



UQ Gatton
Past Students
Association Inc



Queensland
Agricultural
College



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Re-Connect

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Association Inc.
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STOP PRESS

Back to College
Weekend

2-3 December
2006

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Report.....	2
2005 Gatton Gold Medal Winner	3
2006 Bumper Year	4
Stanley Petherick Meeting Room	6
Ekka Lounge Report.....	7
Branch Reunion	7
Executive Committee Members.....	8

AGRIBUSINESS AT UQ GATTON IS UNIQUE



Student research group interviewing four farmers on an 'Army farm' in China

Photo courtesy agribusiness students

No other University in Australia, and probably the world, challenges their business students in quite the same way as UQ Gatton. The last major project that Gatton Agribusiness students do before they graduate is a commercial market research project for a fee-paying Australian agribusiness firm that requires them to go into an overseas market. The project revolves around a team of 4-5 students working on their client's project for the whole of second semester (early August to early November). In late September they go overseas to carry out in-market research and they have until the first week in November to have the whole project finished and a full report back to the company.

In 2006 Gatton completes its 14th year of this program. We have now worked in 16 countries for more than 50 companies (some have been back

4 times) with about 300 students. We have never failed a client – we know this because about one third of each group's marks come from their client, not the university, so when a client gives a mark it reflects their satisfaction with the quality of the work. The usual comment we get is that clients are very surprised at the quality, and how much they get for the cost.

The client pays \$10,000, students pay \$800 each, and the School of Natural and Rural Systems Management pays the costs of an experienced staff mentor who oversees each group's activities. Associate Professor Ray Collins, who is responsible for the overall programme, says that this means for about \$18,000 UQ Gatton can just break even on projects anywhere in Asia or the South Pacific. For countries outside this area, the fee is based on actual costs.

continued on page 3

THE LAST WORD

by Craig Tunley

For the first time this year, I was reminded of the stress and heartache that exams bring to ones life. Commencing studies for the third time in my life, I remember the time I spent at Gatton, the experiences, stories and activities that moulded me in to the person I am today. And while online learning is convenient, the sense of achievement, fulfilment and pure relief that I often felt in June and November can not be replicated. There is nothing better than getting together with friends to celebrate the end of another semester, successful or otherwise.

The Back to College Weekend is one such celebration, a time for reliving all those experiences with friends. Gatton has always been about the start of lifelong friendships. Enjoy the celebration today, for tomorrow is but another day to celebrate.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Graham McClymont
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The year of 2006 has been a busy but enjoyable year for the committee you elected last December. We have achieved a lot and had a great time as well which is the aim of the exercise.

Stan Petherick is our Patron, a Past President and Honorary Life Member of our Association. Our Association recently recommended to The University of Queensland that the meeting room in the Foundation Building be named the "Stanley Petherick Meeting Room" and this has been approved by the Senate of UQ. The official naming of the room will take place at 11:30am on Saturday 2 December 2006 as part of the Back to College celebrations. Please make an effort to attend to support Stan and Agnes on this wonderful occasion.

Registration on the day for the Back to College weekend will take place downstairs Morrison Hall (formerly Shelton or Old Shelton).

This year we manned a stand at the Exhibition and it went very well with 156 signing the visitor's book. Next year it will again be situated beside the Animal Nursery so make sure you pop in and say hello. If you live in the Brisbane region and are available to help for a day on our stand, please advise Peter Douglas or our office. You will be surprised how many of your friends you will see on the day and we can supply complimentary tickets.

We now have over \$105,000 in the UQ Gatton Scholarship Fund and it is proposed to award a \$5,000 scholarship to an eligible Gatton student for 2007.

If you would like to contribute to the fund as well as have a plaque with your name on it attached to a table or chair in the Dining Hall, then please contribute now. Forms are available from our office.

Our Association now has around 1,000 members but we still hear of people who claim to be a member but lost contact with us over the years. If you know of anyone who is a member from the past but does not receive mail from us then please let us know their name and contact details so we can resume communication. Our membership list is the best it has ever been but we fully acknowledge that members have been lost over the years.

The UQ Gatton Historical Collection continues to impress and volunteers are always pleased to receive donations of memorabilia of College life from any decade. Photographs are particularly welcome, especially with names or details of the photograph. Donations may be sent to our office.

We are always looking for new committee members so if you live in the South East Queensland area and would like to be on the committee next year, please contact me. We meet at Gatton on the first Monday night every second month starting in February and the meetings are always enjoyable.

Looking forward to seeing you on the first weekend in December.

On behalf of the committee, I wish you all the best for the future.

PROFILE – 2005 GATTON GOLD MEDAL WINNER

Professor Mark von Itzstein
*Executive Director, Griffith
University Institute for Glycomics*

As a teenager growing up on a farm in Archerfield, Professor Mark von Itzstein had always wanted to become a vet.

Professor von Itzstein has fond memories of his days at the then Queensland Agricultural College, but after studying Animal Husbandry and being exposed to wider science disciplines at the College, he started down a path that would lead him into the exciting world of drug discovery and carbohydrate science.

Instead of vet science, Professor von Itzstein studied a Bachelor of Science at Griffith University and gained a PhD in organic chemistry. He worked in Germany and Melbourne, the latter where he led the team which developed Australia's first anti-influenza drug, Relenza.

Today, Professor von Itzstein is the Executive Director of the Institute for Glycomics at Griffith University. The Institute is the only one of its kind in Australia, and one of only six in the world, exploring how carbohydrates can provide drug breakthroughs.

continued from page 1

In past years, students have gone as far afield as Dubai, Italy and the Netherlands on their projects. Fees are payable in three equal instalments, but the final one-third is not payable unless and until the client is satisfied with the quality of the result. The goal is to make students feel the pressure to perform to their client's needs

Ray said he is very confident of the UQ Gatton Agribusiness

A Federation Fellow and Australia Prize winner, Professor von Itzstein was awarded the Gatton Gold Medal 2005 and visited the campus recently to address students.

A key focus of his, and the Institute's, research is addressing a potential pandemic influenza threat.

"Whether that comes from a mutant strain of the H5N1 bird flu virus or another virus, we need to develop new drugs to fight this threat," Professor von Itzstein said.

In the Institute for Glycomics at the Gold Coast campus of Griffith University Professor von Itzstein has established a high-powered group to investigate the design, synthesis and biological evaluation of next generation anti-influenza drugs that would tackle a pandemic threat.

"We are using Smart Design procedures to produce next generation anti-influenza drugs that will be able to tackle all influenza strains and potentially minimise the development of resistance."

programme's ability to delight clients with the quality of students' work. He says "My biggest hurdle every year is convincing a new client that it is possible to get such a high standard from a group of final semester students". But he reminds clients that in just a couple of months after doing this project many of the students will be working in jobs where they may well be expected to be able to do work like this.



Professor Mark von Itzstein

2006 REUNIONS

4 February
Gold Coast

18 March
Sunshine Coast

30 March
Mackay

12 August
Gold Coast

28 October
Brisbane

2–3 December
Back to College

2006 WAS A BUMPER YEAR

This year, The University of Queensland Gatton Campus had a record six agribusiness student groups travelling overseas. There were two groups in China mentored by Dr Tim Sun and Associate Professor Tony Dunne, and one each in Dubai (Dr Yunus Khatri), South Korea (Dr Geoff Slaughter), Singapore (Associate Professor Ray Collins) and Thailand – just after the military coup (Dr Kim Bryceson). As some projects are commercial in confidence, not all details can be made public. One group in China investigated the market for second hand cotton pickers for Vanderfield Machinery, Toowoomba. In South Korea students undertook market research for the Macadamia Society of Australia to assess macadamias as a snack product (to date they've mainly been used in food manufacture). Honey Gold mangoes, a new Australian bred variety, were the subject of market research in Singapore.

Students return with a whole new perspective on business, travel and life generally. David Young, who worked on the project in Thailand, said he was amazed to see abject poverty

side by side with five star hotels. The Thai people, he said, were some of the friendliest he had ever met, and their respect for the Royal Family had to be experienced to be believed.

Upon their return, students face the busiest time of their whole degree programme. With only three or four weeks to analyse data, write a detailed report and do an oral presentation to their client, there's little time for anything else – especially with one-third of their marks hinging on the client's response.

WILL HONEY GOLD MANGOES BE A HIT IN SINGAPORE?

Pinata Marketing is a family company headed by Gavin Scurr, at Wamuran in south east Queensland. Besides being Australia's largest pineapple grower and supplier, Pinata also grow and market strawberries and have exclusive rights to the Queensland-bred Honey Gold mango.

Pinata have 45 growers across the north of Australia who are licensed to grow Honey Gold, providing a supply that will be available from late October to March. Developing the best possible marketing plan for this sweet golden fruit is the key to the future of the variety. That's where Mike Evans, Pinata's Marketing Manager, and a group of five Agribusiness students enter the picture.

Stephen Caffery, Karl Gygar, Sally Little, Ruth McInness and Jodie Wilkin were given the task of evaluating the Singapore market as a launching platform for exports of Honey Gold to Asia. With their mentor, Associate Professor Ray Collins, they spent a week in Singapore visiting supermarkets, interviewing store managers and met market retailers, evaluating importers and wholesalers,

Photo courtesy agribusiness students



(From left) Stephen Caffery (Dalby), Jodie Wilkin (Roma), Karl Gygar (Gold Coast), Ray Collins (UQ Gatton), Sally Little (Toogoolawah), Ruth McInnes (Harrisville), Mrs Toh Guek Hong, A.O. (Austrade), Ms Irene Tan (Austrade), at the debrief with Austrade at the end of the fieldwork in Singapore

and generally building a picture of the viability of this market for Pinata's mangoes.

Is there a market? Will Honey Gold mangoes be a hit? We'll have to wait and see. The final presentation

to Pinata's management team is on 2 November. Meanwhile the team of Agribusiness students is sweating over a mountain of data, no doubt sustained by memories of the food, fun, hospitality and hard work they experienced in Singapore.

VANDERFIELD MACHINERY, COTTON PICKERS, AND FAR WESTERN CHINA

Bruce Vandersee is CEO of Vanderfield Machinery, Australia's largest John Deere dealer, based in Toowoomba. Bruce has a problem selling second hand cotton pickers – it seems that buyers in Australia mostly want new ones. Dr Tim Sun, postdoctoral researcher at UQ Gatton, originally comes from Xinjiang province in far west China, where the cotton industry is moving to broadacre production systems. Tim was able to find out that some cotton pickers had already been imported into Xinjiang, so along with Ray Collins, he put the proposition to Bruce Vandersee to undertake research using a group of Agribusiness students to determine if there was a market for second hand cotton pickers. Bruce readily agreed. "If you take into account all the costs, including the costs of being away from work here, I could not use one of my own people – even if they had the in-country expertise – for the same cost as getting a group of five students plus Dr Sun from UQG to do this research", he said.

After five weeks of desktop research, Tim and his student team of Daniel Elder, Matt Larsson, Catherine Macrae, Kerry Phillips and Sarah Warby, flew to Beijing then made the 3000km domestic flight to Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Province. After about ten days of intense research



Photo courtesy agribusiness students

Research team with proud Chinese farmers and their John Deere cotton picker, (from left) Kerry Phillips, Matt Larsson, son of farmer, Sarah Warby, Xinjiang cotton farmer, Daniel Elder, Cath Macrae, Dr Tim Sun (UQ staff mentor)

involving meetings, field visits and numerous banquets, they returned ready to put together their case to Vanderfield Machinery.

Is there a market? We'll have to wait and see, just like Bruce Vandersee and his staff, who will find out in three weeks time, when an exhausted but satisfied group of Agribusiness students will officially sign off on the greatest adventure of their time at UQ Gatton.

STANLEY PETHERICK MEETING ROOM

The UQ Gatton Past Students Association has proposed and the Senate of The University of Queensland has approved the proposal to name the meeting room in the UQ Gatton Foundation Building in honour of Mr Stan Petherick.

The meeting room in the UQ Gatton Foundation Building is now named the Stanley Petherick Meeting Room.

A plaque will be installed containing the new name of the room.

The official naming of the room will take place at 11:30am on Saturday, 2 December 2006 as part of the Back to College celebrations.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Ken E.D. Bassett 1933-34
2nd XV 1933
1st XV Colours 1934
Passed away suddenly 31 May 2006.

Noel Meurant
2003 Gatton Gold Medal Winner



Noel Meurant OAM, who played a vital role in the establishment of what is now a multi-million dollar mango export industry, passed away on Thursday 28 September 2006.

His vision and assistance given to the Bowen District Growers Association lobbying efforts resulted in the establishment of the DPI&F facilities at Delta, which were officially opened in 1968. From this centre, Noel assisted the team that developed the R2E2 mango in the extension of this variety to industry, which is now the favoured Queensland export variety.

Noel was responsible for numerous major innovations in post-harvest fruit and vegetable production techniques. Outstanding among these was the development of the "volume fill" concept of packing many types of fruit, which has now been adapted worldwide.

Noel is survived by his wife Peg and children Robyn, Carole, Susan, Andrew, Nicole and Michelle.

Source – DPI&F Media Centre

GOLD COAST BRANCH REUNION

Food Fantasy
Jupiters Casino

SATURDAY
10 FEBRUARY 2007

12 NOON LUNCH

Peter Douglas
5546 6350
koalamen@bigpond.com

BRISBANE BRANCH REUNION

Sherwood Services Club
Clewley Street, Corinda

SATURDAY
25 AUGUST 2007

12 NOON LUNCH

Bob James
3349 1738
rjames3@primusonline.com.au

Rod Jensen
3379 6250
r.jensen@uq.edu.au

EKKA LOUNGE REPORT

Once again, by all accounts, it was a successful and informative expedition to the Ekka. The lounge area, which is not so much a lounge anymore, continues to be a worthwhile and rewarding time for volunteers and past students. A big 'thank you' to all the volunteers who manned the display at the Ekka. Special thanks to Val and Julie for selecting and preparing the display items and organising the refreshments. Sincere appreciation to Mark Hohenhaus for his organisation and administration

and George Melano for his "onsite" assistance.

The Ekka Lounge is a very worthy activity of the UQ Gatton Past Students Association and it is hoped that next year will see more 'year' groups exhibited. If you would like to volunteer your time at the lounge (we'll need at least 6) or just want further information, direct your enquiries to the secretariat at gattonpaststudents@uq.edu.au or PO Box 717, The University of Queensland, Gatton Campus, GATTON QLD 4343

SUNSHINE COAST BRANCH

Over 70 people gathered at the Caloundra Bowls Club on 18 March 2006 for an enjoyable lunch. This was the first reunion in several years for the Sunshine Coast Branch.

A good mix of past students and staff attended from each of the past seven decades. We were honoured to have Stan and Agnes Petherick as our most senior guests.

Our President, Graham McClymont, welcomed all present and expressed his desire that future reunions would be even more successful.

If you would like to be on the invitation list for future reunions of the Sunshine Coast Branch, please contact one of the organizers.

SUNSHINE COAST BRANCH REUNION

Caloundra Bowls Club
Cnr Arthur Street and
Burwah Terrace, Caloundra

SATURDAY
10 MARCH 2007
11:00AM FOR
12 NOON LUNCHEON

Barry Bendixen 5499 6576
Frank Natoli 3264 1242



Seven Decades: (standing from left) Tony Short (1990s), David Penrose (1980s), Graham McClymont (1970s), Ross Murray (1960s), Graham Baumber (1950s), (seated from left) Stan Petherick (1930s) and Ivan Stanton (1940s)

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INTRODUCING ...



RON SWANWICK (JUNIOR VICE- PRESIDENT)

My Q.A.C. education and experience has had a continuing

influence on many aspects of my life.

I justified my Q.D.A.H. in 1963, by proceeding to study Veterinary Science and then spent 22 years in Veterinary Practice. I did a sharp U turn in my middle age, studying Law to become a barrister and Crown Prosecutor where the public speaking skills conceived and born with hard labour in inter-house debating competitions at College became my tools of trade. However I still feel most at home in the country and especially enjoy the country circuits of the District Court. Having been instrumental in producing the P.S.A. tie, I can now add "fashion designer" to my C.V.

Q.A.C., now U.Q. Gatton, continues to exercise a hold over me. Only those who are College Diplomates appreciate the unique experience that we had and how difficult it is for outsiders to understand much less actually believe what went on in those far off halcyon days and how that shared experience has spawned a species of tribalism which survives to this day.

My 15 or so years on the P.S.A. Committee has been devoted to the preservation of Q.A.C.'s place in the 109 year history of the Institution and to making the P.S.A. a significant body in the new order. The embracing and welcoming of possibly reluctant Veterinary Science students into the campus fold and its rich traditions will be one of the next challenges facing the P.S.A. in which I hope to be proactive.



ROB NIELSEN

Spending his formative years in Tenterfield, Rob Nielsen enrolled in the last Diploma of Agriculture

offered by the College. On graduation, Rob heeded some advice that he had received, "if you stick to the black soils of the Downs in the dry, they'll stick to you in the wet", and accepted a research assistant job with the DPI at Warwick. There, his work involved soybean, plant nutrition, weed control and medic research, some of which he continued when he was later transferred to the Brigalow Research Station, near Theodore.

Rob moved to Toowoomba, assisting in sunflower research work, completing a

degree in Biology part-time through the Darling Downs Institute of Technology. A change in direction led Rob to undertake psychology studies, leading to a period as DPI staff counsellor before he moved to the department's Building Rural Leaders programme with which he has worked for the last ten years.

The move to Toowoomba also allowed Rob to become more involved with the Past Student Association and he was elected to the committee in 1983. During his time on the committee he has been involved in a diverse range of activities including being minute secretary for many years, helping to organise and run a "get that job" weekend for final year students which was conducted for several years and assisting with the past students' lounge at the "Ekka". In his spare time, Rob is heavily involved with Lifeline in Toowoomba.