2013 UQGPSA Scholarship winner

UQGPSA Management Committee member, Rob Nielsen has the pleasure to represent the Association each year when the recipient of the PSA scholarship is chosen. This year’s very deserving recipient is Lexus Hughes, now of Warwick, who is in his first year of a Bachelor of Applied Science (Wildlife Science major) degree. His brother, Jahk, who is in his second year of B.V.Sc. degree, was last year’s recipient.

Last year Lexus was the Vice Captain and Silver Dux of Clontarf Beach State High School, and he received numerous cultural and community awards. The school Principal commented on his leadership and initiative qualities, and said that he had been a very good role model for younger students. She gave Lexus the highest recommendation that the school can give and observed that he had attracted the high regard of staff.

Lexus was recently invited to speak at a Smith Family business luncheon hosted by the UQ School of Business, and held at the Southbank Convention Centre.

As well as his studies, to help support his mother and brother, Lexus has a part-time job in Toowoomba.

The PSA scholarships provide financial assistance to the value of $5,000 per year for the normal duration of the recipient’s program. The scholarship fund has now been operating for a number of years and PSA President Graham McClymont has commented that it was instigated to assist students like Lexus and Jahk, and to attract people into agricultural industries. As Graham observed, “The members of our Association all received a sound education while studying at Gatton and we would like to see more students beginning their careers here”.

If you also value your time at Gatton and are in the financial position to do so, past students are strongly encouraged to make a tax-deductable contribution to the PSA Scholarship Fund, and thereby make university study a possibility for others like Lexus and Jahk.
The Last Word
by Gary Mason

Are we running out of farmers?
Yes, and the plight worsens every
day, every week, every month and
eyery year.

Getting around the bush I hear
countless stories from “baby boomers” and even younger land
holders who actively encourage
their children not to return to the
land after getting an education.

Find a vocation which you enjoy,
pays well, gives you work/life
balance and at the end of the day
the satisfaction of knowing you
don’t have to live with continual
debt, fight drought, flood, fires;
watch the demise of your local
town as more and more flee for a
better life.

These are the words which many
young people are hearing and it
does not augur well for our rural
industries.

Greater encouragement is needed
from all levels of Government
as well as our educational
institutions to gain and retain
people on the land, and a very big
part of this has to be a better farm
gate price for what we produce.

With world population increases,
the likes of China and other
southeast Asian countries give
Australia the opportunity for
greatly expanded markets,
especially in the demand for
protein.

……………………

Having said that, there are plenty
of opportunities out there for
an agricultural education and
according to the Australian
Council of Deans of Agriculture,
there are 4000 graduate level
positions available for about 700
graduates annually.

And as science and technology
expand and create new challenges
UQ Gatton has also pushed
forward with the introduction of
majors in the Bachelor of Science
with the offer of Animal and
Veterinary Bioscience as well as
Soil and Plant Bioscience.

Also read about the re-
introduction of a Diploma course
at Gatton in this edition.

President’s Report

Where has the year gone? It seems that
we have just finished the very successful
Back to College Weekend from last year
and already we are planning this year’s
event which looks like being bigger and
better than ever. Keep the first weekend
in December free.

At our August Management Committee
meeting, I had the pleasure of hosting
a dinner for our scholarship winners.
The dinner gave the members of the
Management Committee the opportunity
to speak with the students and vice
versa. It was a very enjoyable evening
and something that we enjoy doing each
year. Each student said how much the
scholarship has helped them meet their
university expenses, which are quite
considerable these days.

This year we will give a total of $20,000
to four students studying full time at UQ
Gatton. The Scholarship Fund balance
was $120,000 as at December 2012 and is
slowly decreasing as income is a little less
than the amount we give in scholarships
each year. Donations are most welcome
and please remember that all donations
to the Scholarship Fund are tax deductible.

Carol and I have attended the Sunshine
Coast, Gold Coast and Brisbane Branch
Reunions this year and enjoyed each one.
Mark Pace represented the Management
Committee when he attended the Mackay
Branch Reunion. The Management
Committee of our Association encourages
branch reunions and will help anyone who
is interested in forming a branch in their
region.

The selection committee has selected the
Gatton graduate who will be presented
with the UQ Gatton Gold Medal at the
graduation ceremony in December. There
were nine excellent nominations and any
one would have been a worthy winner.

Unfortunately there can be only one medal
awarded each year. It is important to note
that the majority of people on the selection
committee for the UQ Gatton Gold Medal
are former students of UQ Gatton and I
am a member of the selection committee.
The name of the recipient of the UQ
Gatton Gold Medal for 2013 will be
announced at the UQ Gatton graduation
ceremony.

Late last year we started a Facebook page
and already we have 186 people who
LIKE our page. If you are into Facebook,
then please follow our activities there.
Facebook has already superseded email
and phone as the preferred method
of communication for the younger
generation. To many, email is considered
old technology. The Facebook link is
shown on the front of this newsletter.

I am a member of the UQ Gatton
Community Advisory Group and the
following were discussed at our August
meeting:

1. All horses on Campus have been
vaccinated for Hendra Virus. Some
fig trees have been removed and
replacement trees will be planted.

2. Construction of the solar farm research
project will commence late 2013 or
clearly 2014. It will be situated on the
airstrip and power will be fed back into
the grid.

3. Funding for a feasibility study on
expansion and upgrade of the library
has been approved.

4. A community garden will be
constructed by students on the site of
the old dairy.

5. The piggery will be updated by 2017 to
remove sow stalls.

If we don’t see you at the Back to
College Weekend, then on behalf of the
Management Committee, I wish you
and your family the best for the Festive Season.
Queensland Diploma in Agriculture Program returns to the Gatton Campus

The Queensland Diploma in Agriculture program which has been a part of this Campus’s educational platform since 1897 and up to 1968 is proposed to be reintroduced commencing Semester One in 2014 according to the Director of UQ-GVEC, Mr Mark Pace.

The proposed new Queensland Diploma in Agricultural Technologies is a two year full time program which is aimed towards students who seek higher technical capacity through a ‘Science with Practice’ approach. This program will better prepare graduates to respond to the rapidly changing world of agriculture which faces significant challenges when dealing with climatic variations, marketing structures and production methodologies. The need to maximise efficiencies and adopt new technologies is pivotal for producers to be able to succeed in the energy and environmentally sensitive agricultural landscape of the future.

The Diploma will offer four specialisation streams in:
- Production Horticulture;
- Broad Acre;
- Plant Protection;
- Animal Production.

The new Diploma model involves a rigorously applied academic curriculum, with the underpinning theory supported by a significant applied practicum. This will result in students better prepared to meet both industry and academic needs.

Days of Wine and Diplomas

A new book, describing life at Gatton College in the 1960’s, is to be an addition to the growing collection of literature and merchandise held in the Historical Museum on behalf of the Past Students Association.

Management Committee Member Ron Swanwick, a 1963 Diplomate, has produced a detailed and comprehensive 35 Chapter book on his personal recollections of life at QAC in which he tries to describe “the sights, the sounds and the smells” of life at College which does not appear in official reports.

The book is a mixture of historical events, documentary fact and light hearted creative writing on the lighter moments at College.

As observed in a foreword by contemporary Kerry Dowsett, although it is Ron’s personal story, others will find lots in common with their own experiences at College. He also includes a detailed analysis of what has become of the graduates of 1963 in later life and concludes that they have fulfilled the hopes and expectations of the College which produced them. He also discusses and muses over the changes and developments which have taken place over the last 50 years at College, now UQ Gatton, and the changing face of the Past Students Association.

A feature of the book, now entering the final stages of production, is the large collection in excess of 100 photographs, many in colour, of persons and places at College between 1961–1963. Most come from the personal collections of contemporaries and so have not been presented before.

The book is being backed by the Past Students Association and its launch is timed to coincide with the 50 year reunion of the class of 1963 which will take place at the Back to College Weekend on 7–8 December this year. Copies will also be able to be ordered and despatched by post.

All proceeds after production costs have been met, will go to the UQ Gatton Past Students Scholarship fund which provides a $5,000 scholarship for four current students each year.
Branch Reunions

Brisbane Branch Reunion Success

The UQ Gatton Past Students Association annual Brisbane Branch Reunion took on a somewhat different flavour this year – Greek! The reunion held on 24 August at the Greek Club for the first time was an outstanding success with 100% of the member feedback praising the venue and the sumptuous spread of traditional Greek fare.

Almost three dozen members gathered for the luncheon with guests coming from not just Brisbane but from the surrounding region as well. For several attendees it was their first time and all were impressed, so we can expect to see them in future.

Bob James described and promoted the UQGPSA publication Memoirs and Moments to the gathering, and three copies were sold on the day – good sales pitch Bob!

Russ Stephenson also spoke to the members announcing the International Horticultural Congress that will be held in Brisbane in August 2014.

With such a good response to the change in venue it is likely that we will go back again next year, so we look forward to an even bigger show and would be delighted to see members from near and far in mid-August next year.

Slade Lee

Gold Coast

The Reunion Luncheon on 13 July was held four weeks earlier than in previous years. This was due to a one off necessity. Twenty-nine attended, the lowest number by far for over nine years.

However, a most enjoyable time which extended late into the afternoon, was had. What else could be expected from a group of QAC Past Students?

Thirty four apologies were received. Special guests included Association President Graham McClymont and Carol, Association Past President Bob James, Gold Coast Patron Bill Laver and our Honoured Old Boy Clive Gilchrist 1934–38. Also attending were 2011 Distinguished Past Student Ray O’Grady together with Association Honorary Life Member Val Kilah (Whip).

We were pleased to welcome for the first time Denis Murphy 1961–65 and Ian Wylie 1964–66.

I thank George Hannaford and Diana for their continued support at the door and to the new Honorary Life Member Bob James for conducting the Raffle.

Peter Douglas

Getting together at the Mackay reunion in June were (from left) Hal Rogers, John Whitaker, Mark Hetherington, Clive Rogers, Mark Pace, Keith Jepperson, and Eddie Insch

First timers Denis Murphy (left) and Ian Wylie at the Gold Coast Reunion
Mackay

The annual reunion dinner for the Mackay branch of the UQGPSA was held at the Marian Hotel on Sunday, 2 June. This year’s turnout was slightly down from last year’s due to some health matters with attendees but 27 attended and certainly a good time was had by all.

Branch President Clive Rogers and Secretary Mark Hetherington presided over events and ensured formalities were addressed and procedures for the branch satisfied branch requirements.

New Junior Vice President of the UQGPSA Mark Pace was this year’s special guest and flew up to the reunion to represent both the UQGPSA Committee and the University of Queensland Gatton Campus as the Director of the Universities Gatton Vocational Education Centre. Updates were provided regarding developments with the Campus and progress with the recent move of the Veterinary School from St Lucia. Mark also advised progress with the re-introduction of the Diploma in Agriculture programs back to the Gatton Campus.

Several responses were made to the delivery and overall support was unanimous for the current developments and activities occurring back at the Gatton Campus and the request for Mark to re-attend for next year was gratefully accepted.

Mark Pace

Back to College Weekend 2013

As usual, the annual Back to College Weekend will be held again on the first weekend in December this year, Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 December. The early arrivals will arrive in the afternoon of Friday for a casual BBQ and socializing at the Staff and Graduates Club beneath the Foundation Building.

The main weekend activities commence from 10am Saturday with registration at Morrison Hall and the activities continue non-stop until after lunch on Sunday.

The feature years are those groups who finished their study at Gatton in 1953, 1963, 1973, 1983, 1993 and 2003 and a great roll up is expected. The 1958 and 1968 year groups intend to be at the weekend to celebrate their 55 and 45 year reunions. The 1948 year group will also return for their 65 year reunion. A reunion of staff both past and present is organized over lunch on Saturday 7 December. There has been a great roll up of former staff in previous years and the numbers tend to grow each year as the word spreads.

The annual dinner held in the Dining Hall is always well attended on the Saturday night. The AGM of our Association will be held at 3pm on Saturday 7 December beneath Morrison Hall. All are welcome to attend our AGM and reunion.

Getting together at the Caloundra reunion in March and starting to organise their 45th anniversary at the Back to College weekend in December were (from left) John Limpus, Adrian O’Connor, Arthur Egan, Peter Young and John Guthrie

We welcome the following new members:

Allen Robert Bruce (1989)  
John William Foreman (1968)  
Ronald Phillip Ambrose Jenkins (1983)  
Graham Roderick Kenny (1993)  
Arthur Stanley Le Feuve (1963)  
Allan Douglas Muller (1973)  
Karen Maree Prewett née Schutt (1996)  
Scott Alan Prewett (1993)  
Alan Giles Randle (1958)  
David Albert Walton (1963)
PSA Committee Members attend Rugby Matches

In an attempt to increase awareness of the UQGPSA, committee members Phil Long and Kevin Lewis attended two Risdon Cup rugby matches recently. These matches featured the composite UQ Gatton/Highfields teams playing Toowoomba Bears in Toowoomba and the Dalby Wheatmen at the UQ Gatton campus.

The opportunity was taken to speak with a number of past students and also to feature our new banner.

The attendance by UQ Gatton student spectators at these matches was quite low and probably reflects the changing demographics of the current student mix currently undertaking courses at the Gatton campus.

We would like to thank the General Manager of Downs Rugby, Cameron Donaldson and Charlie Martin, President of the Toowoomba Bears, both past students of QAC, for allowing us the opportunity of attending these matches.

We would like to think, that in 2014, we can generate support for our attendance at College team matches in a wide area of the Downs Rugby competition from St George in the west to Goondiwindi in the south to Roma in the north.

Historical Collection

Donations to the collection continue to increase. My apologies to Paul Hassab QDA 1962 for not thanking him in the last issue of the Re-Connect for his donation of 1962 Foundation and Diploma Day programmes.

Donations have been received from Pat Harden B.App.Sc. (RT) 1989: Parasite collection, degree certificate, lecture notes and assorted QAC souvenir (official!) items.


Ed Holmes. QDAH 1966: assorted photos depicting College life in the early 1960’s together with assorted papers.


Gerry Collins. QDAH 1957: photocopy of 1930 College 1st XI. Gerry’s father, Stan QDS 1930, was a member of the team.

David Francis. (1970–73) donated an original Rugby Club tie.

George Hannaford. 1946: copy of “From War with Love”. This book of some 160 pages of photos and letters is a concise diary from the Western Front of George’s father, Stanley Devine Hannaford, a College student 1914–15. Stanley’s College Blazer Pocket and Gold Medal he won for shearing are part of our collection.

Judy O’Farrell and Alan Richardson: framed photo of 1934 Staff and Students which was the property of their late father Albert Phillips Richardson who was a Junior student in 1934–35.

The Museum is always open for special groups on request.

In May, 15 members of a Brisbane Probus Club visited, while in July, 40 Ag. Science graduates celebrating 50 years since graduation from UQ also inspected the collection.

On the UQ Open Day in August some 60 people visited the Museum.

I thank Kevin Lewis who has assisted on many Monday afternoons; and to Don Oxenham and Julie Martin who are always available when required.
Gone, but not forgotten…

BARLOW, Leon

CUMMINS, Victor Gary (Vic)
1st XV 1967–70. Combined Darling Downs Representative 1967. He was a member of the first group to receive a degree at QAC, majoring in soil conservation. Vic was also a big horse racing fan and always looked forward to Saturday (or “raceday” as he affectionately called it).
His career was spent in the Soil Conservation Branch of DPI, firstly on the Darling Downs in Toowoomba and later in Central Queensland as a Regional Manager based in Rockhampton. Vic passed away 8 June 2013.

EDGAR, A.W.D. (Bill)
Short Course in Sheep. Shelton House, Prefect 1939.
1937 3rd XI.
1938 2nd XV, 2nd and 3rd XI, Life Saving, 26th Bn, 2nd Mile and Cross Country.
1939 1st XV, Senior Swimming Champion, 3rd XI, Runner – up Open Athletics. 25Bn.
He served as a Lieutenant in the AIF during WW2.

ELINGTOM, Allan Reginald
Allan was at College 1940 and passed away on 17 March 2013.

KOLISHKIN, Michael
1948 Senior Cadets.
1949 Won Open Shot Put, Sgt in Senior Cadets.
1950 3rd XV, Sgt in College CMF Unit.
Michael passed away on 16 September 2011.

McINNES, Zoe
Zoe studied Ag at UQ Gatton, graduating in 2007. Her career began as a cadet with Landmark in Toowoomba and then Pittsworth. Promotion followed after her transfer to Chinchilla where she specialised in cotton agronomy and broadacre cropping.
Zoe passed away on 19 June 2013 as the result of a tragic farm accident.

MCKAY, Kenneth Vivian
He attended College in 1938 as a Junior student. Ken was a staunch member of the Mackay Branch of the PSA and passed away 6 April 2013.

MENZIES, William Roland
1961 2nd XV – Captain, 3rd Junior Judging Fat Lambs at the Toowoomba Show. College CMF Unit.
He spent the first years of his career working on properties in the Arcadia Valley and Cononcurry, later for CSIRO in Canberra.
Bill returned to the family property in North Dorrigo which he operated in partnership with his brother Alan. QDA 1964. They also bought and operated the local milk run.
In his spare time Bill was Ag. Assistant at the High School.
He passed away on 25 June 2013.

MORRISON, Dr T.M. “Mac”
Commenced duties as the second Director of the Queensland Agricultural College in January 1979, following the retirement of Mr. N.W. Briton.
He was responsible for many improvements in the courses offered by the College, landscaping of the Campus and renamed some of the older buildings.
He retired as Director in August 1988 and passed away on 12 May 2013.

PHILIPS, Robert Erskine
Robert passed away 2 September 2013.

REGHENZANI, Horace Ercole
QDA 1945.
Entered College in February 1941 as a Sub Junior student, returned home March 1942 due to the occupation of the College by the US Army in that month. Returned in February 1944. 1945 Captain of Riddell House, Prefect. 1941 Swimming. 1944 2nd XV. 1945 Boxing, 2nd XV Captain.
Horace co-managed the family farm at Mt Sophia then managed the family general store in Werribee South (Victoria) before moving to his own cane farm at Fig Tree Creek.
Horace passed away 26 April 2013.

SCHOTT, Graham Thomas
He was a High School student at the College 1960–61.
Very little is known of his time at QAHS&C other than he was a brilliant student, gaining 10 As and 1B in the 1961 Junior exams. The B was gained in Horticulture!
Graham’s Funeral was held on 14 June 2013.

SPRY, Edwin George
1966 and 67 1st XV. Q’ld U18 Basketball.
He passed away 23 May 2013.

WARTLER, Howard
After graduation he returned to Glen Innes to farm fat lambs and operated the local school bus service.
In later years he inherited the family shoe business which he ran successfully for many years.
Howard passed away 1 August 2013.
Introducing...

Bruce Birtwell

The eldest of seven children, I was born in Rockhampton on New year’s Eve, 1953. My father was a police officer and his transfers resulted in my attending schools at Rockhampton, Rolleston, Charleville and Brisbane.

After completing Grade 11 at Camp Hill High School, I arrived at QAC in 1971 to start a Certificate in Animal Husbandry. Having had a grandfather and uncles who were drovers in western Queensland and spending my holidays on a dairy farm at Goowigen, I had an interest in horses, and livestock in general. I was fortunate that, as I was 17, my movements off College were not restricted!

I completed my Certificate in 1973 and started a two-year traineeship with Borthwicks Meat Processing Facility at Murrarie the following January. At the end of it, due to the beef slump future employment was uncertain and I was fortunate to get a cadetship with the Slaughtering and Meat Inspection Branch (later Veterinary Public Health Branch) of the Department of Primary Industries, and started work with them at the Bundaberg Regional Abattoir. After passing the Qld Public Service Regulation 90 exams, I achieved full meat inspector status in January 1977.

Later that year I was also successful in the Regulation 90 exam for stock inspection and about this time was transferred from Bundaberg to the Ipswich Regional Abattoir. I remained there until 1986 and was engaged in a range of meat inspection activities, including a period as Disease Control Officer at T.A. Fields as part of the BTEC program. During this period I was also promoted to Inspector Division 1 and then, later, District Inspector Division 2.

Late in 1986 I transferred to Roma as the District Meat Inspector and was responsible for inspection of butcher shops, slaughterhouses, and Kangaroo depots. It was while I was in Roma I began studying externally and completed a Bachelor of Applied Science (Biology) degree from Central Queensland University at Rockhampton.

In 1995 I transferred to Warwick and worked at the Killarney Abattoir and then, three years later, I moved to Mount Isa as a Stock Inspector. While in Mount Isa as well as stock inspection and animal welfare work, I coordinated the Plant Health Surveillance Monitoring for Papaya Fruit Fly. I also became involved in workplace health and safety and was the Department’s West Region WHS Coordinator. As well, I completed a Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management through Flinders University.

In 2004 I moved to Toowoomba to work on workplace health and safety and then, in 2005, moved into the Plant Biosecurity and Product Integrity program where I am currently a Senior Biosecurity Officer. I coordinate the plant health surveillance and certification service, and supervise and train casual and permanent staff in plant surveillance and certification activities.

Debbie, my wife, and I have three sons and two grandsons.

I am a Justice of the Peace (Qualified) and am involved in the Toowoomba Branch of the Qld Justice Association. During my life I have been involved in a number of organisations including being Vice-President of the Roma and Mount Isa Show Societies, P&C, junior soccer and cricket in Roma, as coach of my son’s teams. I have judged carcass competitions and was the Chief Steward of the Roma Show Society carcass competition.

All of this has been the result of the foundations laid by my study at Gatton College, with its motto “Science with Practice”. By now being secretary of the Past Students Association committee, I have a way of repaying the start that Gatton College gave me.