



NEWS FROM CLASSMATES

"The Old Bush Telegraph"

DOWNLANDS 1956 – 61

November 2015

Issue #52



Compliments of the Season to everyone

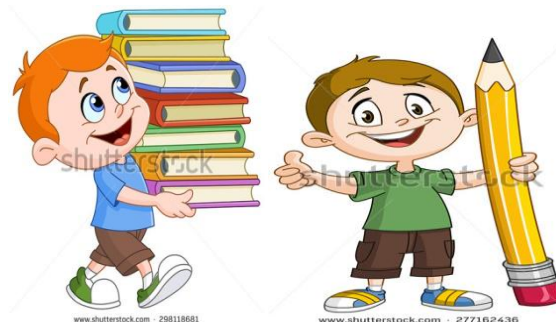
By the time I have this edition ready to distribute, there won't be many shopping days left before Santa arrives.

I hope that everyone who reads this edition has a Happy and Peaceful Festive Season, and that 2016 brings everything you wish for yourself and your loved ones.

In this edition:

- News from Classmates
- Still thinking about the 55 Year Reunion !!
- News from other years
- Editor's Column
- Requiscant in Pace
- **Don't forget to read the Attachment**

So here we go again:



David Bowden: Hi Jack – Appreciated your Newsletter. Would think your date for the 55th Reunion would work well. During the recent School Holidays Lynn and I took our twelve year old grand-daughter, Olivia Bowden, to Alexandria Headland for a week. We had a good time there at the beach and the hinterland. Lynn has a good disciple with Olivia in the Shopping Centre adventures! Olivia has also been accepted to commence her studies at Saint Ursula's in 2016.....I tried for Downlands.....however lost out to a strong minded family member!!

We had a Bowden cousin from Newcastle NSW come to Roma recently. She (Jenny) was following up Bowden family history. After checking out the Roma connection, we had a trip to Barcaldine, Emerald and Injune to fill in some information. The drought in Central Queensland is hard to comprehend fully until you see the bare paddocks. I know drought is nature's way of cleansing....just hope the rains come soon!

Roma and District have some withdrawal pains with the downturn in the Oil and Gas Industries. Several businesses have closed their doors and others considering doing the same. I guess we have seen it all before.....just a bit hard to live through at the moment! Regards David.

Bernie Casey: Agrees that email is the way to distribute the newsletter. (See Editor's Column)

Bernie and Marie are kept busy looking after grand-daughters these days. I've seen their diary, it's totally full for the rest of the year and beyond !

noel clanchy. Hi Jack. I hope you have recovered from your back problems. You did well to get your publication out. I can't make the two percenters who solved the quiz; but I'd say 2% would probably guess the answer. Sounds sus to me. Hi to all the readers; and. good to see the photos. All the best Noel Clanchy

Jack With regards to the quiz, I'm going for the Norwegian; 98%? (See page 12 for the answer to last month's quiz! – Ed)

Frank Crawford rang during the month to bring me up to date with his busy life – still pushing out that splendid legal advice. 'Ladder' sends Season's Greetings to all his old mates.

Darrell Dennis: "Thanks again for all the news that The Old Bush Telegraph brought to us. Great title. Like many others, we are praying for good rains to fall. Our only green areas are the irrigated pastures and, although it means a huge workload and is a costly operation, we are fortunate to be able to water the feed.

Golly gosh Jack, at first glance we thought we would need a whole month to solve that riddle. After 15 minutes last night, we found that the German owns the fish. Surely we cannot be right if only 2% can come up with the correct answer. There must be a hidden trick to it?

So pleased to hear you have recovered well from your back operation.....be cautious though, and take care of yourself. Kind regards,

Darrell & Brenda Dennis "

Phil Derriman: (1/11/15) Jack — Belatedly, many thanks for another top effort. It occurs to me that a few months from now it will be 60 years since you, Hede, Herzig, McCawley, Taylor etc etc arrived at Downlands. I didn't make it until 1957, the year we were taught by LG.

(18/11/15) Jack — I had no idea that you posted copies to anyone. I'd have thought doing the email version was more than enough work. So, yes, stop posting it to anyone as from now. My opinion, anyway.

Cathy and I intend to spend a couple of weeks in the Brisbane/Buderim area (my sister Bernice now lives in Buderim) in February. I hope we can get together then. Maybe I'll be able to talk you and Deb into a trip to Oberon next winter. — Phil

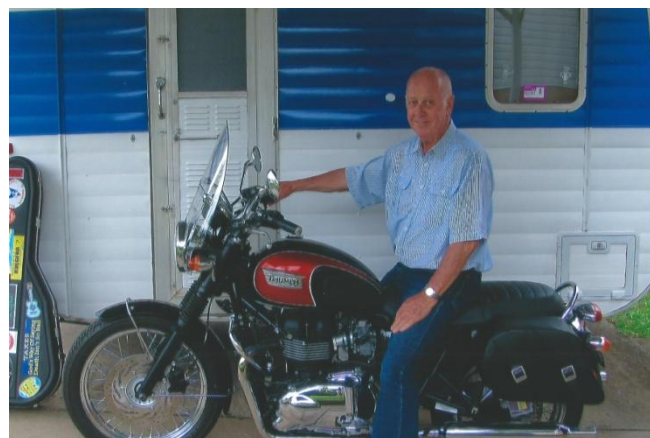
Dom Crain: Had a birthday during the month and responded to my Birthday wishes thus:

Thanks Jack, Dom.

Some other recent 'birthday boys' are Brian Joseph, Squiz Taylor and Bill Sexton – Many Happy returns boys!

Mick Doherty: John, I recommend sending the note. No matter what we do in life for the benefit of others, we expect some appreciation or thanks. Great morning on the bike & all going well. I see J.E.H. a fair bit & he is well

Hugo Fitz Herbert OAM: Sends Christmas Greetings to everyone. You'll see in the following column that Hugo appears to have big plans for 2016.



Hugo's got it all! The guitar, the caravan and the motor-bike. My question is "Where is the tow-bar on the bike to pull the van??" 😊

Peter Guilfoyle " Jack, A cull is in order. Cranky is not good. Procrastinating Pete gets the keys to Unit 245 at Buderim Village Gardens today. 405 Mooloolaba Road is **IN** Buderim if not **ON** Buderim. OH! Kay is also moving with me. There's 400 Units and we all are Neighbourhood Watch. Must compare experiences with Bernie Casey. Cranky is not good. Best Wishes to all, Peter

Peter Johnson: Here is an edited version of the newsy letter from the Johnsons who are planning their next visit to Australia in April / May 2016.

WE WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND
FESTIVE SEASON AND PROSPEROUS 2016



Amazingly, this is our 'seventh' Christmas greeting from China. We are still living in Rong Cheng in Shandong Province. It is sunny and cold with blue skies and the snow has been falling gently for the past few days.

This time last year we were preparing for Christmas in Australia for the first time since we left for China in April 2009. It was a very precious and memorable time.

We haven't travelled abroad as much this year, simply Australia, Hong Kong (a couple of times) and Taiwan. We fulfilled another dream at the end of April and enjoyed an absolutely memorable and fascinating trip along the Silk Road. Last month we were fortunate to have another interesting trip to Tianjin, 7 hours north on the fast train, (300km/hr) where it was minus 7 and snowing heavily

Until recently our days have been filled teaching oral English at an International Language School. I spent the last 3 months helping establish a new branch of this school in Shidao, about an hour away. Now we are working on various projects and I have established 'Trishie's English Academy' - training the wealthy Chinese in western ways. Peter is exploring many business opportunities.

We lead a busy social life. There are 11 different nationalities here in Rongcheng, and we meet regularly. There are teachers from America, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, England, Ireland, Italy, France, Russia and a business man from Germany in our circle of friends. Chinese families have returned our hospitality in their homes where they serve traditional meals.

One of the highlights of the year was when our son, Dermot, from New York, brought his girl friend to stay for a short trip. We celebrated Dermot and Peter's birthday on 27th August and enjoyed trips to Shidao, Wendeng and Weihai .

Last week friends took us to see the Whooper Swans who migrate here from Russia, Siberia and Mongolia. They fly thousands of miles in pairs in a triangular flock up to 7,000 feet .There are over 8,000 white swans on the coastal lakes and they are a perfectly lovely sight with orange and black beaks They mate for life and travel here to escape their freezing winters.

Life still holds a tremendous fascination for us here in China – who knows how long it will last?

We wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and a Prosperous 2016,

Peter and Tricia (still in Rong Cheng in China!!)

Philip Moloney: Philip very kindly rang me on the 7th December to say, among other things, "Happy

Christmas" I'm delighted that he has been able to provide me with an email address to receive future copies of *The Old Bush Telegraph*.

He tells me he had a fall from a large machine a few weeks ago. All good after the local ambulance team checked him over. The Moloneys are off to celebrate Christmas in Armidale with their eldest son and his family. When they're all together, they make up 19 family members

Phil is hoping to join us at the Annual Mass for Deceased Past Students on the 17th January.

John Hede: Also agrees that email is the way to go with distributing the newsletter. He sends Best Wishes for Christmas to all.

Brian Herzig: [Re posting newsletters- 18/11/15]

You are not being harsh when one considers the time, effort and costs that go into producing hard copies of "*The Old Bush Telegraph*". If you are not receiving any response from these recipients there is no point in continuing mailing out copies to the non-responsive!!!! Tell'em get an email address or miss out.

We are up in Toowoomba for a few days and it was very cool last night, but has soon warmed up this morning. It is supposed to be as hot here towards the end of the week as Brisbane!!!!

Time sure does not stand still. This Saturday is the 50th year Reunion of my Graduation in Civil Engineering. A celebration at Lucy's Café at St Lucia preceded by a tour of the Engineering Buildings. Where have the years gone ???? Cheers, Brian

Black Jack O'Brien: 29/10/15) Rang at 7.30pm Qld time to say he'd just finished work having spent the day, in 40 degree heat, *it was 22 in Brisbane*, chopping iron bark logs to turn into 'strainer posts' while making smaller paddocks on the property. He was in Nanango in mid-October attending a "Classic Livestock Seminar". Terry McHugh went from Mundubbera to see him and they spent some good time together. Black Jack asked me a riddle' What do you call a sleep-walking nun? *A Roaming Catholic – Yuk Yuk!!*

Mike rang on the 9th December to say Mataranka had about 20mls of welcome rain overnight, but much more is needed.

He's keen to come to a reunion in 2016 as long as it's after the 7th September 2016 which is the date on which Coodardie has its bull sale.

He sends Season's Greetings to all

Bill Sexton: I had a delightful lunch with the 'Father of Queensland Racing', Bill, and brother Denis, in the past ten days. Since first meeting Bill in 1958, it is the first time Bill's punctuality has been called in to question.

For years he's been on my case for keeping him, Denis, Brian Joseph and a couple of others waiting, for the best part of an hour, at the main gate at the Ekka in 1959! My arm has only recently lost the bruises from all the 'corks' (punches) I received as punishment for that error. Understandably it was attending to the welfare of the Racing Industry that kept Bill late.

While we were on our own, Denis and I were able to exchange stories about William that he'll never know about - hehehe!

Bill Smith: "Thank you for another very entertaining newsletter. *My bet on the riddle is the owner of the fish is the German living in house number 4*, which probably explains why applying my logic in picking a Melbourne Cup winner will result in the last placed horse!

Wendy and I just had 3 weeks in the UK, with a side trip to Geneva for a tour of CERN. She had worked there in the 1960's. She explained that in those days all papers were written out in handwriting and transcribed on special typewriters with an extra keyboard to insert mathematical symbols – no computers! What they are doing there is incredible - not only the physics, but also the engineering and materials science. Over 12,000 work at the site now. One can book tours 3 weeks in advance but they go like hot cakes. It was also very good being able to catch so many good rugby games without having to be up at all hours. Going down to breakfast at the hotel the morning after the England/Australia match, I responded to a "Good morning" from a couple of guys wearing white with the red rose. When I replied "It's good for us" their response was not exactly suitable for publication here.

On the idea of a 55th reunion, please count me in.
Regards, Bill

Ken Stegeman: "I know that I have not been the best contributor to your wonderful newsletters but I do look forward to getting mine all the time. Sometimes, I leave them for a few days until I have the time to digest them properly instead of just skimming through.

In regards to your question, I do not think you are harsh at all about stopping the practice. How have you kept it up for so long?

I am off to Sydney again in January to rehearse another show. I know I said that the last one I did was the last but we have decided to do a total of 12 shows.

That is 2 to go. The first of these will be in the middle of April in 2016 and then in October in 2017. I think the show girls are getting just a bit (dare I say) 'old' for the fish nets and the guys are worse - they can't keep up with the girls! We will have raised well over \$1M for our charities - the Josephite Community Aid and the Oncology Ward of the Children's Hospital at Westmead. Hopefully someone will step in and take over when we stop.

Looking forward to seeing you in January (hope it is 17th otherwise I will be in Sydney) Regards - Ken

Squiz Taylor: (23/10/15) "Thanks once again for a great update on our mates from school. As everyone else says, I really enjoy reading about the comings and goings of the blokes. I loved reading the piece written by Fr Tyson before he died. It brings out the human side of a legendary man who had such a positive effect on so many of our lives.

Barb & I returned from Uganda last Saturday after another 4 weeks of operating, this was our 5th trip there. Between Kasese (Prolapses) and Kagando (Fistulas) the team managed to get through 129 surgeries in 20 operating days, so we were pretty busy. We did get to visit the Orphanage that we help support, as well as helping (financially) to finish building a home for street kids 3km outside Kasese, which should open in 2 months if all goes well. I also got to climb (for 2 hours!) up a steep muddy track to help with Health Education talks for some of the mountain people-they were kept entertained by the white haired, puffing, sweating old mazungu with the bag of lollies for the kids!

Next trip is back to Bangladesh in December (providing the current political unrest settles a bit by then), after that, another Bangladesh trip planned for March, and back to Uganda in July. Talk soon.
Squiz.

On his birthday, 18/11/15, regarding the newsletters Squiz wrote: "I think you've been generous in posting the newsletters for four years – now it's time to pull the pin!"



Photo of a few of the 62 kids at the Orphanage wearing their Sunday best for the visitors. Most have lost their parents through HIV-AIDS



Up in the Rwenzori Mountains (border between Uganda & Democratic Republic of Congo), with Happy, one of the HIV nurses from Kagando Hospital



With one of the Urinary fistula patients three days post-op. Dry at last, after 10 years of urine running down her legs day and night. The catheter has to stay in for 2 weeks to allow full healing, then she can rejoin society

John Ward: In mid-November JDW returned to The Gap after a few weeks of R & R outside and then inside Australia. First off, he and a couple of his mates spent some time in Phuket playing golf. Yep! playing golf, plus enjoying delicious oriental cuisine. Flab said 'drinks' are relatively expensive compared to the food.

On returning to Australia he, and his wife Di, had some time in Melbourne. During this stop-over they caught up with Dom and Jan Crain.

Many of you will know what a connoisseur of coffee, fine food and fine wine Flab has become. 😊

His palate has matured markedly since the days of 'stew', 'shark', 'mystery balls', 'rolled oats', 'scrape', 'pineapple malted milk' etc, etc. When we meet for a coffee, which we do from time to time, it is at a delightful place called "Home" at Ashgrove. I'm not sure how this café compares to "Sails on the Bay" at Brighton, or "Cutler & Co" in Fitzroy, but my mouth waters as JDW describes the dishes on offer at these top rating eateries in Victoria, and which he enjoyed on his latest visit.

Flab also recommended the play, "The Odd Couple" which he saw recently. He's always great company, a real "renaissance man", and I look forward to our catch-ups three or four times a year.

Lou Young: "Good morning young John,

At the outset I must again apologize for not telling you how much I enjoyed your last Newsletter. Been really busy and all that stuff. Our little family continues to increase – Lisa, our youngest daughter, and her husband Will, produced Harry Ajax Gabb on Friday 13 November 2015 in Sydney. All are well, even Ros has lost her superstitious fear of Friday 13 now. By way of explanation about his second name Ajax, Will is into Ancient History and Ajax was the number 2 warrior on the Greek side in the Trojan Wars, Odysseus was number 1. Will is English and although Lisa explained to him Ajax is a cleaning powder/liquid in Australia, the English fortitude came to the fore, hence the name stuck.

Anyway to the subject of your letter, I reckon if the recipients of the posted Newsletters don't have the good manners to even acknowledge their receipt then don't send them. Keep it simple.

Regards – Lou"

To which I replied: "Congratulations Lou. As an old Italian used to say to me whenever he heard (son) Jeremy had a new child – "Well John, you'll just have

to buy another block of flats!!". Ros told me about "Ajax" being a possible name for the new baby, but I must admit I only heard the bit about the 'cleaning product' :0) Well done to the Pommy husband.

Thanks for your reply about the newsletter, I just thought I should get a couple of people's idea on things in case I was taking it all too personally."

SPECIAL NOTICE

THE 55 YEAR REUNION - 2016

I know it's very early days and no need to put any pressure on people, but a couple of you have indicated that you think a 55 Year get-together sounds like a good idea.

You'll see from Black Jack O'Brien's comments, he's prepared to come from the NT, as long as it's after 7/9/16, and Bill Smith would journey up from Victoria, so I'll continue to canvass ideas over coming editions.



Please continue to think about this and let me know your thoughts – Jack

News from other years



Stork Beirne: Rang on the 8th December to offer Christmas greetings to everyone. Stork tells me that in recent weeks he's had medical, optometric and dental checks from the tip of his head to the soles of his feet. All good!!

He and wife Marj are new grand-parents to a two-month old grand-daughter who they visited in Sydney recently. Everyone there is well too. Christmas, with extended family, will be in Melbourne this year. After

a couple of days in the State capital it will be back home to Warrnambool.

The grapevine tells me there was a 'mini Downlands reunion' in Markwell Street, Hamilton in the past few weeks! **Jeremy Charlston** is on the move from this address and farewelled a number of his friends, which included a number of former Downlands boys and their wives. I'm assured the move was not precipitated because of noisy neighbours – Is that right WJS??

Barry Collis: You just can't hold Barry back. He's a media-tart a la one the State's former Premiers, Peter Beattie. A photo in a recent edition of the local newspaper shows Barry and a number of his friends from Viridian at Boondall preparing to an old bush idiom 'paddock to plate', by packaging and sending 40 fruit cakes to people in drought affected areas of the State, like Longreach. This will hopefully put a smile on the recipients' faces. The project follows a fundraising effort a couple of months ago where the cash raised was turned into 'store cards', in the same drought affected, to help local 'bushies'. Congratulations and well done Barry and your friends.

John Gagen: " I got your letter re the Annual Mass and I certainly shall be there, and I would also like to attend the Lunch at Doomben

Tim Gaffney (53-58) died in Sydney on Sunday after a long period of poor health. His funeral notice will be in the Courier Mail later this week, but most likely will be held on Monday 14 Dec at St Ita's, Dutton Park.

After the loss of Margaret, my life is now back to normal, and am enjoying travel, theatre and the like. Also enjoying a stint as State Laird of the Queensland Malt Whisky Society which involves a bit if travelling to sip whiskies with the members at the Society's branches - but someone has to do it.

Went back to Toowoomba for a few days in November - now, there's a town going places!. With huge amount of inner city improvements, a fantastic new airport, and better (and getting better) access. Some parts haven't changed - your end of Bridge Street has seen a lot of renovations, but still easily recognisable.

Regards - John

Denis Newman: from Kingaroy.

Paul Richards kindly put Denis in touch as you can see:

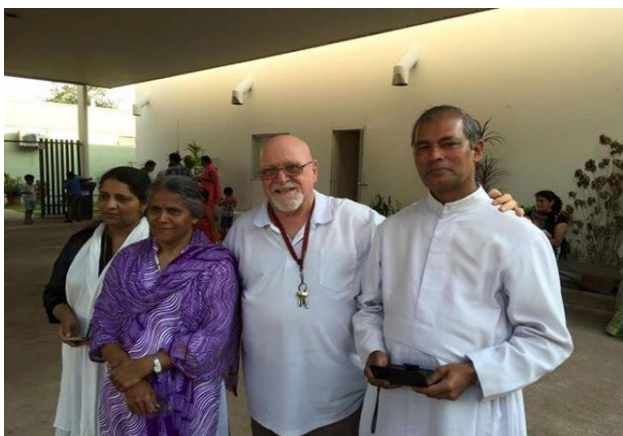
"Hello Jack, I had a chance meeting with Peter Richards the other day and he sent me one of your Newsletters. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Would you mind adding me to your email list?

Thanks, kind regards - Chad (Denis) Newman

Ps. Chad (Mick) Newman is living in Margate but does not have an email address. Mick was at Downlands from 1955-58 and I was there from 1960-62.

Roy O'Neill MSC



Syro-Malabar Church has a strong presence in Darwin. Fr Binesh works in St Paul's Nightcliff where **Roy O'Neill MSC** (third from left) is parish priest. This picture was taken at a special retreat which was conducted on October 23rd to 25th at St. Paul's Church and Catholic Primary School, Darwin for the students of the St. Alphonsa Sunday School. It was the first kind of retreat held for the students since the start of the Sunday school several years ago.

J.C Ryan: "Jack, Many thanks for latest mail-out. I like the title - it certainly suits your contribution to keep so many of us informed and in touch.

I was fortunate to attend the annual college reunion and both the memorial mass for the MSC group and the celebration of the jubilees for John Franzmann and Vince Carroll.

Thank you for the kind recognition of O'Donoghue's work for our 1954 group which we agree is top class. We had our first reunion in 1994, then 2004 and every year since 2007.

We have gathered in Toowoomba again in 2009 and 2015 and at Noosa, Emerald, Gympie, Yeppoon, Longreach, Byron Bay, Caloundra and Stanthorpe mostly for three night reunions. Our wives have become great friends also. I recommend these gatherings to all past students and thank Downlands for bringing us together.

We had 32 in the senior class -eleven have now passed away. Some others are not well so only nine managed to gather at Stanthorpe. We keep in touch with those who can't make it, and as many as possible of those others who were part of the group but left before Senior. Fr Albert Chan, Denis Curran and Michael Campbell started as young primary boys. Enough from me, Many thanks and best wishes. John - (J.C.Ryan.)

Don O'Donoghue: *Thanks to Don, once again, for sharing his e-mails to his old classmates with me. Quite a few of you know Don and will recognise others from this class as well.*

"Dear Classmates and Ladies of the Class of '54.

I have attached a couple of photos of our group who were able to attend our Reunion at Happy Valley Retreat at Stanthorpe from the 12th to the 14th of October. We were down to nine Old Boys and their wives eventually, but what we lacked in numbers we more than made up with in enthusiasm. It was a very relaxed and enjoyable get together. That we had the Resort virtually to ourselves helped a lot, and the large lounge and public areas gave us ample opportunities for fellowship and to exchange yarns.

Ben Kennedy was unable to attend because of his health. Ben is at home in Toowoomba and our thoughts are with him and Denise. *(See RIP Below-JED)*

Merv Welsh also had to cancel as he was in hospital. The good news is that Merv is now back at home in Gympie.

John Kearns also had to cancel at the last minute as he had to see a Ocular Plastic Surgeon in Brisbane to remove a BCC from near his eye. The operation is scheduled in Brisbane in a few weeks' time.

We are open to suggestions for our next Reunion. There was some talk of going to Sydney and having a look a look at Douglas Park and Kensington and other MSC haunts, but maybe at our age that is a bit too ambitious. JC Ryan has just returned from a very successful Probus trip to the Margaret Olley Museum and the Tweed Coast and that is certainly worth consideration. Please contact me with any other ideas for a venue for the 2016 Reunion .

With every best wish - Don O'Donoghue



L- R: Pat Nolan, John Littleton, Oskar McIvor, Denis Curran, Don O'Donoghue, Liam O'Dea, David Corrigan, Tom Cullinan, and John C Ryan



All the above with wives

Kerry White '59 – '62: "Thanks for thoughts on 11/11 – didn't do much as I was on uni exam supervision till 10.45, but pulled in at Alex Headland; listened to ode, Last Post on ABC Radio while pondering the ocean.

Here is some stuff from last week – use whatever you think OK. Regards – KW

Past students from 1959-62 period attended a lunch at United Services Club, Brisbane, on 6 November.

Host was Commodore (Ret.) Mick Dunne, who was recovering from a Rugby World Cup trip, having just got home two days before after attending the final. Also at lunch were: Justin McCarthy, living up Cairns way; Lyle McGrath, retired in Brisbane; Tony Atkinson; retired spending time between Cooran and Brisbane; Charlie Billington, formerly of Quilpie, retired near Beaudesert; Peter Casey, now parish priest at Camp Hill, Brisbane; Dick Rowe, still consulting; Rod McCafferty, Sunshine Coast, but still some Toowoomba connection (the former McCafferty bus/coach terminal is on the market); John Dark,

retired Mackay; Neil Ziegenfusz, retired Tweed Heads; Denis Sexton; retired GP; Bill Taylor, retired from Cunnamulla to Minden, near Brisbane; Terry Prindable, Gold Coast, retired teacher, author of 'Shaking Caravans: The Incomplete Teachers' Guide'; Kerry White, Sunshine Coast, semi-retired, author of two anthologies and a book to be released soon, 'Three of a kind', about three pilots from different wars..

We also heard from Gary Collis, who lives in WA; Wilson Whitehouse, shares time between Gold Coast and Bali; Michael Burns, at Melbourne Cup Carnival; Ken Dooley, busy on a building project in Sri Lanka but normally North Queensland; Ian Beilby, Sydney, "we could be anywhere"; Grant McAuliffe, Atherton, and reported that Bernie Franzman has left Toowoomba and is at Albany Creek near Brisbane.

Kerry White recently had a story in Queensland RSL News about one of his pilots, and Mick Burns said he had read it. On inquiry Kerry was told: "My father-in-law is a 103 year old ww2 vet - I read his copy to him". Wonderful eh?

Rod asked Peter to say grace – "Why don't you Rod?" was the reply, before he did it anyway.



L – R: Rod McCafferty, Terry Prindable, Kerry White



L – R: Mick Dunne, Neil Ziegenfusz, John Dark

EDITOR'S COLUMN



L- R:
Peter Casey, Lyle McGrath, Justin McCarthy, Bill Taylor



L- R: Tony Atkinson, Denis Sexton, Charlie Billington, Richard Rowe

Who do you recognise here?? This group forms the real power base in Canberra!!



Fr Jim Littleton (middle back row); Fr Harold Baker (far right, front row) among other MSCs at Daramalan, ACT.

During half-time in the RWC final, I 'flicked' through the sporting channels and found a game of volleyball between two European teams just starting. The individual team members were being introduced. I had a laugh at what was scrolling along the bottom of the screen: Helga Josefski Age 27, **Length** 182 cm, No of games 65; Name Tomasina Durkkov Age 24 **Length** 185cm No of games 52, etc., etc. Haha!!.

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I saw the following verse on the back of an Order of Service at a funeral recently. "Don't be sad that I've left you. I would like to think you would smile because you have known me" That's a starter for MY Order of Service, right there!!

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I'm sure I have bored you over the months by telling you that 'readership' of this newsletter has increased since it first began in 2011. These days I email <210 copies to people who, although not all in our class, were at school during the years we were there. Some ahead of us, others behind us, some widows etc., all of whom have contacted me asking to be included on the mailing list. In addition to these I printed and posted, snail mail, another 24 copies.

I 'spat the dummy' while preparing to send out the last edition and advised these 24 that it would be the last one I'd be sending through the post. These were all classmates from the '56 – '61 group. Apart from the <\$50 a month cost of distribution, the thing that struck me was that there was no two way communication from most of these people. Maybe, I thought, these blokes didn't really want to receive the newsletters. They may have thrown them straight in the bin – don't know.

I wrote a separate letter to each, offering the suggestion of emailing future copies to another family member so they could print them off if that suited better, but I've received only two acknowledgements to that suggestion. SO ! Grumpy bum here made the decision not to post.

I ran it past a few of you and am thankful for your feedback, which was in line with my own thinking. You may see some comments to this effect in the notes from "Classmates"

I hope I haven't upset anyone too badly in making this decision and trust that most, if not all of you, would agree that this is not unreasonable. I say this in case anyone might say to you they don't know what's going on with our blokes anymore. Enough !

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Thanks to Denis Sexton for sending me the link to follow the late Jonah Lomu's Memorial Service..

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0usuQlyWV3M>

Eric Rush's tribute, the various 'Hakas' and Lizzie Marvally's rendition of 'How Great Thou Art' were memorable.

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You may have received some information regarding a new DPSA Bursary. The launch lunch was to be held early in December but, because of everything else going on at this time of year, it has been held over until the New Year. An interesting venue is proposed, the newly renovated "Les Bubbles" in Fortitude Valley [formerly Bubbles Bath House made infamous during the Fitzgerald Enquiry etc]. It is now under the control of entrepreneurial past student Damian Griffiths who has many hospitality interests in the district.

I'll keep you posted.

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Attached to ~~The Old Bush Telegraph~~ this month is the notice concerning the Annual Mass for Past Students. Some of you receive this notice individually, but I commend the day to those of you who don't.

The notice is self explanatory. If anyone is interested in more details please contact me asap as the new Caterers, who don't know us, have imposed somewhat harsher rules than we have been used to in the past.

The organisers are confident of another successful day.

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From the Infirmary



Rob Burns tells me he's had trouble with his eyes, having cataracts removed. He's ok after having the necessary procedure.

He too has had back problems for which he received relief after his health provider offered an "alternate form of treatment". He's had a good result and is pain free.

Rod Cochrane rang me on the 10th November to report on his health.

He had two angiograms in a fortnight. The first was his regular test but then, almost two weeks later, he experienced some heart pain as well as pain down his arm and decided it was best to be cautious so off to the PA hospital, to be on the safe side., but had anew 'balloon' inserted into his stent?? The test proved there was no heart attack so he was released to go home. Rod says he's happy to talk to anyone who may need assurance about 'heart issues' as he's been through the mill a few times now.

Best wishes to Margaret Collis who has been convalescing after heart surgery. Best wishes for a speedy recovery Margaret.

REQUISCANT IN PACE

Raymond (Mousey) Bligh (1954 – '57) from Warwick, passed away in Sydney on 31/10/15, after a long illness.

I remember Mousey very well from days as one of the 'gun' drummers in the band. He was first on the bus when we'd go to march in the St Patrick's Day procession in Warwick. I'm sure all the local girls gave him an extra cheer as he went passed. His photo is prominent in the 1957 College magazine as a member of the Boxing squad along with Clanchy et al. Ray's sister, Margaret, who is married to George Emerson, is a regular at our annual Mass. Ray will be among those prayed for in 2016.

Gerard James (Ged) Collins (1941 – '43) from Berat. Passed away peacefully, in Toowoomba, on 2nd November 2015.

Tim Gaffney (1955 – '58), from Brisbane. Tim passed away in Sydney on 6/12/15 after a long illness. He was a loving husband and proud father of nine children. He was a dentist by profession, and was one of three Gaffneys at school during our time there. **Tom ('54 – '56) and Pat ('59 – '65).** I met another brother Jim in Darwin in the mid '60s,. I think he was at Downlands too, for one year in '54. Tim's funeral will be conducted from St Ita's at Dutton Park on 14/12/15.

Jeffrey G Bishop (1947 – '51), from Condamine, passed away peacefully, at his home in Cronella Point NSW on 30/11/15.

Thanks to John Casey, who was a fellow student at school at the time, I have learned that Jeffrey was a quiet boy at school. He later went on to St Leo's and ultimately graduated from UQ as an engineer. He was father to seven children, worked for a time with 'Shell'

then became a consultant and lived in Sydney for most of his adult life.

He was a proud ex-Downlander and MSC supporter. He attended most if not all past student events held in Sydney over the years, and attended Fr Doneley's Funeral recently at Kensington. He and his wife even drove down to Douglas Park for Fr Tyse's burial.. He suffered from Leukemia, and was relatively well up until a few days before his death.

Brendan O'Brien 1947 – '53 from Toowoomba, passed away in the past few days [12/12/15]. Brendan with his twin brother, Morgan, were long term supporters of Downlands.

Bro James Maher MSC passed away peacefully at Kensington aged 52.

Br Maher, as well as having a long involvement in liturgical music, worked as a teacher and a High School chaplain. In more recent years he worked in adult faith formation. James' first collection of spiritual and liturgical songs, 'Heartvoice', was released in late 2002. His second album, 'Gospel of Love', was released in 2010 to much joyful acclaim. The theological and spiritual depth of his compositions and the high musical production standards have attracted wide praise in Australia and beyond, and have nourished the faith and prayer life of many people. Several of James' compositions are included in the 'As One Voice: The Next Generation' collection

Ben Kennedy (1951 – '54) from Kilcoy, School Captain 1954, passed away in Toowoomba on 14/11/15. [Ben is on the right in the photo below]



Don O'Donoghue very kindly included me on a mailing list of his classmates to whom he sent a report on Ben's funeral. Here is what he wrote:
"Greetings Classmates and Ladies of the Class of '54,

I would just like to give you a short report of Ben Kennedy's funeral for the benefit of those who because of distance or health were unable to attend

Ben's funeral. Of our group the following were able to attend --- John and Maureen Ryan, Denis Curran and his son Boyd, Liam O'Dea, Merv Welsh, Nev Byrnes, Pat and Kath Smith, John and Mary June Littleton, Sybil O'Keeffe, and Deann and Don O'Donoghue.

There were a whole lot of other familiar Downlands faces from the years we were there - too numerous to mention. A lot of them were Kennedys.

John Ryan kindly saved a row of seats for the Class of '54 so that we could all sit together as a group in a crowded church. With the permission of Denise and the Family, the Class of '54 and all the other Downlands Old Boys present formed an Honour Guard outside St. Theresa's as the coffin was taken to the hearse after the Mass. In a conversation between John Ryan and the Parish Priest Fr Brian Noonan, he estimated that the crowd numbered about 650 persons. The attendance was a reflection of the wide range of Ben's friends and contacts that he had established in his lifetime in several communities. Of these nearly half attended the burial at the Toowoomba Cemetery on South St. Most of these proceeded on to the wake at Gip's Restaurant on Russell St., which is where we had our formal dinner at our Toowoomba Reunion last year.

It was a perfect summer's day in Toowoomba without a cloud in the sky. The main celebrant was Fr James Browne, who had been an old friend of the Kennedy family since they were first married in their Conondale and Kilcoy days. A very moving and well researched Eulogy was read by Ben's son Peter. The whole ceremony proceeded without a hitch, with great dignity, and Denise and the Family can be proud that they gave Ben a fitting farewell. We will all miss our friend Ben, who was one of those larger than life personalities that are only seldom encountered.

I phoned Tom Cullinan to report on the funeral this morning. Tom is still not 100% after his weekend in the Wesley. Tom has kindly volunteered to host the Class of '54 for a men only lunch on the 2nd of February 2016 at Tattersall's Club. Please mark the date in your diary, and for the out of Brisbane members, if you have to see a professional in Brisbane about this time, try to arrange your affairs so that you may join us.

Best wishes to all - Don O'Donoghue

Recently I read a quote from an old Buddhist teacher
"To die is simple – you breathe out and don't breathe in" If only it was so simple" - JD

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## PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Johnson's Baby Powder with Cornstarch. During these hot, humid days, I find a good sprinkling after a shower offers added comfort !!

Deb insisted we have the Kylie Minogue "Christmas CD" ready for playing during the Festive Season.

I upped the ante by buying bought the Ten Tenors "Our Christmas Wish" CD for the BIG sound of Yuletide.



If you have tried something, and failed;

You are vastly better off than if you had tried nothing, and succeeded.

## ENTERTAINMENT CORNER

Last month's "Einstein Quiz" was solved by 4 readers. The answer was: **THE GERMAN**

1] Sorry John, can't keep people waiting for your answer (which may get lost) - It's the **German**, But you have to be an Architect to work it out - Cheers, **Roger Parkin** , Project Architect

2 & 3] **Bill Smith & The Dennis's**, (see News from Classmates) AND

4] From an avid international 'problem-solver' and reader:  
"I've been up all night working out the Einstein equations. I have pages of boxes and rows of permutations. Colour codes. Animal zoos. National flags. My answer is: **"der deutsche mann"**

*Well done! I still haven't worked it out! - JED*

## HOW TO WRITE GOOD

1. Avoid Alliteration. Always.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. Avoid cliches like the plague. They're old hat.
4. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
5. Be more or less specific.
6. Writers should never generalize.
- Seven: Be consistent!
8. Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
9. Who needs rhetorical questions?
10. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.

*1) All the villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered but only one boy came with an umbrella.*

*That's FAITH*

*2) When you throw a baby in the air, it laughs because it knows you will catch it.*

*That's TRUST*

*3) Every night we go to bed without an assurance of being alive the next morning but still we set the alarm to wake up.*

*That's HOPE*

*4) We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future.*

*That's CONFIDENCE*

*5) We see the world suffering but still we get married and have children.*

*That's LOVE*

*6) On an old man's shirt was written: 'I am not 80 years old....I am sweet 16 with 64 years experience'*

*That's ATTITUDE*

*Live your life like the six stories!*

## **OLD FART PRIDE**

It's not a bad thing to be called an Old Fart.

Old Farts are easy to spot at sporting events; during the National Anthem, Old Farts remove their hats and stand at attention and sing without embarrassment. They know the words and believe in them.

Old Farts remember Spitfires and Hitler. They remember Vietnam, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Moon Landing and all the Peacekeeping Missions to 2005.

If you bump into an Old Fart on the pavement, he will apologize. If you pass an Old Fart on the street, he will nod or tip his cap to a lady. Old Farts trust strangers and are polite, particularly to women.

Old Farts hold the door for the next person and always, when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection.

Old Farts get embarrassed if someone swears in front of women and children and they don't like any filthy language on TV.

Old Farts have moral courage and personal integrity. They seldom brag except about their children and grandchildren.

This country needs Old Farts with their work ethic, sense of responsibility, pride in their country and decent values.

We need them now more than ever.

***Thank Goodness for Old Farts!***

## **THIS MONTH'S QUIZ:**

**[Answers next month]**

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?
2. A clerk at a butcher shop stands five feet ten inches tall and wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?
4. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?
5. What word in the English language is always spelled incorrectly?
6. Billie was born on December 28th, yet her birthday always falls in the summer. How is this possible?
7. In British Columbia you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
8. If you were running a race and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?
9. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg is white" or "The yolk of the egg are white?"
10. A farmer has five haystacks in one field and four haystacks in another. How many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in one field?

***Thanks to everyone who contributed this month, it is greatly appreciated.***

***Cheers until next time - Jack***

***All care taken in presenting material here, but no responsibility taken for errors / omissions.***

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***Dated: 13/12/2015***