



April 2014

Newsletter

Association of Retired Inspectors of Schools and Senior Educational Administrators

--- A FRIENDLY LUNCHEON REMINDER ---

2nd May 2014

**The May lunch meeting will include the
Annual General Meeting**

**A Lunch Reservation form is attached to the Membership Subscription Renewal form
that is being posted to members. You should receive it within the next 2 or 3 days.**

**The Lunch Reservation form needs to be
completed and returned to Jack Harrison, with your cheque, by 11th April.**



April 2014

Newsletter

Association of Retired Inspectors of Schools and Senior Educational Administrators

From the President



This will be my last official report to you as president as the AGM of May 2 will elect a new president for the next 12 months. May I say how much I have enjoyed serving as acting president /vice president and finally president since 2012 and I wish my successor the best of good wishes later in the year.

I also sincerely thank the committee in getting a number of tasks completed, especially to Allan Mills who has updated and taken on the management of the members' list with the help of Peter Robinson.

In particular I thank our Secretary, Geoff Walton who has been a constant tower of strength in keeping the organisation running. Geoff has also taken on the welfare position after the gulf left by the resignation and then sad passing of John Dugdale. Without Geoff ARISSEA would be in a much poorer position.

Richmond Manyweathers still remains our loyal treasurer in spite of moving to God's own country but with the wonders of modern technology we can continue to use his valuable skills in ensuring we remain solvent and flourishing.

The lunch meetings throughout the year have been the usual success and again I thank

Jack Harrison for his continued support and tireless work in making these meetings so enjoyable and well organised.

My thanks also to Alan Rice who kindly guided and advised me when I first took on the position. In all I am indebted to the wonderful committee whom I had the privilege to work with during that time.

There were two objectives I had in taking on the president's role. The first was to establish a meeting with the Director-General to discuss her cooperation in helping us to identify those retiring members at CEO level and above who may wish to join ARISSEA. To date this has yet to take place but I note we now have additional strategies to communicate with those retiring from the service and hopefully this will ensure our membership can continue to grow.

The second objective was to gauge the opinions of members in relation to organising a lunchtime meeting where we invite a speaker to brief us on a current educational topic of interest. I realise this has received a lukewarm response in some quarters but some interest with others. I leave this now to my successor to see if there is sufficient interest in this to follow it through.

Whether ARISSEA would ever wish to take on a policy role of making submissions in response to public invitations and reviews such as the current one conducted by Minister Pyne is another one we might examine. This may be further down the track but obviously such a change would require an amendment to our constitution.

While I certainly enjoy the fellowship of meeting with colleagues in a relaxed, informal atmosphere several times a year I also feel that our interest in education has never weakened and our combined talents and experience could still be of immense value to the community and the education system as a whole.

In spite of leaving the president's role I still look forward to continuing working with you all in 2014 and beyond and thank you for your support and assistance over the last two years.

Syd Smith

From the Secretary

The final meeting of the members of the 2013-2014 ARISSEA Committee was held on Monday March 1, 2014. The Meeting, chaired by President Syd Smith, considered the following:

A presentation from the ISEA President (Kerrie Ikin) and Executive Officer (Brian Powyer).

For several years the ISEA has been working towards publishing a history of the Institute. In essence, this publication would be the product of formal research, have academic credibility and of necessity involve a suitably qualified commissioned researcher.

The Institute is developing a specification for the publication. It is likely that the scope of the research will include identifying and searching relevant documents, and interviewing individuals. It is likely that the ISEA will establish an editorial group to appoint and support the researcher.

Review of the implementation of 2013 Membership Database:

Allan Mills reported that he has redesigned the formulae to calculate the financial status of individual members and any outstanding membership fees.

The Newsletter:

Peter Robinson will continue to produce three versions of each of our newsletters, one that is posted to members, one that is emailed to members and designed to be “read on screen” and a third version that is emailed to members who want to print their own copy and read it on paper.

Mailing and processing 2014 applications membership renewal, and Stewart House Donations:

Richmond Manyweathers and Allan Mills have collaborated to modify the 2014 Membership Subscription Renewal forms. As in previous years, these will be posted to all members either included with the April Newsletter or separately if you receive your Newsletter by email.

Business for the Annual General Meeting (Friday, 3 May 2014)

Nominations for committee positions 2014-2015:

The outgoing 2013-2014 Committee is comprised of 15 members: Chris Carroll, Laurie Craddock, Vincent Delany, Ray Gillies, Bill Grant, George Green, Jack Harrison, Deanna Hoermann, Richmond Manyweathers, Allan Mills, Alan Rice, Alan Pratt, Peter Robinson, Syd Smith and Geoff Walton. Following established practice, Ray Gillies, currently Vice President, will become President for 2014-2015.

Please let me know if you wish to make a nomination ph 96396847, mob 0418241406 email, email address: geoff@sandglass.com.au – nominations from the floor of the AGM will be accepted.

The (*) indicates names of current committee members/invitees who have indicated that they are prepared to be nominated for specific positions on the 2014-2015 committee.

President	Ray Gillies
Vice President	*Chris Carroll
Immediate Past President	Syd Smith
Secretary	*Geoff Walton
Treasurer	*Richmond Manyweathers
Editor	*Peter Robinson
Membership Officer	*Allan Mills
Welfare Officer	Vacant
Luncheon Coordinator	*Jack Harrison

Geoff Walton

December Lunch



Geoff Walton and Allan Mills

December Lunch



Ritchie Stevenson

Members say

Ritchie Stevenson

Barbara and I have recently returned from a visit to Greeley – a rural town (100,000+) in Colorado – where the family of our new son-in-law lives. Greeley is named after the personality who invented the phrase: “Go West young man; go West”! The town is about 50 miles north of Denver along the I25 highway – not that far from those famous skiing resorts, Steamboat Springs and Aspen.

Perhaps one would say that there’s not much to see in Greeley. However, one morning Barbara and I visited a low-rise lookout and saw signs pointing towards a Missile Site Park and to a German POW camp. Intrigued, we went for a drive.

About one mile out of town we saw the sign, and a little off the highway we came across the camp which housed the German POWs. Not much remains except a couple of weathered stone gate-posts and a ploughed field stretching into the distance. But the engraved on-sited information plates told the story.

Over 3,000 German POW’s from Rommel’s Afrika Corps were housed there in long rows of barracks. I guess they had been the “return cargo” in empty United States armaments ships returning from North Africa! Most were employed growing sugar beet on the farms near the township.

One stalwart loyalist (Rommel's batman) refused to work for the enemy and spent the war ironing shirts in the barracks. But in 2000 he wrote a letter to the good citizens of Greeley commending them for the humane way in which they had all been treated!

Further down the rural side-road we came across a small park surrounding an ICBM missile site dating from the Cold War days of the sixties. Amongst the trees was a large cement hardpan with two massive rusted lids over the missile silo. A short cement road led down the hill to another sliding metal door used to house the 84 foot missile. The lot was dotted with weeds and a wire fence enclosed the site.

During the Cold War these silos housed massive Atlas E missiles with atomic warhead attached. The large lids could be retracted and the missile within would be elevated into a vertical position for launch within a few minutes. The launch control room and storage areas were deep underground.

These Atlas E's became operational in late 1961 (my first year of teaching!). Later, their technology launched John Glenn into orbit. There are four more similar abandoned sites in northern Colorado.

And there are dozens of others across the United States. Some have been made into underground hotels, some into tourist venues, and the one in Greeley into a small caravan parking area.

During the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 the Atlas E's were readied for launch as a deterrent in the crisis. (Remember the film, "Thirteen Days", showing John Kennedy's tussle with the situation.)

In those days, too, guidance technology was pretty spongy and, if they'd launched one on Moscow from Greeley, in a few minutes one from Moscow would follow the trajectory back to Greeley.

How would people have liked to know they lived within a ten miles radius of obliteration!! Perhaps they did! All so unimaginable to look back on! And how we all wasted so much of our resources! Now so much dust!

I guess this is what I really like most about travel - the unexpected connections and "link-ups" that continue to occur, and the patterns that emerge in our knowledge of the history of events!

December Lunch



Vincent and Jennifer Delany

Friends of Stewart House

Thursday 3rd April 'The Tragic Blunder: The fate of HMAS Australia, our first flagship - Guardian of the Southern Seas' presented by Dr Brad Duncan, NSW State marine archaeologist. Meet at Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club 10.45am for 11am start. Cost \$10. Lunch at own expense. **Contact:** Margaret Harmer Ph 9744 2625 by Monday 31st March.

Wednesday 21st May Illustrated talk by Peter Kahn on 'The Trams of Sydney'. Meet at Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club 10.45 for 11am start. Cost \$10. Lunch at own expense. **Contact:** Diane Hill Ph 9665 7202 by Monday 19th May.

Monday 23rd June Meet at restaurant in David Jones, Castle Towers, Castle Hills, for morning tea (sandwiches, scones, cakes) at 10.30am. Parking is available or catch the M61 bus from the QVB. Cost \$20 includes \$10 donation to Stewart House. **Contact:** Diane Hill Ph 9665 7202 by Friday 20th June.

Monday 14th July Lunch at Doyle's Restaurant at Circular Quay (Northern end of overseas terminal). Meet inside at 12.15 for 12.30 start. Cost is \$40 which includes a small donation to Stewart House. **Contact:** Barbara Kenny Ph 9986 1718 by Tuesday 8th July.

December Lunch



Helen and John Allsop

Members say

Laurie Craddock

A year ago (19/1/13) we were awakened by banging on our bedroom window by a neighbour, Susie, at 4.25 a.m. “Come out, you’ve been burgled and your car is gone!” she informed us. A police officer was standing in the background. When we obeyed, exiting by the smashed glass door used by the villains we discovered there were a couple of constables present, along with both neighbours from the other side.

We had been the subjects of what the police term ‘aggravated break, enter and steal’. The ‘aggravated’ means the occupants were in the premises when the theft occurred. The other side neighbour, Alan, heard some noises, jumped into some clothes and raced out to see our car leaving by the driveway. A quick inspection revealed the site of the break-in and he immediately rang the police who attended very quickly.

The house was still deadlocked, doors and windows with security chains on the outer doors. The forensic officer, who was very impressive, said there was only one other safety step we could have taken and I’ll come to that. A weak spot which they obviously knew about as a risk worth taking was the glass panelled door. We’d had it installed in an extension about 10 years ago.

The nature of the glass was the problem – like the windscreens of old when struck in the right way collapsed with a pop and the whole thing fragmented and fell basically in a pile on the floor. It didn’t wake us, nor did their attempts at other points of entry.

A good, sound night's sleep is a good thing but as we found it can be a hazard. Strangers/intruders are not welcome in our bedroom as we slumber. The car keys along with my wallet were on the bedside table next to my head, and similarly the house keys and her Kindle were beside Peg's. Everyone has said just as well we didn't wake up the reason being obvious. (I, of course, would have thrown them bodily from the house – perhaps not.)

What of the villains themselves? Five weeks before the happening, a fellow arrived on a motorbike, parked it opposite and then explored the nearby streets. Two weeks later he came back and parked in the same spot. He followed a similar routine and was eventually joined by a man coming from the opposite direction. It appears this one walked along the nature reserve that is over our back fence. Two young fellows observed the behaviour but took no action. 'Casing' was the name of the game. The pair that did our house was firstly disturbed in nearby Langdon.

Both appear to be what we would perhaps think of as ex G.A.s, on a training run. Evidence for this was in the modus operandi. Their targets were flat items like flat TV screens, laptop computers, i-pads, small things that are easily gathered and sold in law-abiding pubs. The car was an opportunistic bonus simply because they found its keys.

Having gathered their booty the last item was the car. The door through to the garage was deadlocked but they already had it's key. Out into the yard and not to be beaten a brick was thrown through the laundry window (literally; they didn't steal the brick) and entry was gained through a not very big hole suggesting it might have been the teenage girl known to be operating with a gang. Whoever it was he/she was badly cut leaving a trail of blood for the forensic officer. The garage door is activated by a switch on the wall. No, they had to bust the mechanism, easy to do from the inside.

Constable C, the forensic investigator arrived at 7.20 and worked till midday. She obtained several sets of prints, including my grandkids', some excellent DNA samples and other items our villains (in training) had dropped in their haste to get the car. Obviously never having heard of pin numbers their next move was to the ATMs at Baulkham Hills to use my credit cards, where they obtained no cash but had their pictures taken. Then to fill the car with petrol, (I'd already filled it using a good discount deal) to a petrol station in Parramatta that has CTV on the apron. The Detective had a good idea who our trainees were.

This type of crime is growing in numbers. There were five in the Hills police district that same night. In the wash-up on the same day the locksmith replaced the at risk locks; O'Brien Glass repaired and cleaned up the glass damage working well into the evening, replacing the door with armour glass; credit cards were quickly replaced and altered where necessary (the slowest being the Medicare card); and the garage door mechanism was repaired and properly adjusted.

The big ticket item, the car, was retrieved by the police on the 9th day. They were always confident that they would. The vehicle had been driven on a flat tyre on the left front. An

attempt was made to change the wheel but because of the locked mag it failed. In this process the completely unused spare was discarded, or perhaps sold.

Repairers did a particularly good job. I had the car back when a hidden fault emerged, the gearbox had been badly damaged (\$4k) and though I expected difficulties the insurers rang just to say they would pay for the previously undetected problem. The disruption however was immense.

So, out of pocket a bit, but things eventually settled back to normal. There are some lessons that we learnt.

- a) At night lock wallet, keys (house/car) and other valuables away and securely hide the locking up key where it won't be found, except by you of course. It's easier than you might think.
- b) Have security lights that come on when someone approaches particularly at rear.
- c) If you have a radio activated garage door, lock it so it can't be opened. I understand that there are possibly only 11 signals used in the metropolitan area and there have been instances of thieves driving along a street and identifying those they could open.
- d) Make sure your car is also locked with the alarm on and not containing any visible valuable item. In most modern cars the boot is the really secure place. Make sure your partner is out of the car before you take these precautions or trouble might ensue.
- e) A security alarm that makes a dreadful noise and flashes a beacon is a great deterrent. We have such a system but needed to be modified to fill the purpose. Job for an expert. It's to do with the dwell time between entry and the time lapse to the disarm pad.
- f) Many people like to take a nap after lunch. In these circumstances doors from the outside should be locked. Many 'aggravated' burglaries occur during the day. Don't trust a gauze door unless it's a security screened type. Also secure windows from illegal entry.

I had hoped to get this to Peter not long after the above event, but I had to go into therapy. No not that kind, chemo. That was a very trying experience and I was told yesterday it will be the middle of this year before I'm rid of the last side-effects.

We, because Peg was heavily involved, had great support from our wonderful friends and neighbours. From ARISSEA Vincent, Geoff and Ian organised my transport to NCI, and friends like Doug and former work colleagues visited and kept in touch. We are so grateful to them.

December Lunch



Ron Pickles

Members say

Derek Howland

Continued from the February Newsletter

While Derek and his grandson Joel were travelling by river boat from Amsterdam to Budapest, they visited Melk in Bavaria where Derek developed a sore throat.

I awoke with a slight sore throat but thought very little of it but by evening I had lost my voice and by the next morning I was no better. The tour leader, Cheri, tried to find a doctor.

It was a public holiday and many doctors had made the most of it. Cheri eventually located one and called a taxi. The doctor was an elderly man who did not speak English, fortunately a young lady doctor did and between them I was diagnosed with bronchitis, given a prescription and sent on my way.

I have little recollection of the next morning. Joel later told me I was hysterical and raving. Cheri sent for another taxi and sent me to the hospital where I was admitted at once. The ship was ready to leave for its next town so Joel and Cheri packed all our belongings and bundled them with Joel off to a hotel.

Cheri, of course had to remain with the ship which then continued along the river to its next destination. I, oblivious to what was happening was subjected to a series of tests, X-rays and finally to a scan and was diagnosed with pneumonia. I was placed in a ward with four other men only one of whom spoke English but with about the same competence as

my schoolboy French. Poor Joel was alone in a German community and with a grandfather in hospital!

The doctor in charge was an unusual man with a mop of jet black hair and the build of a front row forward. When Joel arrived he asked the doctor if he spoke English. He apparently did and French, Spanish, Italian, Swedish in fact pretty well every major European language. Joel asked about Japanese at which the doctor admitted ignorance!

I had the usual array of equipment at my bed head and drips hanging out of my arms. I could not complain about the staff few who could speak any English but compensated with care and kindness. I cannot say the same for the cook who apparently had no idea of a gluten free diet, I am a coeliac, and I was reduced to picking out those bits of food which were safe and sending the rest back.

The consequence was that for the rest of my stay the cook, so called, sent me the same unappetising food day after day. I had no cause to lose weight being skinny enough already, but I undoubtedly did.

Joel in the meantime had to find another hotel with a twin room vacant and for an unknown period! He succeeded and fortunately the doctor's forecast was correct. I was discharged on time and both of us were ensconced in the delightful Hollerenstein Hotel in the hills overlooking the immense vineyards providing white grapes for the wines for which the Wachau Valley is famous.

By this time Joel had finished his negotiations with APT who had booked us a non-stop flight from Dubai to Brisbane. There is no international airport in Melk, so we would have to go to Vienna about 100kms away.

APT provided a taxi for which we were most thankful. Meanwhile the ever reliable Cheri had kept track of us and had sent my walker and stick to the airport at Vienna. Fortunately the walker arrived but some villain collected my stick!

I was very weak and even less useful than usual, so Joel was proportionally busier looking for the appropriate booking queue, where my walker was to be found, where the nearest toilets were etc., etc. but eventually we were on the plane to Dubai. At Joel's insistence we were to stay there for two days so that I could rest.

It was an interesting two days. The airport is vast and very modern, even the airport trolleys are collected by men standing on electric vehicles and when they have a worthwhile number, I counted over twenty on one occasion, drive away to the collection point, with their catch in front of them.

That system compares more than favourably with ours, having solitary workers struggling through crowds with a mere half a dozen! I have not seen a bigger airport anywhere but was assured that Saudi Arabia's is bigger.

There's no substitute for owning a few oil wells! The hotel was only a three or four minute drive from the airport, and was large and luxurious. There were several restaurants, the

one we favoured for breakfast seemed to have as many staff as patrons. When we ordered bacon and eggs for breakfast we were quietly told that it would be veal bacon!

That was the only hint, apart from the occasional veil, that we were in a Muslim country. For dinner on the first night we tried the Asian restaurant, very good and on the second night the sumptuous restaurant where we extravagantly ordered Australian Wagyu steak. It was so large and with so many trimmings that neither of us could finish it, what a waste!

On our second day we took the opportunity of a tour of Dubai by taxi. The hotel booked it for immediately after breakfast. The driver, not a native of Dubai, spoke quite good English and was well worth the sixty dollars fare. He proudly pointed out the tallest building in the world, likewise the largest super market, the new housing estates and hotels, the beach and so on. We found it very interesting but Dubai although a near miraculous creation in the desert lacks any soul, there is a sameness about the whole place.

We both agreed that we would find living there intolerable and not just because of the enervating climate where no outdoor work occurs after lunch. Apparently others have felt the same way, lured there by huge salaries and leaving before their contracts are fulfilled.

The non-stop flight to Brisbane was by Emirates airline, an excellent choice as it transpired. Unlike at the hospital, my meal trays were delivered with a label, 'Mr Howland, Gluten free' and was entirely edible. Joel who is allergic to nuts and crustaceans (poor fellow) was similarly treated.

Emirates could not be faulted for its cabin service. After what was for me an exhausting flight of about eleven hours which seemed more like a couple of days, we arrived at Brisbane where we were met by my elder daughter Penni, and driven home to Tallai.

I was totally exhausted and did not get back to my normal fragile self for a couple of weeks. Even Joel confessed to tiredness, quite understandable considering the problems and responsibilities he had endured.

Finally, traveller beware! My wife and I had travelled extensively overseas and had always taken out travel insurance with Diploma Travel, had excellent service and never had to make a claim. This time, because of my age, a mere 87 at the time, I had to have a medical, and for whatever reason the insurance was shared with another group and then again to a subsidiary of Lloyds.

Nobody's fault but my own, but somewhere along the line I missed some procedure and unknowingly set out without insurance. Don't let this happen to you! Bread and cheese for dinner from now on!

There are aspects of the cruise that have not fitted comfortably into the chronology such as options and additions. I will deal randomly with just a few.

Guided walking tours through the streets of picturesque towns and villages, cathedrals and abbeys or the freedom to do those things at your own pace, a visit in the evening to a beer garden or even doing those things by cycle!

A gondola ride over a section of the Rhine valley.

The ships carry about a dozen bicycles, usually enough, and are available free of charge at selected stops. These enable the young and vigorous exercise and additionally the opportunity to explore further afield than the footsloggers.

We had a brilliant talk on the European Union. Boring? Definitely not it was so good I asked the speaker if he had a CD of the talk. He had not but I am sure he would have sold many had he thought of the idea.

At Wertheim a young seventh generation glassblower who brought a portable 'furnace' with him gave an amazing demonstration of his craft and was a brilliant and naturally witty entertainer to boot. He informed us that Wertheim was the oldest glass blowing community in existence and had established teaching facilities in other parts of the world.

He suggested that every family in the town had at least one member employed in the glass industry. The only larger producer of glass products was the American Corningware for which he claimed Wertheim produced several items.

One evening we had a middle aged pair of folk singers and yodellers, interesting and deliberately hilarious. Every evening we had the resident pianist with an apparently inexhaustible repertoire but additionally played any request.

There was never a boring moment and alternatively the quiet retreat of the lounge and bar where in addition to the usual stock, a coffee machine and tea making facilities were always available.

APT have sent me their touring brochure for 2014, it seems very good. I have suggested that a tour of Vietnam or a cruise along the Yangtze are enticing but the response has been dark murmurings sounding suspiciously like 'certification'.

This may be a problem to overcome although a little late arriving wisdom has reluctantly and privately conceded they are probably right!

December Lunch



Dorothy and George Green with Alan Pratt

Members say

Syd Smith

Most of you would have noticed that over the holiday period *Saving Mr Banks* was screened Australia wide in most cinemas. The film of course recounts the story (with some embellishments) of the disagreement between P L Travers and Walt Disney on how her Mary Poppins novels were to be interpreted for the big screen. According to the movie Walt Disney won the day but that is understandable given *Saving Mr Banks* was a Walt Disney production anyhow.

The billing of Julie Andrews in the star role of Mary Poppins brought back pleasant memories to me of the time when I was a primary school teacher at Gymea Bay Public School. Between 1964 and 1965 Julie Andrews was at the height of her career particularly after she made *The Sound of Music*, the biggest box office grossing movie of all time. Gymea Bay at that time was, I believe, ahead of its time and I was extremely fortunate to have worked there between 1964 and 1968 when Julie Andrews was the golden girl of the cinema.

Gymea Bay was innovative, explorative and, in some ways, a bit of a loose cannon for the Department. The principal, Vic Spongberg, had convinced the P and C to install a closed circuit TV system to every classroom in the school.

Moreover all the teachers had to present a lesson for the whole school in a learning area that they regarded as their forte. I, for example, had the task of presenting a current affairs lesson once a week with another teacher serving as the cameraman, resources

producer and director. Here we discussed the latest news and its implications.

ABC Television, then in its infancy, was suddenly interested and visited the school for ideas for its new education program, *Looking Behind the News*, which I think still runs today. These were exciting times for the teachers and we were inspired to work longer hours to ensure our lessons were as good as they could be. After all the most critical audience of all was watching us: our colleagues and professional friends!

Vic had his unique way of challenging his staff and in a subtle way put pressure on them to enhance their creative and innovative skills while still providing them with in-school professional training. Once a term every teacher had to prepare a presentation at a whole school assembly. It was known as Monday Mystery and had to be kept a secret until it was presented on Monday. This really put staff on their toes.

Some extensive preparation and practice were required; students hopefully were to give a polished performance and, of course, it had to have an educational purpose. And this is where *The Sound of Music* came in for my 5S class of talented students.

One of the students at the suggestion of her classmates actually wrote to Julie Andrews and asked her how the movie was made. To our surprise we received a reply almost immediately (or was it from her manager perhaps?), thanking us for our interest and providing details of the children in the movie. This of course was read to the whole school and was received with great interest given that the movie was still screening in cinemas at the time.

I share this story with you simply to raise the question of whether primary schools still have time to wander from the narrower and outcomes based curriculum they must now follow and given the greater emphasis on assessment and reporting which teachers must now endure. It's possible of course but in my opinion much more difficult today.

To do such an activity is a challenge with time to practise and still account for the relevant curriculum outcomes it supports. Added to this, teachers have to rationalise how such activities can be assessed let alone evaluated, all of which certainly requires more time and may in fact hamper creativity.

Over time the tension between a freer curriculum and a more prescriptive alternative, swings from one time period to another. In the '60s we were freer and more open to creativity, particularly in the way we selected specific learning activities.

However, as society moved to a more competitive and economically focused paradigm, governments have had a more influential, even if indirect role in what is to be taught and to some extent how it may be implemented in classrooms. Many of you may not see it that way but I must say that I was glad to be a teacher in the 60s and 70s and would find it less satisfying in today's educational environment.

Whether you agree with me or not I am sure you would see the point that if we are to move into a dominating political environment we can only pray that our ministers are not blinded by ideological beliefs or hobbled by sheer ignorance and arrogance.

December Lunch



Chick Carey and Brian Jarman

Members say

Geoff George

A recent visit to the “Back O’ Bourke”

“You don’t know Australia until you know Bourke”

This is a quote from Henry Lawson who was sent to Bourke by the editor of the Bulletin in 1892 to curb his heavy drinking.

I visited Bourke on a number of occasions during my role as Inspector of Schools (Personnel/Properties) and Industrial Arts whilst attached to the Western Region and was always fascinated by the area. Last year friends of ours, who also worked and lived in Bourke for many years, decided that we would revisit the area for old times sake.

Other friends also indicated an interest as some had not been further west than Bathurst! We ended up with 32 people from 74 to 90 years of age (plus a waiting list) so we had to hire a coach and driver.

This meant that I had to take on the role of tour organiser as we planned to take a week all up for the trip. After many phone calls and internet searches to organise accommodation, meals, tours etc. we set off from Forestville early one Sunday morning last September.

Lunch found us at Mount Panorama, Bathurst in Rydges Hotel on Conrod Strait, followed by a drive around the famous circuit. Our first overnight stay was in Dubbo.

We arranged the next morning to drive with a guide around the Western Plains Zoo, which is a must see if you are in Dubbo. The trip from Nyngan to Bourke went through a number of small villages that acted as railheads during the heady days of wool and grain and of course the customary 'one teacher schools'.

Most of these are now closed but we were fortunate to have a retired teacher with us who taught in some of these schools and gave a very interesting talk on his experiences as a young teacher.

Our accommodation whilst in Bourke was in excellent cabins located in a caravan park on the Darling River just out of town. Now, you might ask, what is there to see and do in Bourke over three days? My first port of call when arranging the itinerary was the very well organised 'Back O' Bourke' Information Centre.

They are situated in the recently opened 'Back O' Bourke' Exhibition Centre which showcases a world class display of interactive and visual presentations of the history of Western NSW and Bourke. The centre depicts the stories of early exploration, the poets, local bush rangers, the legends and conflicts.

Names synonymous with Bourke are Henry Lawson, Will Ogilvie, Harry 'Breaker' Morant, Captain Charles Sturt, Vincent Dowling and Fred Hollows.

Included at the Centre is a first class outdoor "Legends of the Outback" show by a local identity who tells stories and poems of the outback while he puts camels, horses, bullocks and cattle dogs through their paces in a very clever and hilarious performance. (We all agreed that he would make a fortune in Sydney!)

On one of the evenings we were dined and entertained by a local identity with "Poetry on a Plate" where we enjoyed an evening of original poems, local stories and music by the campfire. Some of the members of our group also contributed to the entertainment.

Our three days of activities included a cruise on the Darling River on a paddleboat; a visit to the historic cemetery which includes Fred Hollows grave and monument, a tour with a local guide of Bourke's many historic buildings, visits to the high tech farming for citrus fruits, jojoba and cotton including a cotton gin and view the Port of Bourke's wharf and Australia's first Lock and Weir on the Darling River.

Another highlight was a drive out to Mt Gundabooka National Park where the black soil suddenly changes to red dirt, and emus, red kangaroos and mallee ringneck parrots abound amongst arid vegetation. The fittest of us walked to view aborigine rock art in a cave situated within a lovely peaceful valley of rock formations and pools.

The return trip back home was via Dubbo with a tour of the Old Dubbo Gaol and overnight in Wellington. Our last day returning to Sydney included a conducted tour of Gulgong and Mudgee.

Everyone enjoyed the experience and was surprised at the diversity of interest in and around this part of Australia. If you are ever travelling in the north west outback of NSW, make sure that you spend some time in and around Bourke. This is the real Australia.

As a famous early Aussie writer and poet once wrote: "You don't know Australia until you know Bourke."

December Lunch



Jack Baseley

An Old Timer Writes

Anon c/o Peg Craddock

I remember the cheese of my childhood.
And the bread that we cut with a knife.
When children helped with the housework.
And the man went to work - not the wife.

The cheese never needed an ice chest.
And the bread was so crusty and hot.
The children were seldom unhappy.
And the wife was content with her lot.

I remember the milk from the billy.

With the yummy rich cream on the top.
Our dinner came hot from the oven.
And not from the fridge in a shop.

The kids were a lot more contented.
They didn't need money for 'kicks'.
Just a game with their mate in the paddock.
And sometimes the Saturday flicks.

I remember the shops on the corner.
Where a pennyworth of lollies was sold.
Do you think I'm a bit too nostalgic?
Or is it I'm just getting old.

December Lunch



Eula Guthrie with the Christmas Cake raffle prize

December Lunch



Fred Cook

Address changes

(Changes shown in Bold)

YOUNGHUSBAND Nola
PO Box 4881 Dubbo East 2830 6884 5127
nolayounghusband@clearmail.com.au

Deaths

09/02/2014 BOOTH WB William (Bill)
20 Matson Crescent, Miranda 2228

Late Breaking News

The Institute of Senior Educational Administrators (ISEA) has moved quickly to advance its proposal to mark its centenary by commissioning an authoritative history of the Institute.

Brian Powyer has advised me that the commissioned researcher is Dr Reynold Macpherson from Rotorua, New Zealand.

Alan Pratt will be the ARISSEA contact and will become a member of the three person steering/ editorial committee. This committee will meet with Dr Macpherson on Thursday 27 March 2014.

We have agreed that ARISSEA provide “in kind” support for the project. More information about the project will be shared at our AGM on May 2, 2014.

Geoff Walton.

Members are reminded that material is needed for the **August 2014 Newsletter**
Accompanying photos are most welcome,
preferably as JPG email attachments.

Copy deadline: 27th May 2014

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Have you contributed in the last 2-3 years?
If not, your ARISSEA friends may like to know
what you've been doing,
what you are thinking or
what you remember.