



# *Newsletter*

February 2017

*Institute of Retired Senior Educational Administrators Inc*

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From the President



Alan Laughlin President IRSEA 2016-17

I would like to wish each and every member of IRSEA and your families the very best for 2017.

Christmas is always demanding and I trust you had an enjoyable time. Our Christmas luncheon on 2 December was a great success with the usual good fellowship and camaraderie. We had about 40 people present.

It was wonderful to have Laurie Dicker with us from Queensland and it was good to be able to catch up with him. We had a number of people from far afield including our Treasurer, Richmond Manyweathers from Alstonville. It was also nice to have Sylvia Corish, a practicing senior educational administrator with the Department and her husband Brent.

Many thanks to John Allsopp for his organisation. Our next luncheon will be on Friday 5 May, and as usual this will be our AGM. Please make a big effort to be there and round up support from your friends in IRSEA.

As reported at our Christmas luncheon, Richmond has been busy finalising the financial status of members. This is not an easy task and has required many emails and phone calls.

Allan Mills has been updating the information held on the membership data base. Allan and incoming treasurer Ray Gillies have been working to refine and simplify the recording systems for 2017 membership.

Ray is drafting a revised 2017 membership renewal form and advice about new banking arrangements. This will be posted to you as a separate piece of advice rather than be included in the March Newsletter.

My thanks for the hard work of these wonderful people. An organisation like ours is dependent on the good will and commitment of many people and their willingness to give up so much of their time.

A couple of snippets of information. The Australian College of Educators, during 2016, made Dr Kerrie Ikin a Fellow. This is a great honour and recognised Kerrie's continued efforts in professional development for educators in ACE and the wider community.

As you know Kerri is our incoming IRSEA President for 2017-18. You may also be interested to know that ACE has its 2017 dinner at the Royal Automobile Club for Fellows and guests on 3 March. The guest speaker will be Mark Scott, the new head of the NSW Department of Education. Many of you may wish to go to this and hear from Mark.

A second piece of information; the Friends of Stewart House (FOSH) had its AGM on 17 January and they have prepared a very extensive list of social fund raising activities for 2017. We will have more detail of these in our March Newsletter, but I commend this group to you. They are mainly colleagues who were principals or other officers in the Department and FOSH provides a fine avenue for social connection.

I know many of you already are members and attend functions. Of particular note this year, Stewart House itself will be “going it alone” and running its own Race Day on 17 June at Rose Hill Racecourse, in lieu of the Stewart House Ball.

Tickets are \$160 and includes an excellent lunch, entertainment and of course the races. Stewart House is hoping for upwards of 1,000 people to attend and it would be great if IRSEA had a table.

With the 2017 school year now building momentum it is worth reflecting on those critical matters that must be confronted by Government this year.

The school funding debate continues apace. It has been reported that “elite” private school fees have gone up 20% over the last four years. Many of these schools have also been overfunded by Federal Government allocations. This cannot continue.

The Federal government is trying desperately to save money and move towards a more balanced budget, the chances of Full Gonski funding with no reductions to the private sector seems unsustainable. I believe we need to watch this carefully and put our commentary in, if it looks like public education will be short changed in this realignment.

Again international test results in Australia are slipping and NAPLAN has plateaued. Our trajectory is not positive and Governments need to address the critical issues of equity and meaningful support to overcome educational disadvantage.

An interesting year indeed for education and these are only some of the looming challenges.

In conclusion may I acknowledge the recent sad passing of a number of our esteemed colleagues: Russ Mulholland passed away on 11 August and Don Thursby on 1 October.

More recently we had further sad news with the passing of Peter Bray on 2 January and Jack Hurley on 5 January. We express our condolences to the families and friends of our colleagues.

We also wish a speedy recovery for any of our members who may be experiencing ill health.

Alan Laughlin

## December Lunch



Geoff Walton and Alan Laughlin

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## Guest Speaker

### Guest Speaker for August 2016

At our luncheon meeting of August 5 we were lucky enough to have Dorothy Hoddinott AO as our guest speaker.

Dorothy is the principal of Holroyd High School and has become a champion of the rights of refugee and asylum seeker children.

Dorothy Hoddinott AO



She was first appointed to the school in 1995 and reshaped it to meet the special needs of these very disadvantaged children. In 2014 she was awarded the Australian Human Rights Medal for her untiring work for refugees. She is also Pro Chancellor at the University of Sydney.

We were able to enjoy the story of her school and some of her reflections on the impact of assessment programs such as NAPLAN.

Holroyd is a relatively small school with a student population of about 570. Of this number some 150 are in the Intensive English Centre, and a number in a support unit. There are about 400 in the main stream school.

The school has become the favoured destination for refugee and asylum seeker children from that broad area of Sydney. An analysis of the student data underscores the extraordinary challenge that is being met.

Approximately 90% of the students are from a language background other than English, but even more significantly, 60% are from recent refugee or asylum seeker background. The students come from multiple countries including Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

Dorothy spoke of the challenge these young people face with many having seen extreme violence and been threatened themselves. Some have lost a parent or both

parents to the actions of extremists. Many have spent considerable time in detention centres on Christmas or Manus Island or Nauru.

One of the most telling statistics presented by Dorothy was that 49% of the students had been in Australia less than 3 years, some 64%, nearly two thirds of the student body, had been in the country less than 7 years.

How does a school meet these challenges? Dorothy spoke of the complete realignment of the school objectives, teaching methodology and culture. The overall themes adopted were respect and responsibility, aimed at building a culture of openness, trust, collaboration, participation and high expectations.

Dorothy had opened the school to analysis by the Grattan Institute and as a result of their report now employs some four mentor teachers and a refugee support teacher.

The school pursues a strong Quality Teaching Program with ongoing professional development. The innate ambitions of many of the students are a big plus. Although they have often been deprived of schooling in their own country they want to achieve in Australia.

It was interesting, and heartening, to hear of their achievements. In 2015 no less than 61% of HSC candidates received a first round University offer. Well above state average. Another group, some 15%, chose to attend TAFE.

This was indeed an outstanding result and a testimony to the work of the teaching staff and the exemplary leadership in the school.

Dorothy did reflect on the relevance of NAPLAN to an environment like hers. She stated that in 2015 some 50 Year 7 students sat the test, but given the recency of their arrival in Australia only 25 of these had sat for the test in Year 5.

The challenges in monitoring progress or having meaningful analysis of value added data was obvious. It was fascinating to note that of the 50, some 44% had never sat a test in their lives.

To re-emphasise the success of the school, it is worth noting that in 2015 the top ATAR was 94.5 and some three students got six band six results. Not a bad effort considering the disadvantage and dislocation these students have experienced in their lives.

The financial disadvantage the students experience has also been a challenge at the school. Many come to Australia with little money and live in family circumstances



that are extremely deprived. The Myschools website data shows over 60% of students are in the bottom 25% of the socio educational advantage scale (ICSEA).

Dorothy recounted how many students were challenged both at school for resources, and even clothing. The challenges of going to University or TAFE were also insurmountable for many.

Dorothy initiated a scholarship program from corporate and individual donations. This has been subsumed into the Public Education Foundation (PEF) under the title “Friends of Zainab”.

Zainab Kaabi was an Iraqi refugee born in Iran, who arrived in Australia in 2000 as an asylum seeker. She would have had to leave school as her Centrelink support was to be cut. Dorothy set up the first scholarship program for her and she has since gone on to achieve a double degree at University.

Many students have been supported through this program. Any IRSEA members interested in supporting students through the “Friends of Zainab” can do so through the PEF website.

Many questions were put to Dorothy, basically re the challenges in meeting the needs of such a diverse group. The meeting showed its appreciation of Dorothy for her outstanding efforts through acclamation.

Alan Laughlin

## THE FRIENDS OF STEWART HOUSE?

### WHAT IS (FOSH)?

Friends of Stewart House (FOSH) is a group of people with like-minded concern for making a difference in a child’s life. Formed over 75 years ago, FOSH’s primary purpose is to support the work of Stewart House through fundraising and volunteer ventures.

Membership has now expanded from former Department of Education employees and their relatives to encompass all those who wish to support such an iconic organisation. Members are invited to attend planned social activities for further fundraising and to volunteer their services in a variety of ways.

You can join online for as little as \$15 per year. This forms part of the contribution made available to Stewart House annually. For more information and to join today go to Stewart House's website [www.stewarthouse.org.au](http://www.stewarthouse.org.au) and follow the links from the drop-down menu Get Involved.

On our website social events will be listed and we encourage all members and friends to join us throughout the year. A calendar of events for the coming year will be published in the IRSEA Newsletter in March 2017.

BE PART OF A GREAT SOCIAL GROUP SUPPORTING SUCH A WORTHY CAUSE

#### December Lunch



Alan Rice and Peg Craddock



## December Lunch



Brian Davies and Grant Beard



Geoff Walton, Peter Robinson and Richmond Many weathers

## Editor says

It is with great pleasure that I announce a doubling of the staff of the IRSEA Newsletter, from one part time staff member (editor) to two part time staff members. The new position of Director of Photography, IRSEA Newsletter has been filled by Ray Gillies. The entire staff of the Newsletter welcomes Ray. We look forward to an immediate improvement in the standard of photographs in both the published editions and the digital versions distributed by email.



Ray Gillies

## December Lunch



Alan Pratt, George Green and Tony Re

Tony Re

“Looking Forward, Looking Back”

“Looking Forward, Looking Back” sang Slim Dusty. For those who have retired from a profession such as ours, it might be more appropriate to add an “after” so that we “Look Forward after Looking Back”. With our very many and varied experiences in education, we have much to offer the future of our society.

Upon leaving our Christmas lunch, I decided to heed the exhortations of our esteemed Journal Editor and supply him with an article for part of Page 10 whose blankness was concerning him.

During lunch, our table discussed current headlines such as “Australian students have plummeted in the latest international maths and science rankings, with countries such as Kazakhstan leapfrogging us over the past four years” (SMH 30 Nov). It was typical of the Australian media to denigrate a country about which few people know even little.

Then there was the undue emphasis on ‘rankings’, as if they told the whole story about the education of students in a particular country.

Thus my intended article was to focus on the education system in Kazakhstan with its 99.5% adult literacy rate and on the deficiencies in using ‘rankings’. This was on the Friday.

On the next day, the Sydney Morning Herald published an article on Rebecca Taylor who had gone public on the sexual abuse she had suffered at the hands of her step-father who had received an eight year jail sentence in September for his crimes against her.

I ‘looked back’ through my career and thought about the victims and survivors that I had encountered in schools. I reflected on my knowledge of the sexual abuse of children in their homes which is far more prevalent than those in the institutions investigated by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

After digesting Rebecca Taylor’s harrowing story, I decided to ‘look forward’ and sent the following letter to the editor of the SMH which was published in part on the Monday under the title “More Abuse Victims”:

The bravery of Rebecca Taylor in publicly confronting the sexual abuse by her step-father (SMH 3 Dec) has shed a thin ray of light on a scourge which many children endure regularly, and some daily.

While the work of the Royal Commission has performed a commendable and very valuable role in revealing the extent of child sexual abuse in institutions and in naming many perpetrators or those who have protected them, another Royal Commission is needed into the extent of this evil in society, especially within families.

Research shows that 30% of all females have been sexually abused at some time in their lives, usually as a child or teenager, often by a family member or a close friend of the family. Most assaults are unreported with victims having to live with the consequences for the remainder of their lives.

As the current Royal Commission appears to be giving the abused some relief from the pain they have suffered, in many instances for decades, steps must be taken without delay to establish another Royal Commission to allow others like Rebecca Taylor to lance the boil which has been hidden from public sight for far too long.

Like many of my former colleagues in education, I had the distressing experience of dealing with paedophiles who had infiltrated our schools and with some parents or carers who had abused their children sexually.

In 'looking back', I have often wondered if I could have done more to identify the perpetrators earlier.

The 30% figure emerged for me when one of my schools was involved in developing and trialling the initial Child Protection Program for New South Wales schools.

Ten teachers were in the group overseeing the development of the program and when they questioned the figure, three of them revealed they had been sexually abused.

Later I personally knew from survivors or their family members of sexual abuse committed by a respected next door neighbour, by a much-loved grandfather and by a close uncle.

I found it difficult to imagine the anguish that so many abused children endure as they go home each day not knowing whether this would be a 'safe' evening.

I did 'look forward' when I compiled a detailed submission to the Commander of the Child Protection and Sex Crime Squad.

The proposals I made were brushed aside by the police and the then Premier but, since then, similar ones have been introduced by the current government.

I 'looked back' in preparing a very detailed submission to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and did likewise in my confidential interview with one of its investigators.

I was in Armidale for ten years during the time when paedophiles had infiltrated church and school.

I knew most of them personally but, like many people in the city, except their victims, I had no knowledge of their despicable behaviour. I stressed to the investigator the difficulty in identifying a paedophile even when working closely with one.

The investigator was especially interested in the period when the Department established its Child Protection Unit and the processes the Department put into place to deal with any allegation of child sexual assault.

I 'looked back' on my experiences as a principal and a senior educational administrator in this area and could emphasise that the Department's processes to report allegations of child sexual abuse from about 1990 were clear, stringent and mandatory and that generally they were very successful, a model for other school systems.

'Looking forward', my hope has been that all institutions, not only schools, will be compelled to follow the lead of the Department.

I will continually 'look back' on Rebecca Taylor's experiences. 'Looking forward' I hope to encourage people to bring to the attention of the public and the government the extent of child sexual abuse in the community.

In doing so, survivors might follow the example of Rebecca Taylor and report the abuse they have suffered. "I've come a long way down the track. Got a long way left to go." Please assist this journey.

As for education and Kazakhstan and the use of rankings, perhaps a later article for Editor Peter's happiness.



## December Lunch



Ritchie Stevenson and John Smythe

### Members say 18 HOLES ACROSS THE NULLABOR!

Ritchie Stevenson

When Barbara and I caravanned across the Nullabor during the winter months last year, we took our clubs and enjoyed the legendary hole-by-hole golfing experience available on the Nullabor Links golf course along the Eyre Highway. Hailed as the “World’s Longest Golf Course”, the 18 holes stretch from Ceduna in the East to Kalgoorlie in the West.

We were travelling East to West. Actually a decision of some controversy! Just get any two caravaneers talking about the relative merits of the E-W route or the W-E route, and the prevailing tail-wind, the time of year, the relative cost of diesel, etc ..... and you can have a lengthy argument on your hands!

I have set out the E-W playing order of the Nullabor Links in tabular form (as any geographer must!) below:

LOCAT-ION	KM	HOLE TITLE	DIFFIC-ULTY	OVERNIGHT	INSTRUCT-IONS
CEDUNA	0	Oyster Beds	Par 5; 485m	Ceduna Caravan Park	Pick up card and pay fees at Visitors Centre



		<i>Denial Bay</i>	<i>Par 4; 370m</i>	<i>Ceduna Caravan Park</i>	<i>Do not drive on fairways!</i>
<i>PENONG</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>Windmills</i>	<i>Par 4; 260m</i>	<i>Penong Roadhouse</i>	
<i>NUNDRUO</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>Wombat Hole</i>	<i>Par 5; 520m</i>	<i>Nundroo Roadhouse</i>	<i>Eastern side of roadhouse</i>
<i>NULLABOR</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>Dingo's Den</i>	<i>Par 5; 538m</i>	<i>Nullabor Roadhouse</i>	<i>Watch the crow!</i>
<i>BORDER VILLAGE</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>Border Kangaroo</i>	<i>Par 3, 160m</i>	<i>Border Village Roadhouse</i>	<i>Tee-up near the Big Roo!</i>
<i>EUCLA</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>Nullabor Nymph</i>	<i>Par 4; 315m</i>	<i>Eucla Roadhouse</i>	<i>10 minute drive - follow the golf club signs!</i>
<i>MUNDRABILLA</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>WateringHole</i>	<i>Par 4; 330m</i>	<i>Mundrabilla Roadhouse</i>	<i>Behind the caravan park!</i>
<i>MADURA</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>Brumby's Run</i>	<i>Par 3; 125m</i>	<i>Madura Roadhouse</i>	<i>In front of the roadhouse!</i>
<i>COCKLEBIDDY</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>Eagles Nest</i>	<i>Par 4; 347m</i>	<i>Cocklebidy Roadhouse</i>	<i>End of motel units!</i>
<i>CAIGUNA</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>90-Mile Straight</i>	<i>Par4; 310m</i>	<i>Caiguna Roadhouse</i>	<i>Through tree - not clear, follow the signs!</i>
<i>BALLADONIA</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>Skylab</i>	<i>Par 3; 175m</i>	<i>Balladonia Roadhouse</i>	<i>Through scrub - beware of snakes!</i>
<i>FRASER RANGE SHEEPSTATION</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>Sheep's Back</i>	<i>Par 3; 141m</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>Follow the signs!</i>
<i>NORSEMAN</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>Ngadju</i>	<i>Par 4; 354m</i>	<i>Norseman Caravan Park</i>	<i>Follow the golf club signs</i>
		<i>Golden Horse</i>	<i>Par 4; 436m</i>	<i>Norseman Caravan Park</i>	
<i>KAMBALDA</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>Silver Lake</i>	<i>Par 4; 392m</i>	<i>Norseman Caravan Park</i>	<i>Stamp to mark card in patio!</i>
<i>KALGOORLIE</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>Golden Mile</i>	<i>Par 5; 519m</i>	<i>Norseman Caravan Park</i>	<i>Must follow dress code!</i>
		<i>CY O'Connor</i>	<i>Par 4; 356m</i>	<i>Norseman Caravan Park</i>	<i>Take card to Visitors Centre</i>
<i>NORSEMAN</i>	<i>190</i>			<i>Norseman Caravan Park</i>	<i>Finished and off to bed!!</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>1804</i>				

Some unusual placenames are listed here. However, the name of each hole and the detailed noticeboard placed at each tee gives one a pretty good idea of the local history and stories of the area. Dare I say it but one can learn a lot playing golf!

Tees are unique to the Nullabor Links course and consist of the sawn off neck of a plastic water-bottle with the cap removed to accept the resting golf ball prior to it being hit by the player!

Players may tee-up for every shot as the fairways are often uneven and broken

Denial Bay (1<sup>st</sup> hole), for example, was named by Matthew Flinders in 1802 who found that the scrub and rocks surrounding the small local bay frustrated his landing attempts by denying him entry.

Later a small town, the first in the Ceduna area was set up on the bay (with a school) in 1897. An industry developed from the original oyster beds found there – hence the name Oyster Beds (2<sup>nd</sup> hole).

A massive collection of windmills has been collected and restored near the golf course by the people in the small town of Penong. Hence the third hole played is Windmills.

The so-called “windmill warriors” have assembled and repaired rusted and damaged windmills from local farms (now replaced by solar powered pumps) as a very successful tourist attraction.

At Nundroo one plays the Wombat Hole (4<sup>th</sup> hole) – named for the large local population of Southern Hairy Nosed Wombats (2.5 million). Their isolation has shielded them from many diseases threatening this species in other parts of Australia.

The roadhouse at Nullabor (Latin for “treeless”) will direct players to a very desolate 5<sup>th</sup> hole.

No Dingo’s Den in sight but a small patch of artificial turf surrounded by saltbush and flat, scalded clay.

Border Kangaroo (6<sup>th</sup> hole) is located at Border Village. This is on the South Australia border and also has a Western Australian agricultural checkpoint – two very energetic officers identified a couple of stray potatoes left in our caravan fridge!

We played the Nullabor Nymph hole (7<sup>th</sup> hole) at Eucla. It gets its name from local legend. Apparently a young woman became lost in surrounding bush and was never found.

She learned to live with the kangaroos, and, at times was seen streaking, naked, with the kangaroos some distance outside the town. In spite of numerous search parties, no one seemed able to rescue her from such a wanton life!

This strange tale brought numbers of newspaper reporters to the town who dutifully wrote it all up. Numbers of tourists began stopping to search or join rescue parties.

In all truth it's a hoax perpetrated by professional kangaroo shooters between 1971 and 1972 - it was Christmas time, a bunch of roo shooters, shark fishermen, and other scruffy types, were sitting around the busy bar, drinking beer, and telling stories, when out of the beer came some made-up yarn about a naked woman living in the desert with the kangaroos ....!

Mundrabilla is located on the Eyre Highway and is nothing more than a roadhouse with fuel, supplies, a restaurant with takeaway facilities, limited mechanical services, and motel and caravan accommodation.

It is also a railway siding on the Indian Pacific railway line across the continent. The name Watering Hole (8<sup>th</sup> hole) attests to the shortage of water and is probably the most basic hole on the links.

It stretches across scrubby land behind the roadhouse and is notable for a deserted van (redesigned with corrugated iron) and a particularly unforgiving fairway.

Gratefully, players are permitted to tee up<sup>1</sup> every time they take a shot.

182 kilometres distant, is Madura, settled as a pastoral homestead in about 1876. Madura's hole, Brumby's Run (9<sup>th</sup> hole) gets its name from earlier history.

For many years the area was well known for producing quality polo and cavalry horses for the British Imperial Indian Army.

At the time these horses were employed in various British campaigns on India's Northwest Frontier. Known then as "Walers", these horses were bred at Madura by an ex-Army Officer who overlanded them to Eucla for shipment to foreign ports.

During World War 2 Madura was a site of importance to Australian Army engineers who were upgrading what is now known as the Eyre Highway.

The 10<sup>th</sup> hole is Eagles Nest at Cocklebiddy. The tee notice highlights one of the main attractions in the area as the Eyre Bird Observatory, which offers regular courses on bird-watching and is run by Birdlife Australia.

It features Wedgetail Eagles. In recent years Cocklebiddy has also gained an international reputation as a site for one of the world's largest cave systems.

Ten kilometres to the northwest of the roadhouse lies Cocklebiddy Cave. In 1983 a French caving expedition created history by exploring the cave to an unprecedented distance of over 6 kilometres.

At Caiguna the 11<sup>th</sup> hole is 90-mile Straight, named after the longest straight stretch of road on the Nullabor which commences just out of town.

At this point the road traverses close to the cliffs above the Great Australian Bight – about 80 to 100 metres in drop to the sea with some spectacular views of the Southern Ocean.

Because of its remoteness, some sections of the Highway here serve as emergency airstrips for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. These airstrips are signposted and have runway "piano keys" painted on the road, and turnaround bays for small aircraft.

And on to Balladonia with its Skylab Hole (12<sup>th</sup> hole):

The Skylab space research laboratory built by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) succumbed to the earth's gravitational pull in July 1979 and re-entered the atmosphere, falling in fiery chunks around Balladonia.

Over the period before its final descent the world became fascinated about where the doomed station would land.

The US President (Jimmy Carter) personally rang Balladonia roadhouse to apologise for Skylab falling on them. For only the second time in its history the National Geographic Magazine stopped its presses to include the story.

The local shire ranger (Mr David Somerville) was photographed giving the director of NASA a littering ticket, which received huge international coverage (the council later waved the fine!).

The 13<sup>th</sup> hole is called Sheep's Back and is located on the Fraser Range Sheep Station, just a few miles off the Eyre Highway.

First settled in 1872, the station was the first to be founded in the Nullabor Plain area. In the early days, shepherds moved the flocks from flat to flat before returning to the Fraser Range homestead for shearing annually.

Now aircraft are used to gather the sheep for shearing. The station's work activities allow any visitor to understand the old saying "living off the sheep's back", hence the name of the hole

The 14<sup>th</sup> (Ngadju) and 15<sup>th</sup> (Golden Horse) holes are located at Norseman. The Ngadju people are the traditional owners of the land, and players are now walking on Ngadju ground.



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It is also claimed that an early digger's horse, "Norseman", kicked up a large gold nugget on a site which was later pegged and yielded a substantial gold reef. Today Norseman, the Golden Horse, is honoured by a statue in the town's main street!

Kambalda, 130Ks North, provides the 16<sup>th</sup> hole called Silver Lake. This takes its name from an early shaft used to discover and mine nickel.

Nearby is also the huge Lake Lefroy which shimmers with salt and is also widely used for land sailing.

It is considered by many all over the world to be one of the best places to sail a land yacht due to its size and the texture of its surface. The Silver Lake golf hole is an un-grassed clay-pan with the traditional sand green soaked in sump oil to prevent the

sand blowing away.

The final two holes are Golden Mile (17<sup>th</sup> hole) and CY O'Connor (18<sup>th</sup> hole) at Kalgoorlie. This is a million-dollar course with heavily irrigated turfed fairways. A feast for the eyes after the other 16 holes!

The Golden Mile hole honours the discovery and mining of gold since 1893. Kalgoorlie-Boulder has developed into a major service hub for Western Australia's huge resource industry.

Dominated by magnificent historic architecture, its central streets provide a focus for modern cafes, restaurants and accommodation, hotels, and clubs.

Surrounded by extensive eucalypt forest, the Golden City has colourful characters and culture, world class sporting and indoor swimming facilities, traditional two-up games, and the famous Race Round.

The CY O'Connor hole is named for the engineer in charge of the design and building of the Mundaring to Kalgoorlie pipeline.

This pipeline carries fresh water from the hills on the outskirts of Perth to the eastern goldfields of Western Australia, across a distance of 560 kilometres. It took five years to build and was completed in 1903.

It is still in use today and supplies water through 8000 kilometres of pipe to almost 100,000 people and 6 million sheep throughout the goldfields and surrounding agricultural areas.

DID WE FINISH?

We purchased our score cards in the Visitors Centre in Ceduna for \$70 because we were travelling East to West.

Cards can also be purchased at the Visitor's Centre in Kalgoorlie if travelling in the opposite direction.

The course itself was designed in consultation with a professional golfer and consists of 7 holes from existing courses and 11 holes created at roadhouses and roadside stops. Newly constructed holes have tees and greens that use artificial grass, with natural desert land between.

At each roadhouse or township the score must be recorded on the card and stamped at the roadhouse to certify completion. At Kalgoorlie we presented the completed cards to receive our official Certificates of Completion.

Once or twice we saw and spoke with other people playing the course. We played during a cool and wet winter - playing in mid-summer is not to be recommended!

Social activities focus on the roadhouse – that ubiquitous institution and supplier of all things in remote areas: fuel, food, liquor, accommodation and social company!

They often act as the golf clubhouse and so display all the usual relics and trophies seen in golf clubs everywhere.

Playing the course is one way of breaking up the general monotony of travelling long distances, and learning quite a bit about this part of Australia. It's also lots of fun and our certificates are a happy reminder of some of the funny things we do when caravanning!!

Cheers Ritchie January 2017



## December Lunch



Laurie Dicker and Jack Baseley



Chris Carroll and Geoff George

Dear Peter,

I have just read the latest newsletter and at the urging of Vincent and Jennifer Delaney, I will be sending in my money for the end of year function. I had the privilege of hearing Dorothy Hoddinott speak at a conference a few years ago. She certainly is a wonderful and inspiring educator.

It is now a few days before the second anniversary of Laurie's death. Like the people mentioned in Graham Sim's article, he lived for almost 82 years and we were a few weeks short of our 60th wedding anniversary.

He was devoted to his family, and to the children in his care and the many wonderful teaching colleagues, researchers and the education community.

After his retirement, IRSEA and the people within proved a constant source of friendship, enjoyment and inspiration.

Like those elderly (definitely NOT old) people in Graham's article, his life had ups and downs, but generally he felt blessed in his family, friends and the life he was leading.

Why am I writing this? I want to express my sincere gratitude to Vincent Delany, Geoff Walton and Ian Feneley who took us to the chemotherapy at the Northern Cancer Institute and by their presence and conversation, made a very unpleasant process more bearable.

Laurie thoroughly enjoyed the 'sending out the newsletter days' and the companionship there.

So many of the IRSEA members were generous in their support. Some colleagues took him to funerals for other colleagues when he was unable to drive. These things may seem ordinary, but to us these actions cannot be praised as sufficiently or as eloquently as they should be.

The fact that Doug Swan wrote and delivered the eulogy meant a great deal to all our family. I know Laurie was involved like this for other long time friends, but when it happens to you, it is very comforting.

Two of our sons lecture at a university, one full time in Pure Mathematics and one part time in law but is a full time SC. As teachers, they say that the collegiality of the organisation of IRSEA, and the way the members care for each other and the widows and widowers left behind is inspirational. Mark and I spoke about this on Friday and we could not call to mind another organisation of this calibre.

Whatever name this organisation is known by, the members support one another, and my family and I are truly grateful for the support given to us at that time. Over the last two years I have often thought I would not have come this far without the support that was given when we most needed it. Very best wishes to you all,

Members say

Merv Blanch

Editor's request for articles

Happy birthday on the 15th, Peter, and may you be deluged with the articles that you have been begging us to provide. At 91, I am pushed to think of anything that is relevant in today's age.

Perhaps if we could find a Trump among us, some action might follow but the dunderheads we have in Canberra seem, like me, to be short of good ideas.

As it is 50 years since David Maher and I were invited "to join the staff", we are meeting in Tamworth to have a lunch in May and we are hoping John Farnsworth will join us. I doubt it will make the National News.

Best wishes to you all.

### December Lunch



Terry Burke and John Allsopp

Members say
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Jack McLean  
Room 201  
Brian King Gardens  
Robilliard Drive  
Castle Hill 2154  
Ph. 9634 6142  
8 November 2016

Dear Peter

I have just finished reading page 9 of the November 2016 Newsletter. I am now in my 36th year of retirement.

As a non-active life member I still receive the Newsletter. I appreciate and enjoy that - it keeps me informed and recalls many happy memories.

It lessens the risk of me becoming 'an isolated "ex"member'. My memories of membership are kept fresh as I read each Newsletter. My sincere thanks to all involved.

As you can see from the above I have a new address. It is a part of the Mowll Memorial Village and provides full care for Lurline and myself.

Our clan (3 children, 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren live within 5 kilometres of her so contact is consistent.

There are medical teams on site and a hospital nearby. Currently in our nineties we still enjoy 'good health'.

Good luck in your quest for copy.

All the best in your endeavours. Regards to all.

Sincerely Jack McLean

PS. Current Health status.....well into our 90s - very good.

PSS. A great granddaughter now in High School.

## DECEMBER LUNCH



Allan Mills giving the membership report

### Address changes— (Changes shown in **Bold Brown**)

ELLIOTT Jack

Room 201 **Brian King Gardens, Hilliards Drive, CASTLE HILL NSW 2154**

McLEAN Jack

Room 201 **Brian King Gardens, Robilliard Drive, CASTLE HILL NSW 2154**  
**02 9634 6142**

SINCLAIR Alan

**Rooms 110-111 Paling Court Carrington, 90 Werombi Road,**  
**GRASSMERE NSW 2570**



## Deaths

1/10/2016 THURSBY M D (Don)  
P.O. Box 619  
TWEED HEADS NSW2485

2/1/2017 BRAY P J (Peter)  
15 Marshdale Rd  
SPRINGFIELD NSW 2250

5/1/2017 HURLEY J L (Jack)  
52 Morandoo Ave,  
MOUNT KEIRRA NSW 2500

New material is needed for the  
April 2017 Newsletters

What interests you?  
Chances are that it will also  
interest some other members

You may not be interested in Golf,  
I am not!

but I found Ritchie Stevenson's article  
'18 Holes across the Nullabor'  
not only interesting but also entertaining.

Accompanying photos are most welcome.  
Preferably as uncompressed JPG email attachments.  
(straight from your camera)

Copy deadline: 15th March 2017

Peter Robinson,  
Newsletter Editor,  
3 Corunna Ave,  
NORTH ROCKS NSW 2151  
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