



# ReConnect

A Publication of the  
UQ Gatton Past Students  
Association Inc.  
Issue 19, Winter 2012

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## STOP PRESS

### 2012 Back to College Weekend

First weekend in December  
**To register:**  
[www.uq.edu.au/gatton/  
paststudents](http://www.uq.edu.au/gatton/paststudents)

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## *New Dairy Research Centre opens at UQ Gatton*

Huge benefits will flow to the dairy industry from a new \$7 million research centre that officially opened at Gatton recently.

The University of Queensland and the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) have jointly developed the new centre as a focus for research, development, extension and education in subtropical dairy production.

UQ Pro-Vice-Chancellor Alan Rix said the research dairy would allow the development of on-farm strategies to assist dairy farmers in Australia's northern areas to improve their productivity and profitability.

"It is the only facility of its kind in Australia focused on a sub-tropical feed base and it will provide research, development and education for the national and international dairy industries," Professor Rix said.

The Gatton Research Dairy had been an important part of UQ's Gatton campus for many years but the latest upgrade has vastly improved its facilities and improved its energy efficiency.

"The new facilities further reinforce UQ Gatton as one of the most advanced precincts in the southern hemisphere for animal science learning and research," said Professor Rix.

"The Gatton Research Dairy will be able to provide expertise in the areas of nutrition, forage production, business management, reproductive management, animal health and welfare, animal physiology and biochemistry," Professor Rix said.



Managing Director of Agri-Science Queensland, John Chapman (left) and Pro-Vice Chancellor Alan Rix at the Gatton Research Dairy opening.

DEEDI's dairy research facilities, previously located at Mutdapilly, southwest of Ipswich, had been relocated to the upgraded centre at Gatton.

New facilities at the Gatton Research Dairy include an increased number of milking units to support the larger herd of 250 milking cows, including more energy efficient equipment.

A new calf-rearing facility is designed to optimise calf welfare and growth rates. There are also new pens for feeding and nutrition-based research and an animal handling area for dairy cow research sampling.

A new feed mill and concrete silage pits, feedpad and shade structures will allow research into a range of forage production systems. A new irrigation system will improve water use and labour efficiency.

# President's Report

## The Last Word

by Gary Mason

I cannot believe that we are putting the Re-Connect together again, time seems to escape, and much has happened with another Christmas, New Year and Easter gone. Of course in Queensland we also have a new Government. It is early days, and Premier (Can Do) Newman is making noises about changes in education direction and funding – we can only hope that some of that funding is channelled into agricultural education and training.

We can be thankful in many ways that The University of Queensland has taken control of the Gatton Campus where massive changes have occurred in the past few years. The re-structuring of courses, the transfer of the School of Veterinary Science along with the huge cash injection for the construction of the \$100 million Veterinary Science facilities, the \$33 million Centre for Advanced Animal Science and the recent \$7 million Gatton Dairy Research Centre. Surely, all good for industry, educators and those seeking training for a future career in one of the many agricultural pursuits available today.

Current reports indicate there is a shortage of graduates in agriculture – related fields, with tertiary facilities Australia wide only turning out about 700 agricultural graduates annually (270 in 2009). The Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture estimates that 4000 tertiary trained people are required for a sustainable industry. It is undoubtedly time that Government of all persuasions and their respective politicians took notice of the agricultural industry, our food producers, as to how and in which direction we should be leaning to gain better efficiencies of production, marketing of produce and increased market share on the world stage.

The past twelve months has undoubtedly been one of the best for rainfall and subsequent grass growth, also the filling of water storages for irrigation and replenishment of the underground aquifer. This must give those working the land greater confidence to pursue their goals in either crop or livestock production. To the graduates of one of the greatest agricultural facilities, I wish you well.



**Graham McClymont**  
President,  
UQ Gatton Past Students  
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Thank you to all of our members for the faith you have shown in me and the team you elected last December to manage your Association for another year. The management committee you elected is working well and has already put in place a great program for this year. Bob James and Nicole Hoskin did not seek another term and we thank them for their efforts over many years. Julie Martin returned to the committee after a year break while Slade Lee and Phil Long are new to the committee.

At our February meeting, the management committee unanimously decided to award Honorary Life Membership to Bob James. Bob is a former President (1981 - 1982) and has been a member of the management committee for around 50 years. Bob will be presented with his framed certificate at the *Back to College* dinner in December. Congratulations Bob on a well earned award.

The 2011 *Back to College Weekend* was the best attended yet with 280 registrations. Janelle Zahmel, Gatton Campus Director, responded to the toast to UQ Gatton at the dinner and showed a great series of photographs of current students and their activities. The weekend is traditionally held on the first weekend in December and this year, the weekend will be held on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 December. I look forward to seeing many of you at the weekend. Please note that the weekend is for all members and their family, and is not restricted to the feature years.

We now have over 1,100 members with around 10% being female. While this seems very lopsided, we need to remember that QAC only allowed male students until 1969 when women were enrolled for the first time in 72 years. The majority of our members are QAC graduates, however a

growing percentage of our members are graduates of The University of Queensland (Gatton Campus) and to them, QAC is ancient history. The percentage of our members who are female and graduates of The University of Queensland (Gatton Campus) will increase significantly over the next few years.

Barry Marks is promoting the naming of trees on the Gatton Campus, and I urge you to consider donating to this worthy cause. Further details are included in this newsletter.

Nominations will shortly be called for the *UQ Gatton Gold Medal*. I urge you to consider nominating a Gatton graduate who has become a high achiever since graduation. This is a most prestigious award and details are on our website.

A big thank you to all of our volunteers. Our volunteers are the life blood of our Association and there would not be an Association without the large number of people who help with branch reunions, preparing mail to members and feature years, the *Back to College Weekend* etc. We simply could not operate without your help.

## New Members

- Max William **Albrand** (1971)
- Kerry Maxwell **Barram** (1962)
- Donna Christina **Bennett** nee Appleton (1974)
- Jessie-Lee **Brown** (2011)
- Ivon Douglas **Buchanan** (1971)
- Michael Brian **Curtis** (1991)
- Frederick John **De Costa** (1979)
- Russell Leonard **Doughty** (1971)
- John Reginald **Fagan** (1971)
- Ian Thomas **Fotheringham** (1951)
- Dugald Morrow **Macfarlane** (1990)
- Frances Teresa **Piagno** nee Gray (1971)
- Robert Michael **Shelton** (1961)
- Rex **Sweedman** (1951)
- Julia Anne **Telford** (2001)
- John **Vaccaneo** (1950)
- Albert Kent **Wellsted** (1961)
- Ian Alexander **Wylie** (1966)

# Gatton Gold Medal goes to Army Reservist

Major General Michael (Mick) Fairweather AM, Bachelor of Applied Science (Rural Technology), Graduate Diploma of Teaching, Graduate Diploma of Strategic Studies, Reserve Forces Decoration (RFD) is the first graduate from Gatton to attain the rank of Major General in the Army Reserve.

Following his graduation from Queensland Agricultural College and a stint at Kelvin Grove Teachers College, he commenced a career as an Agricultural teacher lasting nine years, before moving into a role in the agricultural sector. Five of those nine years he worked at Lockyer District High School in Gatton.

This was followed by senior management positions in the public and private agricultural sector, with a strong focus on marketing, leadership and management in the agriculture, food technology and export markets.

Major General Fairweather later became general manager for Agricultural Requirements and was involved in the introduction of new cultivation and harvesting equipment for the row crop sector.

He then moved to Defiance Mills as regional manager for North Asia where he researched and implemented marketing strategies in Japan, including the development of new products with an increased revenue stream.

He subsequently led the successful reforms and winding up of the tobacco industry in south east Queensland through his role as general manager of SQ Tobacco Growers Co-operative.

For 15 years he has owned and operated several small businesses, including a start-up wireless internet service provider.

Joining the Army Reserve at the Queensland Agricultural College Training Unit in 1971, progressing to the rank of Captain, he remained with this Unit for 13 years.

In 1985 he completed the Army Reserve Command Staff College course at Wacol and was posted Company Commander B Company, 25th Battalion, Royal Queensland Regiment, Toowoomba.

Elevated to Lieutenant Colonel in 1990 he took command of the battalion for three years.

He then attended the Joint Services Staff College in Canberra, gaining his Graduate Diploma in Strategic Studies and was posted to the Land Warfare Centre, Canungra as instructor.

On being promoted to Colonel in 1997 he became Colonel Army Reserve, Royal Military College, Duntroon where he facilitated the alignment of part-time and full-time officer training.

On his promotion to Brigadier in 2004, he was appointed Assistant Commander Training Command – Army and subsequently as Commander Australian Army Cadets.

In 2004 Major General Fairweather was appointed Commander 11th Infantry Brigade, Townsville which included the deployment of the first formed bodies of troops from the brigade in operational deployment since the end of World War II.

He received a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for work in reforming Reserve Officer Training and the Australian Army Cadets, and a Reserve Forces Decoration (RFD) for 40 years of service as a soldier and officer.

Major General Fairweather is currently head of the Defence Export Unit in the Defence Material organisation, a Director of Boystown, Chairman of the Board of Sun Engineering as well as being Chairman and part owner of Amplifi Governance.



Chancellor Mr John Story (left), presenting Major-General Michael Fairweather with the UQ Gatton Gold Medal



Major-General Michael Fairweather



# Dairy Diplomat is Distinguished Past Student

## Did you know?

In 1933, a new rice bed was built in the south east corner of Gatton 1 (later renamed Stapleton).

This bed utilized waste water from the scrubber at the Power House – amounting to 3,000 gallons daily.

The Power House was located to the east of Riddell Dormitory which was built on the site of the present John Mahon Building.

## Remember

*Back to College Weekend* is held on the first weekend in December every year – see you there.

The feature years are those who finished their study in 1952, 1962, 1972, 1982, 1992 and 2002. The 1967 year group is also returning for a 45 year reunion.



Ray O'Grady

A Lismore based consultant with a passion for the preservation of our soils has been awarded the prestigious Distinguished Past Student award for 2011.

Graduating from Queensland Agricultural College in 1964 with a Diploma in Dairying (Dux), Ray O'Grady has had a long and extensive career in agriculture. Ranging from cheese, pastures, cotton, ginger, tea-trees to running his own consulting business.

He will soon tell you that it was not an illustrious start when he first went to work on the Snowy Mountains Scheme to save the money to take him to Gatton as a self-funded student.

He was given a reprieve in his second year when he was granted a scholarship with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries (QDPI) Dairy Research Branch.

Following graduation he began work with the QDPI Dairy Research Branch in Brisbane and at which time Queensland cheese was being seriously down-graded by a defect called "fermented flavour".

Through surveys and experimentation, Ray O'Grady, using cheese starter cultures sourced from both the QDPI and another from the CSIRO, discovered a problem in the quality of the QDPI culture.

This was further tested after being transferred to the Murgon Dairy Research Laboratory, where he convinced the manager of the South Burnett Dairy Co-Operative to try the CSIRO freeze dried starter vials, and from day one there was no further down-graded cheese.

In the late 1960's after joining Consolidated Fertilizers (CFL), the concept of combining high density irrigated rye grass with high applications of nitrogen fertilizer (known as High N' Rye) was conceived to replace grass and clover based dairy pastures.

Wide publicity of the success of this concept, resulted in industry acceptance from northern NSW to the Atherton Tableland, where dairy farmers were doubling and tripling their total milk production.

It has been historically suggested that High N' Rye saved the Queensland dairy industry at that critical time.

Ray was later involved in the ginger industry with the introduction of nitrogen fertiliser (urea) through the irrigation system – again widely accepted by the industry with a doubling in yields from 10–14t/acre to 28–32T/acre, causing an over-supply of ginger with subsequent new export markets developed.

These days, through his O'Grady rural management and consulting services he provides workshops for farmers on understanding the biological and ecological processes taking place in the soil.



# Female student population leaps 71 percent in 42 years

In 1969, the female student numbers of the Queensland Agricultural College (now University of Queensland Gatton) was just one percent. Today, it is 72 percent.

Two of the five female enrolments in that year, Anne Chamberlain and Tessa Piagno, returned for the Back to College weekend last December.

Rural Technology student, Tessa graduated in 1971 with a Diploma in Applied Science while Anne graduated in 1972 with a Bachelor of Applied Science.

“We were five females studying amongst 500 students. We definitely stood out, especially at first as we tried to keep wearing our mini-skirts while climbing fences. In the end we had to trade our mini-skirts for trousers,” Tessa said.

Both women spoke fondly of their time living and studying on campus, agreeing that the heart of the campus remained the same – they were allowed to move onto the campus in their second year when the Shelton Hall of Residence was completed.

Anne commented that the beautiful gardens were still evident while also noting the changes with new modern

buildings, and a road used to run through the middle of the campus as well as the relocation of the dairy.

“From when I was studying here to working in the agricultural industry, being a woman has not held any difficulties for me and I think that is a credit to the down-to-earth and genuine nature of the people who work in our industry,” Anne said.

Having both worked in primary industries for many years, Anne now works in rural writing and editing while Tessa is a librarian, but they both still have strong ties to rural life.

They are hoping to return to the *Back to College* weekend in 2012 along with the other three first female students.



Tessa Piagno (left) and Anne Chamberlain at the 2011 *Back to College Weekend*



Student Anne Chamberlain attending the Brisbane Royal Show in 1970 with twin Suffolk lambs.

(Photo courtesy of “Queensland Country Life” Newspaper)

## Historical Collection

The *Back to College Weekend* brought an avalanche of memorabilia.

Items included various photographs, a large number of Diplomas, Certificates and Degrees as well as assorted College magazines and programs.

The list of donors is vast and time does not permit us to write and thank each donor as is our usual practice.

On behalf of the museum volunteers I take this opportunity to personally thank them for their contributions.

Special mention must be made of the Honour Blazer presented at the dinner by Mike Knowles, Senior Prefect

1955–56; the 1961 QAC 10 stone 7 Division boxing trophy donated by Harry Bishop, Senior Prefect 1961; and a silver teaspoon bearing the College badge won by Cyril McCarthy for 1st XV Football in 1932. Cyril QDD 1933, was captain of the College 1st XV in 1933 and represented Queensland against New South Wales in that year.

The trophy was donated by his son Justin QDAH 1966, who was a member of the College 1st XV in 1965–66.

Thank you all.

*Peter Douglas*

# Branch Reunions



New faces at the Gold Coast Reunion were (from left) Harry Randle 1954–58, Mike Luxmoore 1958–60, Neil Baxter 1951–56 and Peter Dinwoodie 1951–53.

## Gold Coast Reunion

The 19th Reunion was held on Saturday 4 February 2012, at the Labrador Sports Club.

A very encouraging attendance of 59 members and guests sat down to the popular seafood lunch.

Twenty apologies were recorded. Special guests included Assn President Graham McClymont, Assn Past President Bob James, our Branch Patron Bill Laver and Honoured Old Boy Clive Gilchrist (1934–39).

The 2011 recipient of the Distinguished Past Student Award Ray O’Grady also attended with his wife Moya together with John Keevers representing Hawkesbury Agricultural College OBA. Honorary Life Members Val Kilah and Julie Reid also graced us with their presence.

Again I thank Ron McMahon and Bob James for attending to the raffle albeit with a hiccup! Also to George Hannaford and Diana for “attending to the door” and our finances.

Since the Reunion, the Branch has donated a cabinet to the PSA Museum which now displays items of military significance. The money was raised from the proceeds of our raffles.

Thank you to all the “donors”.

*Peter Douglas*



Getting together at the Sunshine Coast Reunion in March were (from left) Jack Burchill 1945–48, Ivan Stanton 1943–47, Allan Boag 1944–47 and Adrian Calvert 1943–46.

### Gold Coast Branch Reunion

Labrador  
AFL Sports Club  
Ashton Street, Labrador

**Saturday  
18 August 2012**

11:30 am for  
12 noon luncheon

Peter Douglas ☎ 5546 6350  
koalamen@bigpond.com

### Brisbane Branch Reunion

Sherwood Services Club  
Clewley Street  
Corinda

**Saturday  
25 August 2012**

11.30am for  
12 noon luncheon

Bob James ☎ 3349 1738  
rjames39@bigpond.com  
Tony Wood ☎ 3278 0075  
tonywood@gmail.com

### Mackay Branch Reunion

date and venue  
to be announced  
in next issue

**TBA**

11:30 am for  
12 noon luncheon

Harry Bishop ☎ 4942 1549  
harold.bishop@internode.on.net

Mark Hetherington  
☎ 0408 884 621  
mhetherington@bses.com.au

### Sunshine Coast Branch Reunion

Caloundra Bowls Club  
Cnr Arthur Street and  
Burwah Terrace, Caloundra

**Saturday  
9 March 2013**

11:30 am for  
12 noon luncheon

Peter Jacobson  
☎ 0419 662 467  
peter.jacobson@daff.gov.au



# Tree Name Tagging Project

UQ Gatton Past Students Association has embarked on a project proposed by past student Barry Marks to identify and tag trees in the main campus area at Gatton.

“Everyone will agree that the grounds of the Gatton Campus are beautiful to behold, containing many magnificent trees,” Barry said.

It is proposed to name the trees from Morrison Hall (old Shelton) to the Campus Motel (opposite the old CSIRO site) along both sides of the central walkway past the dining hall.

Research by Barry and friends have identified 285 trees to be tagged with their common and botanical names at a cost of \$15 per tree.

To date \$2685 has been received, which will enable 179 tags to be produced – a further 106 tags are needed to complete the project, therefore further contributions are encouraged.

Each tag will carry an engraved plate, showing:

- Common name
- Botanical name
- The Past Students Association logo on the bottom left
- The University of Queensland logo on the bottom right

The plate will be fixed to the tag and tail, then nailed to the tree at eye height.

The label is 100mm x 60mm and will be anodised and laser engraved so will not fade or weather.

A book listing all contributors will be housed in the Association’s museum.

Contributions can be made by:

- Posting a cheque to UQ Gatton Past Students Association;
- Emailing credit card details to [gattonpaststudents@uq.edu.au](mailto:gattonpaststudents@uq.edu.au); or
- Contributions by EFT, contact Margaret at the above email address for bank account details.



Barry Marks

## 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

### John J CHANDLER

QDAH 1948. 1st XI 1946, 1st XV 1946–47, 2nd XV 1948.  
John passed away 9 February 2012.

### William DOUGLAS

At College 1944–46. Shelton (he won 31 points at the Foundation Day Sports 1946).  
Bill passed away 16 March 2011.

### Colin J FURPHY

Completed the Junior Course 1950–51. Under 15 XV 1950, C Grade XV 1951.  
Member of the Senior Cadet Corps 1950.  
Col passed away 24 July 2011.

### Mrs GREAVES

Together with her husband Jack, ran the College Canteen under the eastern wing of the Main Building from 1951 to Jan 1969.  
Her funeral was held 3 November 2011.

### Mike LAZARIDES

QDA 1949. Riddell. 1st XV 1947, 2nd XV 1946. Boxing 1944–47. ATC 1944–45.  
Mike worked for CSIRO in Canberra for many years. Brother of Luke QDA 1947.  
Passed away in Canberra 14 November 2011.

### Robert LEWIS

Cert An Hus 2nd Class Hons 1970.  
Bob came to College after his discharge from the Army on completion of his 2 years National Service. He played Polocrosse for the Gatton (town) No 2 team.  
Bob passed away 7 November 2011.

### Cyril E MAXWELL

QDD 1937. Thynne. At College 1934–37.  
On leaving College he obtained a position in the Power House of his home town of Longreach where he became a qualified electrician. During the 1950's he was the College electrician.  
His Diploma is displayed in the Museum.  
Cyril passed away 9 January 2012 aged 91.

### William E MEYNICK

At College 1939–40. Riddell House Captain and Prefect 1940.  
Junior Swimming Champion 1939. Senior Swimming Champion 1940. He left College during 1940, returning home to manage one of the family properties.  
Bill passed away 15 October 2011 aged 88.

### W Donald MILLIGAN

QDAH 1952. Prefect 1952. Shelton.  
A1 IV 1952 and Inter-collegiate. A2 IV 1951. A2 XI 1950 & 51. BI XI 1949 & 51. Under 15 XV 1949.  
Debating.  
Don passed away 19 October 2011.

### W Rennie RAMSAY

Appointed Senior Lecturer in Animal Breeding and Reproduction Feb 1968 and Senior Lecturer in Cattle Husbandry and Meat Production in December 1969.  
Ren passed away 14 October 2011 aged 81 years.

### Brian WHELAN

QDA 1966. Prefect 1966. Shelton.  
1st Hockey 1966. B1 Hockey 1965. Debating.  
Brian passed away 29 January 2012.

### Wyclif N WYNDHAM

QDA 1937. Pitt House Captain 1936. Prefect 1936. 1st VI 1934–5–6. Captain 1935. Athletics 1936. Corporal in Trench Mortar Platoon, 25th Battalion. His Honour Blazer and Pitt House Pockets together with a silver Rifle Shooting Medal are displayed in the Museum.  
Cliff passed away 18 November 2011.

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Try our quick links at:

[www.uq.edu.au/gatton/paststudents](http://www.uq.edu.au/gatton/paststudents)

## Introducing...

**L. Slade Lee,**  
*PhD Associate Professor, Southern Cross University and Principal Research Leader, Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation*



I arrived at QAC in 1976 as a mature-age student disenchanted with my former occupation as a teacher. I quickly discovered a whole new exciting world, having had little previous connection with agriculture. During my time at College I was enthusiastic about the possibility of developing a career in biological research. After completing College I took a job as an Environmental Scientist for a very large mining operation under construction in New South Wales, but after just 2½ years I found my opportunity to enter the career in research that I maintain to this day thirty years later.

Equipped with my combination of practical skills and scientific knowledge gained from Gatton College I joined Queensland Department of Primary Industries (DPI) as a research horticulturist for the citrus industry conducting research projects in horticultural crop agronomy, plant genetics and crop breeding. During a 15 year role with DPI, I developed skills in plant molecular genetics and undertook a PhD researching molecular aspects of citrus gene expression. It was gratifying to find that my QAC BAppSci (Hons I), in combination with my DPI research experience, was sufficient for acceptance directly into a PhD enrolment.

In my time with QDPI my career progression led me more and more into the enjoyable arena of research management and in 1997 I took up a position as Associate Professor (Research) at Southern Cross University's renowned Centre for Plant Conservation Genetics, a world leader in plant molecular genetics research. As research manager I played a lead role in a wide variety of projects in crops as diverse as tea tree, grapevines, sorghum, pulses, and numerous others. Through this work I developed an

international network of professional colleagues and friends, and got to work in more than a dozen different countries.

I eventually attained the position of Deputy Director (Operations) of the Centre having also filled a variety of adjunct roles in my time there, including an invitation to serve as a molecular plant breeding expert with the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Plant Breeding and Genetics Section in Vienna, Austria, in 2000–2001. In this role I assisted in the management of projects which convey agricultural biotechnology to developing countries. This was my introduction to working in projects aimed at helping the underprivileged. I continued this association in the following years through honorary roles with IAEA in the Asia Pacific Region.

In 2008 I moved to Queensland University of Technology to take up the role of Centre Manager at the equally notable Centre for Tropical Crops and Biocommodities. In this role I provided management of the Centre's broad range of scientific research and consultancy projects and assisted the University to facilitate the development, protection, application and commercialisation of this Centre's substantial suite of expertise, technology and intellectual property in bioprocessing, plant genetics, biotechnology and molecular genetics. I played a prominent role in two diametrically different multi-million dollar projects in particular – the Syngenta Centre for Sugarcane Biofuels Development creating greenhouse gas solutions for liquid fuels, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Banana Biofortification project in aid of agricultural development in central Africa. Again, my role involved international travel to work with colleagues in many and varied places.

Twelve months ago I was presented with the opportunity to return to Southern Cross University as Associate Professor serving as Principal Research Leader for a large project with the Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation. This work involves leading a team of researchers creating opportunities for developing new bush food horticultural enterprises appropriate for Aboriginal people in remote Australia.

In thirty years I've experienced an exciting and varied career built solidly on a foundation of learning and practical skills acquired at Gatton College. I feel I am a good exemplar of *Science with Practice*, and I know that this motto and the great QAC training that it represents, has stood me in great stead in my profession.