



Re-Connect

A Publication of the
UQ Gatton Past Students
Association Inc.
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STOP PRESS

Dianne Street (UQ Gatton Student Association) is our new Administrative Assistant while Janet Seddon remains as the Museum Curator.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| President's Report..... | 2 |
| UQ Gold Medal Recipient | 3 |
| Back to College 2004 | 6 |
| Bryan Grant..... | 6 |
| I Remember When | 7 |
| Gatton 1855 – 2005 | 8 |
| Executive Committee Members..... | 8 |

THE WILDO REUNION: CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF CONSERVATION AT GATTON

Dr Manda Page

2004 marked 25 years since the first group of conservation students graduated from the Gatton Campus of the University of Queensland, formally Queensland Agricultural College. These were the first students to complete the Associate Diploma in Wilderness Reserves and Wildlife Management and are affectionately known as “The Wildos”. To mark the occasion we held a “Wildo Reunion” in conjunction with the UQ Gatton Past Students Association’s “Back to College Weekend” held on the weekend of 4–5 December 2004.

The event was a great success with over 100 past staff and students returning to the Gatton Campus to participate in the celebration. Most stayed in the Halls of Residence and participated in tours of the campus, a celebratory dinner and a forum which contemplated the future of conservation and conservation education/training.



Left to right: Ranger Tim, Ranger Karen, Associate Professor Ray Collins and Ranger Stacey.



The aim of the forum was to help guide the School of Natural and Rural Systems Management in curriculum design for the future. Past students from a range of organisations which employ graduates were invited to present what they saw as the highlights of their course. This was followed by a discussion on skills required for conservation management now and in the future.

The Wildo Reunion Dinner was a night enjoyed by all. It was held at the Campus Club and past staff and students reminisced about their time at Gatton. A collection of historic photographs of past students was on display which caused great amusement as many noted how young they looked back then. Guests were encouraged to take the microphone and tell tall tales from their time at Gatton and telegraphs, received from those who couldn't physically be there, were read. Associate Professor Bob Beeton was honoured at the event for his role in developing the original courses and shaping the conservation programs at Gatton over 25 years. The program has grown from the first Wildo Diploma to a range of programs including Associate Diplomas, Bachelor Applied Science, Bachelor of Environmental Management, Masters and PhD programs. Participants wrote messages to Bob in a visitor book which was presented to him on the night.

(continued on page 3)

THE LAST WORD

by Craig Tunley

It has been most exciting to receive so much feedback from Past Students on stories featured in the Summer 2004 Re-Connect. Back to the Future (Page 5) and I Remember When ... (Page 7) are both contributed by Past Students. Keep it coming, I enjoy including your input for everyone's enjoyment, at the very least, my own.

Ray Montgomery put it all in perspective, highlighting the role he played as Editor of the old Newsletter and Annual Magazine. He stated, and I must agree, that two of the most important aspects of the Past Student's Association were to keep an up to date list of financial members and to keep in contact with them by way of a newsletter and reunions. Re-Connect and the annual Back to College weekend show that the latter is well, however there are some missing links as far as the list of financial members. Double check your details through the Association (uqgattonpsa@uqg.uq.edu.au) or download a membership form from the website, www.uq.edu.au/gatton/paststudents. A healthy and growing membership is a healthy and growing group.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Graham McClymont
President,
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It is with great pleasure that I present my first report as President of the UQ Gatton Past Students Association Inc. My first thank you is to the members of the Association for honouring me by electing me as President for 2005. I regard it as a great honour to follow in the footsteps of so many wonderful Presidents of the past.

Thanks to the efforts of Mal Ferguson, our Immediate Past President, our Association now has a wonderful working relationship with The University of Queensland in general and the Gatton Campus in particular. In his four years as President, Mal achieved a tremendous amount and on behalf of all members of the Association, I thank Mal for his efforts. We are very fortunate that Mal has agreed to remain on the Executive this year. Thanks again Mal for a job well done.

Thank you to Rod Dalton, Ed Holmes and Christine Cooper who all retired from the Executive in December 2004 for your hard work in the past. Welcome to Bob James and Fiona Ferguson who have joined the Executive for 2005. Bob is a former President of the Association while Fiona joins the Executive for the first time.

Each member of the 2005 Executive has accepted areas of responsibility and we expect to achieve a lot this year. Our projects this year are as follows:

- Back to College weekend;
- Branch reunions at Mackay, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Melbourne and others;

- Scholarship fund;
- Memorabilia and the museum;
- RNA Exhibition stand;
- Graduation day display;
- Open day display;
- UQ Convocation membership;
- Merchandising including ties, badges and books;
- Re-Connect newsletter;
- Display case purchase;
- Website update;
- Membership list update;
- Swimming pool; and
- UQ Gatton Strategic Advisory Group membership.

This year we are continuing to work closely with the UQ Gatton Students Association. Today's students are our future and we hope that many of them will join our Association when they graduate. The UQ Gatton Students Association will be organizing lunch on both Saturday and Sunday of the Back to College weekend this year.

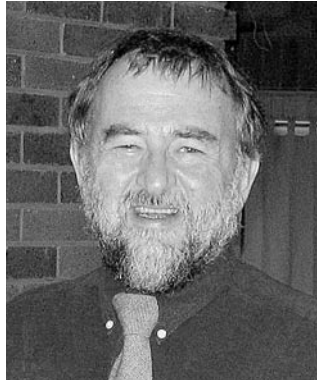
I issue a personal invitation to each and every one of you to attend the Back to College weekend this year, scheduled for 3 and 4 December 2005. Please note that this year there is ample double accommodation available. Many attend the weekend even though they may not be a member of a feature year. There will always be people you know and a good time is had by all. Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible in December at Gatton.

In his four years as President, Mal achieved a tremendous amount and on behalf of all members of the Association, I thank Mal for his efforts.

(continued from page 1)

The night was a great success and many floated the idea of doing it all again soon. I would like to thank the organising committee (Dave Batt, Dan and Deb Parkin, Jono Walsh and Lyn Pullen), the UQ Gatton Past Students Association and all those who made the effort to come to the event. I look forward to being involved over the next 25 years.

More photos can be viewed at <http://www.nrsm.uq.edu.au/wildoreunion>



Associate Professor Bob Beeton was honoured at the Reunion.

The Associate Diploma in Wilderness Reserves and Wildlife Management, affectionately known as “The Wildos”, from the first “Wildo” Diploma to a range of course programs including Degrees, Masters and PhD’s.

TINA DALTON – FIRST FEMALE RECIPIENT OF UQ GATTON GOLD MEDAL

Bettina Dalton, better known as Tina Dalton, was awarded the prestigious UQ Gatton Gold Medal for her outstanding contribution to natural sciences at the 2004 December Graduation Ceremony. The Gold Medal, awarded since 1984, has never been previously awarded to a female or to a non-agricultural orientated graduate.

Tina attended Queensland Agricultural College in 1980 – 81 as one of the second intake of Wilderness and Wildlife Diploma students. She began her career with the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service as part of research teams studying green turtles and koalas. She then became part of the Departments media unit promoting the service’s conservation efforts. Tina has worked extensively in the area of natural history documentary production.

Tina has produced and hosted 45 episodes of a children’s’ wildlife series “Bush Beat”. She has written 3 wildlife books and produced and or directed more than 40 hours of internationally distributed television, including 3 episodes on Australia’s toxic, venomous and dangerous creatures “Deadly Australians” which was high rating prime time viewing for Discovery Channel, Channel Nine Australia and elsewhere overseas.

Tina directed a one-hour special about 24 hours on the Great Barrier Reef for NOVA USA and Channel Seven Australia. She is co-producer and co-director of award winning films such as “Flight of the Rhino” a one hour special about the plight of Africa’s Black rhinoceros, “King Koala” for National Geographic and ABC Australia, “The

Art of Tracking” for Discovery Channel SBS and “Animal Weapons” a five part series for the Seven network and Discovery Channel. Tina was the director of the Ron and Valerie Taylor biography series “Shadows of the Shark”. Most recently she was series producer of a 3 hours commission by Readers Digest on Great National Parks of Australia and a one hour special on the flooding of Lake Eyre and the intensive pelican breeding that followed, soon to go to air on Channel 7.

In the process of producing and presenting, Tina has been stricken with cholera in Tanzania, cerebral malaria in South Africa, charged by a rhino in Zimbabwe, had a close shave with a great white shark while swimming with Right Whales in the Great Australian Bight, frolicked with mountain gorillas in the mountains of Zaire, tracked Rhino poachers on the edge of Africa’s Lake Kariba, challenged wildlife offenders (restaurateurs who cut off bear’s paws while the animal is still alive) in volatile Cambodia and been bitten by numerous animals which she still keeps on her list of favourite creatures.

Since starting a family, Tina has developed Absolutely Wild Visuals an international entity specialising in the licensing of wildlife stock footage worldwide. Her next big challenge is a determined search of the nations attics and garages to find any existing film footage of the Tasmania tiger in its natural habitat.

The UQGPSA congratulates Tina on her contribution to natural science and on being the first female to receive the UQ Gatton Gold Medal.



UQ Gatton Graduation Friday, 17 December 2004 Pictured: Bettina Dalton.

The Gold Medal, awarded since 1984, has never been previously awarded to a female or to a non-agricultural orientated graduate.

GOLD COAST BRANCH REUNION



Ian Hall stands by for a read of Alan 'Lew' Flegler's Re-Connect while Past Association President and new Committee member, Bob James, is content having completed his read.

The branch held its first reunion lunch for 2005 on 12 February at Jupiters Casino. We had 28 past students and staff including one Hawkesbury graduate and ten guests. We were honoured to have Association Patron Stan and Honorary life member wife Agnes; Branch Patron Bill Laver AM; Association President Graham; Immediate Past President Mal and Past Presidents Bob James and Rod Jensen attending. Those attending for the first time were Barry Marks, Mike Gascoigne, Clive Gilchrist, Carmel Drysdale (nee Osbourne, Staff), Jim Luxton, Ian Hall and Bob James. The fellowship and food were of the usual finest quality. The next reunion lunch will be on Saturday, 6 August 2005 at the same venue. For more details contact Gold Coast President, Peter Douglas on (07) 5546 6350 or email koalamen@bigpond.com

MACKAY BRANCH REUNION

Twenty three members and guests gathered at Western Suburbs Leagues Club on 17 March for the 57th Annual Reunion of the Mackay Branch. Longtime stalwart and President, Colin Story welcomed Mal Ferguson as guest speaker.

Three of the members present were at the formation of the branch in 1948 – John Rowe, Neville Head and Col Story. In his President's Report, Col Story raised the issue of attracting newer graduates to annual reunions. He said that an extensive mail-out to known local ex-students in 2004 had achieved little response.

Members re-elected Colin Story as President, John Whitaker as Vice President and Peter Amiet as Secretary / Treasurer. In an after dinner speech, Mal Ferguson brought members up-to-date with progress of the Scholarship fund and the re-development of the swimming pool.

MEMORABILIA – URGENT REQUESTS

The Memorabilia and Heritage Committee is still very active and the ongoing search for items continues. Any articles that you or your family no longer require such as photos (groups, sporting or special interest), badges, blazer pockets (College and House), annual magazines or anything pertaining to College no matter how old or new,

large or small, will be greatly appreciated. Each and every item received is labeled, catalogued and added to the collection. Please send all items to Box 717 at the Gatton Campus or contact Peter Douglas at (07) 5546 6350 or Rod Jensen at (07) 3379 6250.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

The Honorary Life Members and 60th anniversary of American Army withdrawal from Campus from the Summer Re-Connect prompted contributions from our readers. Let me say it is a pleasure to be able to share these stories with others through Re-Connect. If you wish to contribute a short story, memory or quote, please send it by email (craigt@flinders.qld.gov.au) or post to the Past Students Association, PO Box 717, Gatton Campus. Thanks to Ray Montgomery, Luke Lazarides and Coll Hickey for taking the time to pen and send their memories.

Ray responded to the Honorary Life Members, pointing out that even though only three persons before 1978 were listed in the Summer Re-Connect, the 1950 College Magazine noted that the then Old Boy's Association had a membership for the year of 338 ordinary members, 212 Life members and 7 honorary members. There was no mention in the Magazines between 1927 and 1949 on who the Honorary Memberships were conferred.

The 1953 Magazine records that **C.J. McDermott** was given Honorary Life Membership as he was Past President of Hawkesbury College Old Boys Association and was a "staunch friend of both Hawkesbury and Gatton".

Members may be interested to note the following with regard to **W.S. Conochie**, recipient of Honorary Life Membership in 1952.

- First President of the Old Boy's Association in 1927 and held the position until the AGM of 1938.
- Stewart was at College in 1906-07.
- A note in the 1937 Magazine informs that "Stewart has again been elected President of the Old Boy's Association. His Jerseys are maintaining high production records, the result of careful selection and feeding."
- He became Vice-President in 1939 and held that position until 1960
- The 1961 Magazine records his passing at the age of 71. It states "He was an old boy of great distinction in College affairs, cattle breeding and land settlement. In livestock circles he was highly regarded as a most prominent Jersey breeder and judge."

Luke Lazarides couldn't resist sharing his memories of Hugh Courtney, a teacher who strongly influenced him during his College years. "Hugh Courtney was a gentle giant of the English language. Pop, as we called him, coined the phrase, 'Practice makes one less imperfect!' On one occasion, in class which was attended by a number of students who had just finished working in the Piggery, he sniffed the air, tilted his chin and laconically remarked, 'Oh brave new world! How beauteous is mankind that hath such youth to follow in one's footsteps.' Pop was our Shakespeare on campus. How could one forget that?"



View from the Water Tower towards the central campus 1932.

In memory of...

Frank Butler passed away 23 January 2005 (aged 78 years). Frank attended the College in 1943–1944, graduating with a Diploma of Agriculture.

Lieutenant Jonathan King, was killed in the Sea King helicopter disaster in Indonesia. Lieutenant King graduated from Gatton with a Bachelor of Applied Science in 1995.

John Grigg succumbed to leukaemia, passing away on 6 December 2004. John Grigg was a College council Chairman and Councillor, UQ Senator and RNA Councillor.

BACK TO COLLEGE WEEKEND – 2004

The highlight of the 2005 Back to College Weekend will be awarding Honorary Life Membership Certificates to Alan Brimblecombe, Rod Jensen and Col Story.



From 1979, (left to right) Craig Irwin, Andrew Carley, Helen Hope (nee Gambin) and Sue Moyle represent a range of 'Gatton' disciplines – Horti, Hospitality and RM.

The Back to College Weekend was held on campus during 4–5 December 2004 and was well attended with approximately 200 people enjoying the weekend activities. Many past and current staff joined past students returning to catch up with their friends, some they had not seen since their days as a student.

Visitors came from all over Australia and one graduate came from as far away as London for his 30 year reunion.

Ross Murray entertained the visitors with bus tours of the campus on Saturday while the museum was popular on Sunday. Old photographs of the feature years taken in some cases many years ago were on display in the Foundation Building and were particularly entertaining. This collection of photographs is put together each year by Val Kilah and Julie Reid, both former staff members.

The guided tours along the heritage walk around the campus were popular.



1964 Group – (left to right) TJ Carroll, RHP O'Grady, MA Gascoigne, D Hoffman, MW Hart and KJ Thomson.

On Saturday afternoon, the UQ Gatton Past Students Association Inc. held its annual general meeting in the Foundation Building. Mal Ferguson presented his President's Report to members. Three members of the committee, Ed Holmes, Rod Dalton and Christine Cooper retired from their committee positions.

Two new members on the management committee are Bob James and Fiona Ferguson. Bob James is not really new to the committee, as he is a former President of the Association.

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Bryan Grant – QAC's first Registrar

Bryan was born on 7 May 1931. His early life was not an easy one but with honest hard work and determination he made his way through what was to be a very busy and full life until he passed away at age 74 on 30 May 2005. At age 37, Bryan made a bold career change soon after graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1967 to become the first Registrar of the Queensland Agricultural College, Lawes. In his role as Registrar, Bryan oversaw the formation of QAC as an independent College of Advanced Education in 1971, and more recently the consolidation of the College with the University of Queensland. He saw over 6000 students reach their graduation day and became a well known and respected member of the local community. Bryan is survived by his loving and devoted wife Margaret.

I REMEMBER WHEN ...

The summer edition of Re-Connect remembered the 60th anniversary of the American withdrawal from Gatton campus. It was a story that recalled my association with the 105th General Hospital in 1943.

I was a student at a Brisbane College, needing finance as usual, so I approached the American authorities at that time in residence at St. Margaret's Girls School. I was tested and given an American Army licence and appointed to Gatton where a Mr Eales was the lay engineer in charge. Initially I was in charge of a water pump near Goos' property or the one at Buhse's.

The College was taken over almost completely. The senior class was moved to the sheep and wool area to complete their Diploma while the College hill was covered by the temporary buildings that long housed successive years of students. My job was in transport from Brisbane to Gatton and the general running around town, including the collection of soldiers from the various pubs at closing time 10pm sharp! The front gate near Riddell was guarded at all times with no access to any but selected people.

I was in trouble with the authorities over what appeared to me to be insignificant, but which I learned later in Microbiology under Jackie Machel, to be justified. I was told to take a large glass container to one of the large open-topped cement tanks at the orchard, fill it with so-called spring water and bring it to Shelton where the microbiologists worked. I climbed to the top of the tank, held the container under water and tried to lift it out. It was too heavy; the neck was slippery; the bottle fell to the bottom of the tank. I was young, prepared to face a challenge and a good swimmer. The bottle from the top of the water seemed intact, lying as it did on a thick layer of mud which had accumulated over time in dusty drought conditions. So I stripped off and swam down. In the murky water I gashed my hand on the fragmented bottle.

Then I had to face the man who had spent much of his life studying germs and had got along well with them. The gashed hand was not as important as the spoiled sample

of water that he had expected but didn't get. Did I cop it? Every time I go past those tanks at the orchard I recall another adjective and a further query about my ancestry.

Our Gatton Campus today has little to remind the enquirer about the changes that have occurred since the '40's. The Post Canteen (the P.X.) was situated parallel to the road and roughly opposite the site of the memorial cairn. The odd tree has the answer to the position of much that has disappeared. Only the Administrative Building and Shelton House remain intact.

The American presence had one material benefit to the town. Through 1942, attempts had been made to build the present road over the railway line by connecting Crescent St and Old College Road. To that end a large hole had been gouged to provide the soil required and this now remains as a permanent dam to the north of the dump just off the main highway. Large convoys of 6x6 trucks driven by negro drivers were often held up at the railway gates on Gaul Street as the road under the "Red" bridge (as we called it) was not low enough. So it was reasonable to assume that the building of the bridge linking Gatton with Old College Road resulted from American influence.

The bonus to this happy time at Gatton was the wages paid. The American privates wage was £7/10- (\$15) when the basic wage here was £3/3/- (under \$6) and we were paid the American rate. At the end of three months I had accumulated almost £100 (enough to easily cover the remaining costs of education). Bearing in mind that taxable income started at £105, I took leave to have a few days recreation with my school mates. When I returned home there was another cheque for holiday pay which took me very close to paying tax.

And that was my happy experience of the American occupation of Gatton College.

Coll Hickey



The new 'Shelton House' officially opened in 1936.

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Try our new quick link at:

www.uq.edu.au/gatton/paststudents

INTRODUCING...

GRAHAM McCLYMONT

Graham McClymont graduated with a Certificate in Animal Husbandry at Gatton in 1970 and then returned three years later graduating with a Bachelor of Applied Science (Rural Technology) in 1977. Graham worked with Nestle for 11 years before establishing McClymont Agricultural Services Pty Ltd, a rural and agribusiness consulting firm situated in Brisbane. Graham and Carol have two children, Catherine is studying at the St Lucia campus of UQ and Darryl is in his last year of high school.

BOB JAMES

Bob, a serial student, has studied over almost 50 years, obtaining a Diploma (Animal Husbandry) in 1958, a Bachelor of Applied Science (Horticulture) in 1974, a Graduate Diploma (Management) and has just submitted a thesis for a Masters in Science (Environmental Science). Bob has lectured in Horticulture, was the first Manager of Grounds at UQ St Lucia (13 off campus sites) and was the Principal Scientist with an environmental consulting company. A Past President of the Past Students Association, Bob now works as a private consultant.

GATTON 1855–2005

One-fifty years, a decent time in anybody's book,

To toast a town, reflect a while and take a backwards look,

At who we were, and what we are, and what we yet may be

Is Gatton worthy of a chapter in Australia's history?

From eighteen Fifty-five 'till now let's tally up the scores,

The points we earned in sending men to battle with the Boers.

Then once again, when duty called, our bravest flagged the cause,

To answer up the challenge, to fight in both world wars.

Now this fortitude and courage that they wrapped in khaki suits,

Had been seeded, nurtured, grown in their Lockyer Valley roots,

Where a pioneering spirit fuelled by sharp determination,

Filled the world's most fertile soils to feed a fledgling nation.

From the fall of forest giants to the axeman's peeling yell,

To the daily grind of answering the cowyards's milking bell,

From the spud and onion patches that paid the early toll

In winning us the title, as "Australia's Salad Bowl."

The liquid gift down under that we "mined" in days of old,

Is the life's blood of our district and we cherish it like gold.

In our joust with Mother Nature that has lasted all these years,

Seen her droughts and floods and fires reduce us all to tears.

But even She can't quell the spirit that's coursing through the veins,

Of those who'd face adversity to toast their hard won gains.

Those with vision and with foresight and the nerve to see it through,

Those who carried Gatton's baton for the likes of me and you.

Those who dared to dream our "College" would educate the sons,

Of progressive property owners on all those far flung runs.

Those who realised there was a future and set a plan in stride,

Those who recognised no barriers, to a dash of Gatton pride.

Now one-fifty years here later, the scorecard's looking good,

Let's toast a town that's won its spurs, I really think we should.

For the spirit of our pioneers still fuels our beating heart,

And it's the character of its people that sets our town apart.

Gary Fogarty