted research on a number of oilseed and legume crops in the Callide and Dawson Valleys and the Central Highlands until 1985 when he was transferred to Gatton Research Station.

His research while based at Biloela included wide-ranging agronomic studies on safflower, lupins and guar and to a lesser extent on niger and guayule. His studies on the phosphorus nutrition of guar on the Central Highlands formed the basis of his PhD degree.

At Gatton, Ken was responsible for potato, onion, pumpkin, sweetpotato and garlic research throughout the State.

During the period from 1985–1997 he was recognised for the release of several new lines within this group of vegetables and in co-operation with CSIRO at Gatton RS conducted the

first field testing in Australia of any genetically modified crop (potatoes).

In 1997, Ken was appointed Program Leader for Vegetables in the newly formed Queensland Horticulture Institute and became Acting Director of the Institute for a period of nine months in 1999.

Ken retired from QDPI in September, 2002 but felt he would like to pass on some of the experience he had gained over the 31 years he was with QDPI.

His close association with the Gatton Campus of The University of Queensland through co-supervision of postgraduate students has resulted in some part-time lecturing in vegetable and fruit production systems with undergraduate students which he is currently enjoying.

One of Ken's greatest challenges in his lecturing role will be to restore the orchard area to its former state. By doing this Ken believes he will further enrich the learning experience for those training to make horticulture their future.



Ken Jackson

A Past Student's Perspective is an opportunity for YOU to tell your story. Be it what you have done since you graduated from Gatton, a particular story from your days in Gatton or even a note from one old friend to another.

To get your story in the next Re-connect, email it to gcpa@uqg.uq.edu.au.

TOM GRAHAM – TRULY A GATTON OLD BOY

At age 97 years, Tom Graham has certainly earned his place to be acclaimed as the oldest Gatton College “Old Boy”.

Tom graduated with a Diploma in Agriculture after completing a three year course from 1925 to 1927 and ultimately went on to carve out a memorable career spanning 39 years with Queensland’s then Department of Agriculture and Stock.

“How are they going to get a horse and cart up over such a steep slope?”

At age 97 years, Tom Graham has certainly earned his place to be acclaimed as the oldest Gatton College “Old Boy”.

A diplomat in every sense of the word, Tom graduated with a Diploma in Agriculture after completing a three year course from 1925 to 1927 and ultimately went on to carve out a memorable career spanning 39 years with Queensland’s then Department of Agriculture and Stock.

Born at Croydon in the Gulf country in 1906, Tom was the third born of a family of five boys and two girls. His father Tom Graham senior was manager of Magoura Station at Normanton from 1904 to 1915 until he moved to the Northern Territory. In 1919, Tom senior was appointed manager of Victoria River Downs and that is when young Tom was sent to Nudgee College as a boarder for four years. When he completed his Junior Certificate, Tom took on a job as a VRD stockman but 12 months later, he found that his mother had enrolled him at Gatton College while she was visiting his other siblings at Brisbane boarding schools.

Following his Gatton College graduation, Tom did not leave. The then College principal Colonel Murray offered young Tom a position as a junior officer to serve as assistant agriculturist – a challenge he accepted. Six months on, the College’s only senior agriculturist and lecturer in the principles of agriculture resigned and Tom was called on to fill the breach, a position he held from 1928 to 1933.

As he recalls, it was a tough task as the student numbers surged from the 50 taking the Diploma courses to 200 when the doors were opened to 14-year-old boarders to complete their two-year Junior Certificate (Years 9-10).

“It was my responsibility to not only handle the lectures but to ensure there

was sufficient food on the table for the College community plus fodder for all the work horses, dairy cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry,” Tom said.

Gatton College covered some 780 hectares and it was Tom and the students who opened up much of the agricultural land. The Department of Irrigation and Water Supply constructed the weir on Lockyer Creek to supply irrigation water to the College’s horticultural pursuits. There were no underground bores at the time so the grain, fodder crops and pasture were all rain grown.

One task that Tom did take on was to select a site for a cricket and sports oval. With student help, the land was graded and levelled with horse-drawn scoops. To construct a first class cricket wicket, a truckload of black soil was railed all the way from Bulli (south of Sydney) and hauled to the ground now known as the Tom Graham Oval. At the same time, Tom said they required all hands on deck to relocate the grandstand that they put on skids to shift to the new sports ground.

Carrying on from his four years as a Nudgee College boarder, Tom was an accomplished sportsman. In addition to playing College football and cricket, he held the records for an extended period in the cross-country, one mile and 880 yards athletic events.

All the College students at the time came from strong rural backgrounds and some had never seen the ocean. He remembers well taking a College rifle shooting team down to Sydney in 1932 to compete against other agricultural college teams from NSW and Victoria – a competition they won. One of the bushies took a look at the arch of the Sydney Harbour Bridge that was just about to be joined in the centre and posed the question – “How are they going to get a horse and cart up over such a steep slope?”

There were two notable things that have persevered since Tom was at Gatton. In 1926, Tom was one of about 15 students to found the Gatton College Old Boys Association and in the same year he teamed with Phil Hamon (Boyne Valley) to launch the first annual Gatton College Magazine.

Tom married his wife Lillian in 1936 and shared his career as a district adviser in agriculture throughout North Queensland laying the foundations for the tobacco and tea industries and working on sugarcane, irrigated rice, vegetable and horticultural crops. It was in 1935 that Tom's long association with the development of tropical pastures began in earnest. Based at South Johnstone, his research with Wet Tropics grass-legume pasture mixes was legendary and it was this work that slashed 12 months off the turn-off age of coastal-finished cattle. Moving south in 1952, he served three years as Officer-in-Charge of Brian Pastures Research Station (Gayndah) before relocating to Rockhampton. In recognition of his pasture work, the Plant Introduction Society named a pasture legume *Styloanthus guianensis* – cultivar Graham – namely Graham stylo.

Tom retired in 1972 and lives at Glendale on Rockhampton's northern outskirts with his son Dr Gavin Graham, a DPI senior extension agronomist and his family. Tom has two other children Helen McKeague (Malanda) and Jim, a geologist based in Brisbane.

This article was contributed by Russ Boadle, DPI Media Unit, Rockhampton.



Gatton College foundation "Old Boy" Tom Graham, 97, reminisces with his son Dr Gavin Graham, also a College past student.

HALLS OF RESIDENCE UPGRADED AND IN DEMAND

Living on campus has been part of the social fabric at UQ Gatton since the state's oldest rural learning institution opened back in 1897.

The Halls of Residence with their links to the past have provided rich memories for generations.

While the imperative of living in has diminished over the years, the Halls have an enduring place in the future of the Gatton campus.

Student accommodation is being progressively upgraded to cater for on-going demand with the available 350 residential places filled in 2003.

Riddell Hall is the latest to have undergone a \$500,000 facelift for the new academic year with the refurbishment including coaxial cable links to every room allowing students to go online.

A \$1 million make-over planned for Shelton Hall will complete renovations and allow for projected growth in the number of students seeking to enjoy the live-in experience.

The new Head of Halls, Terry Ryan, is settling in at UQ Gatton after moving from a similar position at Deakin University in Geelong.

Terry is taking a holistic approach to the position with the aim of re-building Gatton traditions by integrating social and recreational activities for both live-in and off-campus residents.

"It's a challenging but very rewarding job," said Terry whose office is in the oldest standing former student accommodation block, Old Shelton, now known as Morrison Hall.

The tradition of naming halls to honour important figures who shaped the history of Gatton dates back to 1928 when a house system was established.

www.uq.edu.au/gatton



Refurbished Thynne Hall



Students socialising and enjoying the facilities at Thynne Hall



2002 UQ GATTON GOLD MEDAL WINNER

BOONYARAK SUEBSIRI

Boonyarak Suebsiri has had a distinguished career with more than 40 years of service in land development in the Thai Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, from which he retired recently as Director-General.

Boonyarak was part of a long line of international students at Queensland Agricultural College and one of only the second group of students from Thailand to graduate from The University of Queensland.

Since then, Boonyarak has re-visited Australia 18 times for conferences and on official business with the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). He has also led numerous study tours of soil conservation schemes in Australia and New Zealand.

Born in Thailand on October 10, 1934, Boonyarak Suebsiri was educated at Wantana Silpa School before gaining a Diploma in Animal Husbandry from

Queensland Agricultural High School and College (1954–56) and a Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree from The University of Queensland (1957–59).

On returning to Thailand, he joined the Department of Land Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation. Having won scholarships from the Government of Thailand to study in the United States, he completed a Master of Agricultural Science at Mississippi State University and a course in Public Administration in Agricultural Development at the University of Wisconsin.

In recognition of his outstanding achievements in his vocation and his contributions to industry, Boonyarak Suebsiri, (Diploma in Animal Husbandry (QAHSC), Bachelor of Agricultural Science (UQ), Master of Agricultural Science (Mississippi State University), and Public Administration in Agricultural Development (University of Wisconsin), was awarded the UQ Gatton Gold Medal for 2002.

The UQ Gatton Gold Medal was first instituted by the Past Students Association. It has been awarded to 18 past students.

The recipients have been

*Dr Percy Skerman
(1984)*

*Rt Hon Doug Anthony,
AC, PC, CH
(1985)*

*Mr Berenado Vunibobo
(1986)*

*Mr George Robertson
(1987)*

*Prof Allan Nix, AM
(1988)*

*Mr Stanley Walsh, AM
(1989)*

*Mr Donald Watson, OBE
(1990)*

*Mr Don McKechnie, AM
(1991)*

*Mr Brab Brett
(1992)*

*Mr Alan Brimblecombe,
AM (1993)*

*Mr Graham Kleinschmidt
(1994)*

*Mr Colin Story
(1995)*

*Dr Neil Heather
(1996)*

*Mr John Grigg, AM
(1997)*

*Mr John Sinclair
(1998)*

*Mr James Miller
(1999)*

*Hon Keith DeLacy
(2000)*

*Mr Harry Debney
(2001)*



This photograph of international students at Gatton in 1955 shows Mr Boonyarak Suebsiri seated on the left of Mr Neil Briton, Principal (centre, front row). Also pictured in this same group is another UQ Gatton Gold Medal winner (awarded in 1986), Mr Berenado Vunibobo, standing in the middle row, second from the right.

DEMAND INCREASING FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDY AT UQ GATTON

Programs at The University of Queensland's Gatton campus have again experienced a strong surge in demand.

Overall Position (OP) scores required by school leavers to enter UQ Gatton programs have risen for many programs with the Diploma of Applied Science recording a jump of three places to OP 15 this year.

UQ Gatton Campus Manager Stephen Weller says the increases signify a marked upturn in the calibre of applicants for undergraduate places at UQ Gatton.

"We are particularly pleased with the progress of the diplomas," he said. "Two years ago they had an OP entry of 20 which improved to OP 18 last year. This year's cut-off of OP 15 means that almost all of them are now at an all time high."

The four-year bachelor degrees in Environmental Management and Agricultural Science are also popular with an OP of 10 this year, up from OP 11 last year and OP 12 two years ago.

"What is interesting is that we're achieving these results in a difficult environment where many other universities are struggling to hold students in agriculture and environmental studies," Mr Weller said.

Statistics from the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) reveal that state-wide, the number of applicants for programs relating to agriculture and the environment actually fell by 7.3 percent from last year.

"The University has invested more than \$16 million in new facilities at UQ Gatton over the past couple of years and we are well on track to our goal of strengthening the campus' already strong reputation as a centre of

excellence in our disciplines," Mr Weller said.

UQ Gatton offers degrees, diplomas and certificates in a range of areas including agribusiness, agriculture, animal studies, horticulture and environmental management.

For further information go to www.uq.edu.au/gatton

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VACANCIES FILLED WITH YOUNGER BLOOD

The first Executive Committee meeting of the Association for the 2003 year filled the two vacancies following the AGM with younger blood according to Association President, Mal Ferguson.

"I'm pleased that Craig Tunley, a former President of the Gatton Students Association, and Nicole Hoskin, the first female member of this Executive, have agreed to fill the vacancies resulting from the election of Office Bearers at the AGM which was held as part of the annual Back to College Weekend" Mal said.

"While Nicole completed her degree in Food Technology in 1982, she still lowers the average age of the Executive, which has been something that has been clearly needed for some time". Nicole also addresses the issue of female representation on the Executive, an issue that has concerned Executive members for some time.

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GATTON COLLEGE PAST STUDENTS ASSOCIATION INC.

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Feature Article for Next Issue 1978 and 1953

All contributions including stories, photos, profiles and other interesting written material would be appreciated. If you have any ideas or stories for future issues of Re-Connect, forward all contributions to:

Craig Tunley via email at c.j_tunley@bigpond.com
or

Janet Seddon via email at gpcsa@uqg.uq.edu.au
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Join the Gatton College Past Students Association

Re-Connect is being made available to all past students as an incentive to obtain membership. **This Re-Connect is a once-off issue to non-members. Life Membership is only \$100.**

What do you get? For the \$2 a year it costs you (if you live for 50 years after graduation), you will get two copies of Re-Connect, opportunity to catch up with old and new friends at 'Back to College' weekend and network of past students, some now at the top of their respective fields.

To become a life member, simply fill out the enclosed membership application form and return it with \$100 to:

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The first female students were enrolled on campus in 1969. During the peak years of female student numbers when both the Hospitality and Food Technology courses dominated the student numbers, females also dominated the student enrolments.

“Nicole’s appointment now gives past female students a focus for their ideas and issues within the Association and hopefully, over time, will give current female students a belief that the Association is for all students, not just males” Mal said.

While Craig makes a more significant contribution to lowering of the average age, having completed his degree in 1999, he is remembered more for his leadership of the Gatton Students

Association during the fight for the continuation of the Campus.

At that time, Craig was a regular guest at the Past Students Association Executive Meetings under the leadership of Rod Jensen. Rod was one of those who marched in the funeral procession organised by the student body to highlight the decline of the Gatton Campus. This funeral march and the subsequent development of the Brown Report are the factors which most contributed to the success of maintaining Gatton as a viable campus of UQ.

“It is most pleasing to have someone like Craig who has a real belief in the value of this Campus and strong ideas about what the Association can do to assist in its future development on the current Executive” said Mal.

A TRIBUTE TO BRAB BRETT – 1992 GATTON GOLD MEDALIST

Many past students of Gatton will be saddened to hear of the death of Brab Brett, 1992 Gatton Gold Medalist, in June 2002. He died following a long illness, just short of his 80th birthday.

Brab was Dux of his 1948 Diploma in Agriculture class. He went on to be awarded his Bachelor of Agricultural Science in 1953 and attained his Honours Degree in 1956, both from The University of Queensland.

While Brab worked for various government departments and agricultural chemical companies from 1956 to 1968, it was in the role of Executive Director of the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Association for which he will be most remembered. He led this Association in its formative years so that when he retired after 18 years, it was a well established, managed and respected organization both in Australia and internationally.

To quote Bill Blackhall, AVCARE Director, “Brab was not a supporter of

privilege or prerogatives, and although he often flirted with instinct and intuition, he was a champion of facts and figures and a fair go, and of the democracy of discussion and debate. He was a model of trust, sincerity, consistency and persistence. He could be tough when need be, but never stubborn, and was never afraid to include humble pie in his diet when warranted”.

Brab’s acceptance speech at his Gold Medal presentation reflected all of this when he said “Without faith in my God and my creator, the understanding and the support of my wife and family and the assistance and encouragement of associates from a wide spectrum of organizations, I could have achieved little. These people “ranged from the nuts and bolts or coalface operatives through to senior management.”.

Rest in peace thou good and faithful servant.