

ReConnect

A Publication of the UQ Gatton Past Students' Association Inc.



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA



UQ Gatton
Past Students'
Association Inc.



Queensland
Agricultural High
School and College



Queensland
Agricultural
College

ISSUE 32, SUMMER 2018

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www.facebook.com/UQGPSA

STOP PRESS

Back to College Weekend

Friday 30 November to
Sunday 2 December 2018

Email addresses

If you are receiving a hard copy of this edition of *Re-Connect*, it means we do not have your email address. Email is our preferred means of communication as printing and postage is expensive.

Please email us.

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2018 Scholarship Recipient Announced

It was a pleasure to congratulate and award the 2018 Scholarship to Vanessa Harnett at the Scholarships and Awards ceremony held at UQ in July. Vanessa hails from Townsville and is currently studying a Bachelor of Science majoring in Animal and Veterinary Bioscience.

In her thankyou letter to us she said *"I've always been very passionate about education and learning, especially when it comes to anything related to science or maths, especially to do with animals. UQ Gatton was my first preference on my QTAC application, as I believe that I will have the opportunity to work closely with animals for my studies."*

Vanessa is hoping to transfer into the Bachelor of Veterinary Science (Honours) in 2019 as she would love to work as a veterinarian – a long held goal. Additionally, to go into research later in her career is her aim, researching some or one of the many diseases that can be found in animals, and to help either eradicate them or help control them. She would follow many other esteemed Gatton past students in this area.



Kim Jorgensen (President, UQGPSA) presenting Vanessa Harnett with her scholarship

Opening of J.K. Murray Library Refurbishment and Extension

The **J.K. Murray Library** at Gatton campus has been transformed into a student-focused hub where students can access research, support services, study, collaborate, and share ideas with their peers. Emeritus Professor Alan Rix opened the new space on Tuesday 24 April 2018. He said *"Today's student cohort is very attuned to the needs and demands of their disciplines, is very focussed on learning, and appreciates the practical focus of the campus in providing the animals and the agricultural environment they need for their study."*

The upgraded facility provides an extra 1000 square metres of space and has provided an additional 290 study spaces. The Library is open for study 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

View photos of opening at: [web.library.uq.edu.au/
blog/2018/05/jk-murray-library-transformed](http://web.library.uq.edu.au/blog/2018/05/jk-murray-library-transformed)

The J.K. Murray Library is named in honour of Sir Jack Keith Murray, who was a colonial administrator in Papua New Guinea, a soldier who served in France in the First World War, and principal of the Queensland Agricultural High School and College at Gatton from 1923. Under his direction, the campus became the centre of rural education in Queensland.

A digital story that tells more of J.K. Murray and Gatton has just recently being launched, can be found at [web.library.uq.edu.au/collections/stories-
from-collection/jack-keith-murray](http://web.library.uq.edu.au/collections/stories-from-collection/jack-keith-murray).

Thanks to the library staff for these words and the story.

The Last Word

The Times...

The UQ academic paradigm is a very different thing from that with which most UQGPSA members were familiar in their days at Gatton Campus. This is for a variety of reasons around UQ academic and research philosophy, and also for reasons of modern regulatory and legal constraints. Many members have expressed concern and disappointment with the changes toward a narrow curriculum and little practical experience for students; and indeed it has been opined that recent teaching programs no longer adequately satisfy the requirements of rural industry employers.

Members (with emails) will have received two thorough reports by Barry Marks and Ray Byrnes (abridged version in this edition) regarding review and future plans for Gatton Campus teaching programs. It seems that UQ's Gatton Management has recognised the desirability of improving teaching programs with a much broader curriculum and more emphasis on hands-on skills to complement technical and theoretical learning. We are told that plans to implement changes are afoot. The Last Word sees this as a positive turn.

In the immortal words of Bob Dylan, 'the times they are a-changing' – they have in the last two decades, and are set to again in future; seemingly this time to more, and broader, *Science with Practice*.

Slade Lee

President's Report



Kim Jorgensen
President
UQ Gatton Past Students' Association
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Reunions, reunions, reunions...so good to be able to continue with our usual reunions and add a few more aka: Canberra, Rockhampton and the Tablelands. Plenty of photos in later pages of this edition and also on our Facebook page and in the regular email Newsletter.

We met our latest scholarship recipient in August. Vanessa Hartnett gives us some insight into her college life. We also hear from two other scholarship students as to how they have used their money. You will read that they are both looking forward to life after College next year.

Read about how we again sponsored a Sunflower Competition prize. The competition is going from strength to strength each year. To increase our profile with the current student body we chose to help out the 2018 Gatton Student Association Gala Ball committee with the entertainment. Mark Pace gives a wrapup later in this edition.

We are gearing up for *Back to College Weekend* 2018. Emails and letters are going out to all

graduates from the Feature Years. Check out some of the photos we have been putting up from each year on our Facebook page.

Because of travel for work I have had the opportunity to visit Far North Queensland a number of times in the last few months. Attended VP Day commemorations in Tolga in August. Two Gatton graduates were prominent in the events of the day: John Hardy and Ray Byrnes. Went out to Undara Lava Tubes for the first time too. Great destination – thank goodness for the foresight of Gatton graduates from the Collins' family.

In June, Ray Byrnes and Barry Marks met with Professor Melissa Brown, Executive Dean of Science; Professor Neal Menzies, Head, School of Agriculture and Food Sciences and Ms Janelle Zahmel, Director of the UQ Gatton Campus to discuss issues concerning the future of the Gatton Campus and Courses offered. Members received full transcripts of the meeting and follow-up phone call. A summary has been included on Page 6 of this edition.

To finish, thanks to all the 2018 Committee and museum volunteers for their hard work this year. I will not be renominating for the role of President at the AGM but will remain on the committee. In my two years as President I have especially enjoyed meeting you all at BTCWs and events and am pleased we have been able to add some more regular reunions to our yearly events.

Sunflower Competition continues to Grow



Mark Pace our Junior Vice-President presented our Award to Year 11 students from Wilsonton State High School at the 2018 UQ Sunflower Competition for the Most Ornamental Sunflower Prize.

Nanango State High School won the Overall Grand Champion prize for the second year in a row. The giant sunflower weighed in at 2.97kg. More than 4000 students from 103 high schools across Australia participated in this year's competition.

Scholarship Recipients Update

You will all be pleased to hear from some of our current Scholarship holders on what they have been able to achieve through our support this year.

From Loretta Tonscheck

I am now in third year studying a Bachelor of Agribusiness at UQ, Gatton Campus. After growing up with exposure to primarily the dairying and beef cattle industries, and a strong passion for agriculture, enrolling in an Agribusiness degree at UQ seemed the most fitting next step toward achieving my life ambition of working in the stud and/or commercial livestock industry. As my degree is fast approaching completion, 'resume revamping' and job searching alongside my final semester studies has me fairly busy. This year, the UQ Gatton Past Students' Association Scholarship has been particularly helpful in helping me fund attendance and registration in the Intercollegiate Meat Judging Competition held in Wagga Wagga in July and a trip to Beef Week in Rockhampton in May, which was a fantastic opportunity to network with an enormous and global platform of industry leaders and learn so much more about the beef cattle industry. At Beef Week, in a field of approximately 35 competitors, I

received second place in the 18–25-year-old Stud Cattle Young Judges Competition. Also, through connections I was able to make at Beef Week, I am very pleased to say I have secured a full-time graduate position at a very reputable stud and commercial beef cattle agribusiness to begin in 2019. Again, the scholarship has been an invaluable assistance to me, allowing me to take extracurricular opportunities and reduce the financial stress tertiary studies can be and for that I am forever grateful.

From Sara Rodes

I am in my fifth year of Veterinary Science and am absolutely loving it! I have been on placement all year at places like Taroom, Warwick and Tenterfield and have met so many amazing veterinarians. This would not have been possible without the help of the Scholarship which allowed me to organise accommodation in places where I could have the best learning experiences. Because of this experience I have secured a job as a veterinarian in a great clinic in Warwick next year which I am very excited to start.



Loretta Tonscheck



Sara Rodes



UQGPSA attends the GSA Annual Ball and donates \$1,000

On Friday night August 24, two UQGPSA members, Junior Vice-President Mark Pace and Committee member Trevor Pezet attended the Gatton Student Association Ball held at the Elton Burns Recreation Building (Multi Purpose Hall).

The night was attended by almost 300 Gatton Campus students across all programs from Diploma to Degrees and it can be said that the spirit of celebration amongst students has certainly not dwindled over the generations.

Both UQGPSA members addressed the students to raise their awareness of our existing association and to build the bridge from their current status as students and consider then becoming members of the UQGPSA. Students were also updated on the good work of the UQGPSA Scholarships available to students and the support of the UQGPSA. The student feedback was positive and the engagement certainly raised

the profile and relationship between the two associations and helped to encourage younger generations to consider joining the ranks of the UQGPSA. It was discussed on the night that this engagement should be an annual event to establish the rekindled relationship.

The donation of \$1,000 provided by the UQGPSA was used to pay for the band (photo inset) who provided good entertainment for the Ball.

Branch Reunions



'72 Degree Group 45th Reunion: Greg Nunn, John Marshall, Alan Murray, Jan Hamilton and Ian Littleton



Bundaberg Reunion



Canberra Reunion: Enjoying lunch at Canberra Yacht Club in April



Chinchilla Reunion: Don Allen, Darby Ferris, Dave Bunting, Kev Hart and Norm Woolley

Check out the rest of our photos on Facebook !



Gold Coast Reunion: Charlie Teasdale, Jack Groenendyk and Cheryl Teasdale



Top: Mackay Branch members cutting 70th Reunion Cake in May – John Whitaker, Chris Henn, Errol Leggett, Lyle Rogers and Clive Rogers
Bottom: Mark Hetherington, Paul Newbery, Clive Rogers, John Whitaker and Mark Pace



Rockhampton Reunion held during *Beef Week*

'72 Degree Group hold 45th Reunion

In May, 59 past students, staff and their spouses gathered at The Glen Hotel, Eight Miles Plains to celebrate 45 years since their graduation ceremony in May 1973. Organised by John Taylor, Anne Chamberlain and Mal Ferguson, the event was deemed a great success by all who attended.

Travelling the greatest distance was Charlie Powell (Food Tech.) and wife Judy from Canada. Within Australia, Bruce Short (Rural Tech.) and Geoff Tually (Extension lecturer) from Melbourne were challenged by Mick Gilbert (Rural Tech.) and partner Graziella Peressini from Tolga for the longest trip. However John Harden (Plant Protection lecturer) and wife Di won the longest trip of the day, flying in from Adelaide in time for lunch. Jim Galletly (Soil and Water lecturer) at 91 was the oldest attendee. The student cohort of that year included the first intake of female students to Gatton, and all five women were able to make it back for the celebrations.

John Taylor coordinated a book to celebrate the day. It contained photos from 1969 when all arrived at QAC, Diploma and Degree year photos as well as character notes from fellow students. Group formal and informal activity photos were also included. All students of the time were also given the opportunity to write a one page summary of their post College life. The profiles reflected the major contributions



Anne Chamberlain, Tessa Paigno, Sandy Lincoln, Jan Fletcher and Jan Hamilton

that group of graduates had made to agriculture, business and communities in Australia and around the world, stemming from an extraordinarily broad grounding in 'science with practice'.

John also prepared a PowerPoint presentation that added photos taken by individuals during the "study" years to the group activity photos that played during the afternoon. This presentation was alternated with films made by the late Steve Everingham, whose family

kindly gave permission for the films to be copied. Steve's sister, Joanne, was a special guest for the afternoon. These presentations together with photos taken of the day have now been copied and made available to those who have requested them.

After five hours together, it was decided that we should not wait another 45 years to do it again. However no time has yet been proposed for the follow up event.

Historical Collection

Life in the Museum has been hectic in preparation for the *Back to College Weekend*.

Work on the WWI Roll of Honour has involved 20 replacement name plates being manufactured due to a variety of errors. Research in conjunction with UQ Archives has discovered 29 names missing from College records. To date, it is known that 249 Past Students and Staff enlisted, 51 making the Supreme Sacrifice. One in five, not good odds!!

Donations since the last issue of *Re-Connect* have consisted of an Honour Blazer awarded to Hector Reghenzani QDA 1942, and two bread and butter plates carrying the College badge and colours, a pattern not previously seen by the Museum staff. These were donated by Hector's daughter Angela.

We still require a Riddell House colour pocket and a 1957 2nd XV photo.

We have been lucky enough to be offered access to a new scanner which will be installed in September. This will allow us to scan books and other multiple page documents more easily. Once they are in a digital form they will be much more accessible to those researching our history.

Once again I thank Val Kilah, Julie Reid and Trevor Arthur for their continued and valued assistance.

Peter Douglas



Photographs

The Museum has a severe shortage of class and sporting photographs from the 1970s to the present time. If you can assist, please scan and email them to our Association or send us the original photograph, preferably with captions. We can return original photographs if required.

New Members

Robert Graham **Adams** (1968)

Gillian Sue **Barrett** (1988)

Geoffrey Charles **Hope** (1968)

Paul Mallalieu **Inglis** (1988)

John Alexander **McLean** (1952)

Geoffrey Hugh **O'Donnell** (1978)

Sharon Lesley **Robinson** (1985)

Noel **Turner** (1958)

Back to College Weekend

The annual *Back to College Weekend* will be held from Friday 30 November to Sunday 2 December 2018. The feature years are those who completed their study at Gatton in 1958, 1968, 1978, 1988, 1998 and 2008. Other year groups returning are 1953, 1963 and 1973. All year groups are welcome. There will also be a reunion of the 1978 Rugby teams and supporters. Please note the year groups are the year study was completed and not necessarily the year of graduation as for several decades,

graduation was around May of the following year.

The Friday night BBQ under the stars has proved very popular and is the ideal setting for a relaxing catch up with others from your year group. Saturday is the main day of the reunion with year group photos on the steps of the Foundation building in the late morning before lunch.

Contact with UQ about Future of Gatton Campus and Courses *see introduction in President's Report*

Early in 2018 past student Ray Byrnes wrote a letter to Prof Brown in which he expressed his concerns about the apparent lack of utilisation of land resources and the run-down state of some of the facilities on campus. He also questioned whether courses offered were meeting the needs in the primary industry sector. It was noted in the letter that the Veterinary Science facilities at the Campus were of a very high standard and the impression gained was that their development appeared to have taken precedence. The meeting and follow-up phone call summarised here by Ray and Barry were the result of this letter.

This was a first step in an on-going dialogue to better understand UQ's plans for the future at Gatton and keep past students, industry representatives and other interested people up-to-date on the developments. The UQ representatives provided informative responses to the issues we raised.

Following is a summary of the issues discussed:

- **Future of the Gatton Campus** – It was acknowledged that the future of the Campus had been in doubt but that was in the past and UQ is now firmly committed to the on-going development of Gatton as a leading Centre for Agricultural Education and Research in Australia.
- **UQ Gatton will be concentrating resources in the fields of Tropical and Sub-tropical Agriculture and is extending its target areas of operations into South-east Asia.** The view is that UQ Gatton is the best placed education and research institution in Australia to meet the needs of these sectors.
- **Current Status of UQ Agricultural Science Research** – It was stated that UQ is currently rated number 5 in the world rankings based on quantity and quality of Agricultural Research output.
- **Masterplan for Gatton Campus Academic Core** – copies were provided of the Masterplan which is in three phases over 10 years of planned construction and refurbishment of facilities. The plan conveys that UQ is firmly committed to the on-going development of the Gatton Campus.
- **Practical Content of Courses** – Prof Menzies acknowledged that graduates generally require a period of on-the-job training before they can reach their full potential as an employee in industry. Efforts are being made to address this deficiency through student placements within cropping and livestock operations relevant to the field of study. Whether the return of farming activities on campus will lead to opportunities for practical work is a topic for future discussion.

- **Utilisation of the Campus's Land and Water Resources** – It was acknowledged that these have not been used to full advantage in recent years.

- **Use of Cropping Land** – Moving to more systematic use of all the arable soil types on the site. The campus land will be treated as a research site with different areas/soil types devoted to suitable cropping research regimes. This change from the previous opportunistic cropping system will be overseen by a group of Agronomists whose task will be to achieve the best possible use of the land and water resources in a planned integrated crop research program. Have appointed consultants to assess and advise on water resources as part of the integrated cropping planning process. Are looking to upgrade infrastructure to better suit smaller scale cropping sites e.g. irrigation systems scaled to suit smaller crop areas.

Dennis Poppi (ex CSIRO Pasture Scientist) now at Gatton and soon to retire has urged more emphasis on field vs glasshouse work and strongly supports increased involvement of students in practical field trial work. This change in emphasis is strongly supported by Neal Menzies.

- **The School is aspiring to develop a cooperative relationship with a Swedish Agricultural University ranked just below UQ in excellence.** The aim is to expose students to other ecosystems and environments where they can compare cropping systems and yields and develop a better understanding of the underlying factors influencing outcomes for the same crop grown in different geographic locations e.g. comparison of a cereal crop grown in summer in Sweden with the same crop grown at the same time in winter at Gatton.
- **New Centre for Horticultural Science at Gatton Campus** – Has commenced this year. Professor Neena Mitter an Agricultural Biotechnologist has been appointed to head the new Centre. It is based in laboratory and glasshouse facilities at Gatton and would be working closely with the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation (QAAFI). Practical work could be arranged for students on cooperating farms and orchards. Focus at Gatton will be on intensive horticulture mainly row crop vegetable production. Currently in the planning phase and looking to develop a single research delivery team

with DAF and CSIRO. Not intending to reestablish an orchard at Gatton but are looking to team up with DAF to conduct cooperative research at DAF locations particularly in CQ on citrus. As an example of this approach recently lecturer Darryl Joyce (from DAF Nambour) was a joint appointment between UQ and DAF.

- **New Piggery** – Plans are being drawn up for the redevelopment of the piggery at the Gatton campus at an expected cost of \$18M. The unit will have strong genetics and welfare research programs and will be about 1200 sow capacity. Most pigs will be sold as weaners with a smaller proportion being taken through to grow out stage. Process to choose a commercial partner to operate the piggery is being finalised and discussions are proceeding on design features. Intention is for two people (an academic and an experienced piggery operator) to travel overseas to visit a pig technology teaching facility in Germany (suggested by Pig Industry contact of Ray's) and other piggeries in the Netherlands before the final design is settled.
- **Poultry Industry Training** – Poultry industry research has shifted away from Gatton to other Universities in recent years. Australian Eggs, the leading egg industry organisation in Australia has established its own training program for industry employees conducted by an accredited training provider. It provides a range of training from induction programs to Certificate/Diploma level and is keen to link their Diploma level courses to relevant University degree courses. The suggestion that the poultry industry may be prepared to provide external industry-based lecturers for relevant Gatton courses was well received. UQ approach with the poultry facilities will depend on the outcome of discussions with the main players in the poultry industry.
- **Beekeeping** – no plans to reestablish apiary facilities at UQ Gatton
- **Entomological Content of Courses** – There are difficulties in coordinating the entomological content of Agricultural Science courses because Entomology is located in the School of Biological Sciences and it has been difficult to get entomologists to go to Gatton. However they are encouraging people to work there and a PhD student who has applied for funds to research possible applications of spider venom in Agricultural pest control will be located

continued on page 8

Gone, but not forgotten...

*Because I could not stop for Death
He kindly stopped for me
The Carriage held but just Ourselves
And Immortality.*

Emily Dickinson

ARMSTRONG, Peter John

B of Business 1986.
Passed away 16 April 2018

BARNETT, Ross "BUSTER" Alexander

QDAH 1957.
Prefect 1956–57. Pitt House Captain 1957.
1953: 3rd XV, A2 XI.
1954: 2nd XV, 1st XI, Boxing.
1955: 1st XV, 1st XI.
1956: 1st XV, 1st XI, CMF.
1957: 1st XV, 1st XI (Capt), 1st IV and Intercollegiate, CMF.
His working life was spent as a Husbandry Officer in the Beef Cattle Branch, DPI.
Ross passed away 18 August 2018.

DAVIS, Caroline Elizabeth

B Agribusiness 2005.
Tragically killed 5 June 2018.

FINLAYSON, Lindsay

Assoc Dip App Sc 1989.
Lindsay passed away 28 May 2018.

HADE, Michael John

At College 1986. QAC Union Council Executive (Social Director).
Michael passed away 11 August 2017.

HAMILTON, Jon "Black John" Alexander

QDAH 1956.
At College 1952–1956. Shelton House.
1952: Under 15 XV, B2 XI.
1953: 3rd XV, B2 XI.
1954: 3rdB XV (Capt.), B1 XI (Capt.)
1955: 1st XV, A1 XI, CMF.
1956: 1st XV, A2 XI (Capt.), Boxing.
Graduated from UQ in 1961 with a BVSc.
During his time at St Lucia he played Rugby Union for UQ (1957–1961) and represented Queensland in 1958 and 1959.
After graduating, he spent to 1968 as Veterinary Officer for the PNG Government, then to 1980 in private practice. Jon represented New Guinea in Rugby League in 1962.
He returned to Australia, did locums for twelve months before purchasing a bus company in Toowoomba. He retired in 1996.
Jon passed away 14 August 2018.

JOHNSON, Philip Geoffrey

Ass Dip Rural Tech 1975.
At College 1974–75
Philip passed away 12 February 2018.

MULLINS, Timothy Charles

Dip Bus 1980.
Timothy passed away 29 June 2018.

RANKIN, Robert Dauncey Ellis

QDAH 1954.
At College 1951–53. Shelton House.
Athletics: 1951–53.
1st XV: 1951, 1952 (Toowoomba and Darling Downs Rep), 1953 (T'wmba Rep)
CMF 1951, Cpl 1952.
Robert passed away in May 2018.

SCOTT, Colin Herbert

QDH 1964.
At College 1960–64. Riddell House.
A very talented athlete.
1962: Under 16 Champion Athlete, winning the Staff Challenge Cup.
1963: Under 17 Champion Athlete.
1964: Under 18 Champion Athlete. Won U18 100 yards in 10.6 secs.
2nd XV.
Colin passed away 23 June 2018.

SMITH, Elizabeth (née TREE)

B App Sc 1974.
Elizabeth passed away 16 April 2018.

Branch Reunion	Venue	Date	Time	Contact
Brisbane	Pacific Golf Club Carindale	Saturday 10 November 2018	11:30am for 12 noon luncheon	Slade Lee ☎ 0419 474 251 slade.lee@internode.on.net
Gold Coast	Labrador AFL Sports Club Ashton Street Labrador	Saturday 9 February 2019	11:00am for 12 noon luncheon	Peter Douglas ☎ (07) 5546 6350 koalamen@bigpond.com
Sunshine Coast	Caloundra Bowls Club Cnr Arthur St and Burwah Terr. Caloundra	Saturday 9 March 2019	11:30am for 12 noon luncheon	Peter Jacobson ☎ 0419 662 467 peter.jacobson@agriculture.gov.au
Canberra	Canberra Yacht Club 1 Mariner Place Yarralumla	April 2019	12 noon luncheon	Kim Jorgensen ☎ 0438 130 963 jorgensen_kim@bigpond.com
Rockhampton	Red Lion Hotel 138 Denham Street Allenstown	Sunday 28 April 2019	11:30am for 12 noon luncheon	Julie Martin ☎ 0439 362 364 jazsie@bigpond.com
Mackay	Duke of Edinburgh Hotel Walkerston	Sunday 19 May 2019	11:00am for 12 noon luncheon	Mark Hetherington ☎ 0407 595 349 m.hetherington@pcpsl.com.au John Whitaker ☎ 0437 331 093 john-.whitaker@bigpond.com
Bundaberg	East End Hotel 58 Princess Street East Bundaberg	Sunday 9 June 2019	11:00am for 12 noon luncheon	Mike Moller ☎ 0478 154 593 mmoller57@gmail.com
Other Reunions ...	Watch out for details on Facebook and LinkedIn emails will be sent to members and those we have contact details for.			

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Re-Connect is printed by
the UQ Gatton printery.
Design by the UQ Office of
Marketing and Communications.

110685-September 2018

Introducing...

Adrian O'Connor



In February 1966, I found myself on the steps of the Foundation Building looking forward to the next chapter in my life. My first dormitory was Shelton run by Bill Logan. Life was good. I learned the ropes quickly and tried to stay out of trouble.

My time at the College came and went as most things do in life with a hiccup here and there. Restructuring went on around us, new buildings sprung up and new faces dotted the landscape. We were not immune to civil unrest sweeping the country. We organised our own union and fought for change where it mattered most.

After graduation in 1968, I got a job with the DPI. I was sent to the Hermitage Research Station where Bill Natoli introduced me to pig nutritional research. A year later I transferred to the Warwick office where I worked with Ken Gillies in extension. It was here that I rubbed shoulders with many College old boys especially Stan Walsh who took me under his wing.

I parted company with the DPI in 1971 to explore the world. I boarded the RHMS Patris in Sydney and headed off to London with a return ticket and a suit case full of dreams. I worked in the Strathspey Hotel in Scotland as a barman, hitched hiked around Ireland during 'the troubles' and travelled around Europe in a beat-up VW. I was wild and free ... get my drift.

I surfaced again on Vancouver Island in Canada in 1973 where my life took some unexpected turns. I caught the learning bug. I went to night school to complete my year 12 then on to a community college. I eventually got a BA in classics, philosophy and ancient history from the University of Victoria in 1979. It was here that I became a lifelong learner.

On my return to Australia in 1980 I decided to become a teacher. After completing teacher training at UQ in 1982, I landed my first job as an agriculture teacher on the Sunshine Coast. I

remained in this role for the next 20 years in various Queensland, interstate and overseas locations picking up more post graduate qualifications along the way.

Agriculture went through a period of change while I was teaching. Spatial technologies, remote sensing and variable applicators enabled farmers to work smarter not harder. But perhaps the biggest change was the increasing number of young women entering the classroom. They weren't interested in 'crutchin', 'daggin' and 'shearin'. They had a new take on Agriculture.

I sometimes think agricultural education is stuck in a twilight zone. Many of my generation tend to yearn for the good old days. There is a belief that we should teach students the way we were taught mixing science with practice. Those days have gone. I don't believe we have a modern vision for agricultural education and until we do we will continue to live in the past unable to move forward.

continued from page 6

there. In the meantime, Errol Hassan, retired entomologist, is continuing to provide input to courses at Gatton.

- **Dairy** – The current facilities are adequate and there has been a recent change of staff at the Gatton Dairy. Will be a collaborative research effort with DAF and probably will be looking to a joint teaching appointment with DAF at Gatton. Most of the School of Agriculture and Food Sciences research effort will be pasture related and the School of Veterinary Science will be looking at health and other aspects within their field.
- **Beef cattle** – Have very good facilities at the Darbalara Farm, (the Laidley subfarm) and the UQ Droughtmaster herd has been relocated there from Pinjarra Hills. Facilities are shared with the School of Veterinary Science. Sara Neal will replace Dennis Poppi on his retirement to continue work in the ruminant nutritionist field. Plenty of opportunities for student practical work involvement in the beef cattle program but have to be careful to ensure students are adequately protected when working with large animals. i.e. safe working environment.
- **Sheep** – There is no focus on sheep at Gatton but they are cooperating with UNE for coverage in this field for students wishing to study subjects in this field.

There was also discussion about courses and students being job ready which will be included with any updates in the next *ReConnect* (editor).

Ray Byrnes and Barry Marks