

BKTC Graduates & Friends Assoc. Inc.

Newsletter

Number 1, May 2004

From Gail Halliwell, Editor

Greetings readers and thank you to all those who provided such positive feedback on our last issue. The BKTC Newsletter aims to bring into contact graduates and friends of BKTC who have joined the Association *because they continue to value* what that institution promoted from 1911-1981.

We hope the Newsletter encourages you to reflect on and share stories about how your involvement with BKTC entered into your work with and for young children and their families.

Look for the Newsletter on the internet!!!!

<http://www.alumni.qut.edu.au/voluntee/chaptersandc/bktc.jsp>

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**BKTC Graduates
& Friends
Assoc. Inc.
A Chapter of
QUT Alumni**

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Association events

Tuesday 20 July. The Jean Ferguson O.A.M. Memorial lecture.

Sub-Committee Chair Jennette Lavis O.A.M.

This year the lecture will be presented by Megan McNichol, Past President, Isolated Children's and Parent's Association, Australia. Megan is a BKTC graduate. In 2003 she was the recipient of a QUT Outstanding Alumni Award in recognition of her career achievements for children and families. The venue for the lecture will again be the Parliamentary Annexe. The program commences at 6 p.m.

President Bill Deans will be travelling from Boggabilla for this event. If you would like to travel with him from a spot along the highway, contact us by email or post.

Saturday 30 October: Annual Graduates & Friends Reunion.

Sub-Committee Chair Denise Sherwood

The October Reunion will again take place at the C&K Building, Newmarket, starting at 2 pm, followed by the Association AGM. This date and venue honours a graduate of BKTC, Peggy Banff. For a number of years, in her role as President of Queensland Children's Week Association, Peggy invited BKTC graduates to join her for a reunion on the last Saturday in October.

2011 ???

Sub-Committee Chair Angela Hack

The year 2011 marks the one hundred year anniversary of the formation of BKTC. It is our intention that much of the work the Association is undertaking now, will feature in any celebration we are able to promote for 2011. Early in 2005, we hope to put some ideas to QUT via the Alumni for a commemorative celebration for this founding member of what is now a very large University.

Put on your creative hats – suggest ideas!

About Our Membership

Membership Sub-Committee Chair Margaret Sear

It is encouraging to see our membership growing. There are now 85 members, an increase of 22 since our last newsletter. 4 members are 1930s graduates, 3 graduated in the forties, 6 in the fifties, 15 in the sixties, 49 in the seventies and 6 in the last two years before amalgamation. We have 2 'friends' who share fond memories of their associations with work of the College.

A membership form is enclosed should you wish to spread word of the Association to colleagues and encourage them to join.

A query to financial members: We are considering publishing a list of members (*eg. Gail Halliwell 1974*) in our next Newsletter. If this presents a problem for you please contact us.

VALE- Ursula Hastie 27 June 1925- 23 Feb 2004 *[prepared by Jennette Lavis]*

Ursula was a member of the BKTC Graduates & Friends Association. Although too ill to attend the 2003 AGM, Ursula made sure her apologies were recorded. She was regularly involved in previous graduate re-unions.



Isa and Ursula at an October Re-union in 1997

Ursula is remembered with affection by her colleagues, students and friends. BKTC President, Bill Deans, remembers her fondly as a mentor to him and to other students of his era.

A graduate of Sydney Kindergarten Teachers College in Waverley, Ursula taught in inner Sydney city areas such as Ultimo, where poverty was rife. She came to Queensland as a consequence of a request from the Canberra director of the Australian Pre-School Association that she join the staff of the Brisbane Lady Gowrie Child Centre. Here she met and worked with Jean Ferguson, then director of the Centre.

Ursula met Alan Hastie in Brisbane and they married in 1949. She remained as teacher at Lady Gowrie until 1950 when she left to start her family. By 1969 Ursula was mother to Elizabeth, Lesley, Peter and Susan.

In the latter part of 1969 she undertook a six months post-graduate evening course at the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers College. The BKTC principal in 1970 was Miss Hazel Harrison and the senior lecturer was Jean Ferguson. The course director was Dr Josephine Palmer from New York.

In 1970 she became a tutor at BKTC in Child Development and Early Childhood Education to early childhood students. For many years Ursula also undertook practice teaching supervision working with children in kindergartens, state preschools and the early years of primary school. She was always very involved in the field and set high standards for herself and students.

In her retirement Ursula was an active member of the Child Watch Committee of AECA (now ECA) Old Branch.

A 40th Year Celebration

by Jan Carnegie

1963 was a very good year, or so we, the BKTC graduating students thought – as we moved away from the sheltered halls of the ‘Old House’ at 130 Victoria Park Rd (the last group to complete studies there) – and out to share our talents among Australia’s preschool population. Actually it was beyond Australia that we spread for many of us had secured a scholarship with a bond to teach in Papua New Guinea, the Northern Territory and ACT.

So we dispersed to engage in our chosen careers.

Some of us stayed in Brisbane. Over the years our paths took us to many centres and a huge range of professional and personal experiences. Families grew, travel brought adventures, but the local girls retained contact. Whenever we met – often irregularly – we did not change (well not much!).

Recently, realising we were getting older (judging by our children’s ages, grandchildren arriving and work becoming less in a formal way), we began to do lunch once a year. This has grown to at least four times a year when the ‘little band’ celebrated birthdays or other significant events.

During one such lunch, realising we were approaching the 40th year, we took up a challenge. “Let’s find those other girls in the famous photo of the group taken on the steps of 130 Victoria Park Rd”.



As a group we had moved and moved and so the task of linking up the 20 took quite a bit of sleuthing. The date was set for 8 November 2003, a central venue chosen and enquiries began. Amazingly, someone had an idea where someone was and so the letters began to flow, ending with 'if you know where .. is, please pass on this message.'

And it worked - for all but 4 of our graduates. We gathered Ann Brayne from Bowral, Janet Howard-Smith came from Melbourne, Betty Springer came from Townsville, Julie Smythe from Sydney. Unfortunately, Henri Chapman in Canberra, Ruth Webb from Fitzroy Crossing WA and Janette Kuhl in Singapore did not make this reunion but sent along updates of their past 40 years.

Jackie Thorburn is almost local, residing in Bribie Island and the rest of us, Lee Corrigan, Jill Trewern, Eleanor Nash, Megan Rees, Mary Cousins, Bev Olssen, Lily Chung, Betty Hutton and me, Jan Carnegie were in Brisbane. Two staff were included - Audrey Wise and Anne Russell.

November 8 was a day we will all remember. Our meal, though delicious, was second to the chatter, the laughs, the photos and the 'remember when ..'. And 'you haven't changed' was I think a pretty honest response.



The day flew. The noise level was high. Equally the group photos flashing to record us – now 40 years on. And the promises we made ‘we won’t wait another 40 years!!

We all committed to paper an assignment which began ‘in the past 40 years ... Assignments were collected from all to be shared with present details, addresses etc. so we don’t lose touch again. [Jan has donated a copy of this very valuable collection of ‘assignments’ to the Association archives. Look for it on display at the Memorial Lecture in July.]

If any other group is thinking of their college days, do what we did GET TOGETHER. Renew and enjoy the friendships made at BKTC. It’s a great experience.

From A New Member

The following email was welcome feedback on our last Newsletter:

Dear Graduates & Friends,

While visiting our daughter at Christmas 2003, I was given your latest Newsletter to read. I found it very interesting and will send off my application for membership today. Jackie [Koroglu], our daughter, has been a Preschool teacher for 22 years. She now teaches at Arundel Preschool.

I was Ruth Andress and am now Ruth Lightbody. I graduated from BKTC in 1946. I boarded at the College for 3 years 1944-46 and have wonderful memories of those far off years. In 1973 I was appointed Teacher-in-Charge of the first state preschool in the Wide Bay district. Sunbury Preschool celebrated its thirtieth anniversary last year and I felt honoured to be invited to cut the cake.



I'm sending you a CD with a photo of the 1946 Graduates - taken at the ball held at Lennons after the Graduation Ceremony, In the back row left to right you will find Gwyneth French, Joan Wilcox, Heather Brown, Leah James, Edna Mauch, Lois Purvis, Audrey Merrill, Margaret Brown, Shirley Russell, Gwyneth Allan-Jones, Alix Thomson. Front row - Althea Quinn, Phillipa Murphy, Jean Carter, Miss Faddis (Principal), Katherine Midgley, Merle Philp, Dorothy Bilbrough. Absent from the photo were Iris Bainbridge, Joyce Bytheway, Ruth Andress.



Graduation Group 1946

I have also sent photos taken during my years at College. They are small and rather indistinct, but very precious nevertheless. Today, I phoned Kay Webb who also lives in Maryborough. She was Kay Savage, a graduate in 1960. Her mother, Dorothy Savage [nee Nicholls] graduated in 1932 and her aunt Catherine Nicholls graduated some years earlier. Dorothy, now Lady Savage, lives in a Retirement Village in Brisbane.

I worked with Pat Gibney, who is in one of the photos in the Newsletter when Jean Ferguson was the director at Lady Gowrie. Of course, no need to say how much I have always admired Jean. Penny Field lived at College while I was there and Ruth Trigg attended lectures. Jean Spearritt's [nee Carter], one of the 1946 year graduates, has been very involved with Kindergarten education in NSW for many years.

Again, thank you for the nostalgic trip that I enjoyed due to Edna Irwin's story and photographs. I wish you all the best and trust you will be successful in recording the history of BKTC. I met so many inspired and inspiring people connected with Kindergartens. Looking forward to hearing from you again.

Very sincerely, Ruth Lightbody.

Reports From BKTC Committees

SECRETARY

Cathy O'Connor Executive Committee

Thank you to everyone who contacted us by mail and email. I appreciate your patience in waiting on replies.

All posted mail is collected at least once a week. When necessary it is then passed on to the committee person who is best able to give a response, or when necessary it is taken for discussion at an executive meeting. Occasionally this takes time – the Executive members live distances apart and have a variety of diverse responsibilities.

Email is answered as soon as it is opened to let you know that we have received it. A reply is sent as soon as I have the information requested or have located the person who needs to get back to you.

I am looking forward to hearing from more members so keep the contacts flowing.

ARTWORKS

Anne Russell, Chair, Art Collection Sub-Committee

One of the interesting customs at BKTC for many years was for graduates to donate artwork to the College. Many remember fondly the pieces they lovingly chose and saw in place when they visited their College. We believe a written history about this custom and the artefacts that were assembled would be interesting reading.

Tracing records of BKTC artworks is an interesting but frustrating exercise. At the time of the amalgamation of BKTC with BCAE and later BCAE with QUT, the larger institution did not adequately maintain records of artefacts acquired. Also, it seems that when the 'old building' at 130 Victoria Park Rd was demolished in the early 1960s some works were sold by auction.

So, graduates who remember what their group donated please provide us with information, eg. 1956 grads gave a Starkey & Christoe music cabinet about one m high with small brass plaque attached. We wonder where it is now. Any artworks you can recall or have seen in recent times – please tell us.

ARCHIVES

Rosalie Raciti, Chair, Archives Sub-Committee

Thank you Christine Larkin for sending a copy of your 1979 graduation ceremony list. This year we are hoping to sponsor celebrations for graduates of years ending in '4' – 1934, 1954, 1964, 1974. If you want to make the October get together a time of celebrating your graduation year please contact me. We'd be delighted to help by assembling photos and other memorabilia.

Advocacy 2004

Gail Halliwell

A draft letter putting forward an Association view on the Preparing for School project was circulated with our last issue. We were heartened by positive responses and suggested improvements received – *the stance taken on teachers' work with families has led me to renew my membership (thanks Margaret) – a little disappointed with terms like behaviour management, surely our aim is more positive (Janet I hope you approve of the changes made in response to this feedback).*

The revised letter was sent to the Minister for Education and the Arts with copies to a number of advocacy groups. Acknowledgements were received from the Premier's Office and responses from groups are still being received. Extracts are provided here. They show that our emphasis on the importance of providing the conditions where teachers are able to work effectively with families has been noted and endorsed as important. We hope this encourages each one of you to keep emphasising an often misunderstood and overlooked aspect of teacher's work in early childhood programs. It is when many voices are raised, promoting the same values about practice, that governments are forced to take notice.

8 March. Tony McGruther, State President, Qld Association of State School Principals Inc. [QASSP]

I acknowledge receipt of your letter The issues raised are applauded by our Association and indeed are well embraced within a Position Paper and Budget Submission prepared by our Association. I believe both papers will only serve to support your letter.

QASSP has identified the need for an international standard of provision for the preparatory year to support the integrity of the early years curriculum. We also understand that the trials presently being conducted have been most successful due significantly to the standard of facilities and the curriculum expertise of the teachers involved, many of whom are pre-school trained teachers. We attach a copy of our Budget Submission which we believe establishes standards that are both reasonable and imperative to the success of the preparatory year.

*We note your concern re the necessary renewal of curriculum in the early years of primary school **particularly in relation to authentic engagement with families** (our emphasis). Our position in relation to facilities, teacher aide allocation and ongoing professional development in the early years is directly related to this issue. You can be assured that state primary principals are very well aware of the 're-conceptualisation' that is required to make the preparatory year part of an ongoing developmentally appropriate early years program for 4-8 year olds in our schools.*

Finally, our Association is encouraged by your representation to the Minister and trust that our joint and continuing advocacy will indeed establish a world class model for early years education in Queensland.

Email gassp@qut.edu.au for further information about the Budget Submission referred to above.

10 March. Lawrence Springborg, Leader of the Opposition.

Thank you very much for your letter of 3 March ... Whilst supportive of the introduction of a 13th year of schooling in Queensland, I, too, share your concerns about the capacity of the current Queensland government to provide both adequate funding for the introduction of the 13th year, and also adequate physical and human resources to ensure such a project is a success. Given the time frame in which the proposed introduction .. is to occur, there is a real risk that short cuts will be employed, both in the provision of the necessary school resources, and in the qualification and training of the teachers necessary to be employed to enable the 13th year to be introduced. This is a matter which I will be monitoring closely to ensure that the government does properly implement announced policy.

18 March. Julie-Ann McCullough, President, Queensland Teachers' Union.

Thank you for forwarding a copy of .. The QTU only supports the introduction of the thirteenth year of schooling provided that it is adequately funded and resourced. Our position in relation to a number of aspects of the Prep Year proposal is outlined in the enclosed QTU Position Statement ... The Union recognises that early childhood teachers work closely with family and community members in assisting students to learn in a supportive and friendly environment. (our emphasis)

7 April. Di Loddon, State Secretary, Qld Council of Parents & Citizens Associations Inc.

Thank your for the copy of ... and your suggestions and efforts to ensure a high quality program for 4 to 5 year old Queensland children. A recent meeting of the State Executive members of QCPCA resolved to support the action of your association and hope that we may be able to discuss these issues further with you (our emphasis) in the future.

6 April. Anna Bligh MP, Minister of Education and Minister for the Arts.

Thank you for your letter ... I appreciate the support expressed .. for the introduction of the preparatory year. I also acknowledge your concern that a quality program must be adequately resourced. As you indicate, the preparatory year initiative will involve substantial costs, including facilities, equipment, human resources and professional development. Currently, the Department is refining costings for implementation in light of the schools facilities audit conducted late last year, enrolment data and the decision to implement universally in 2007.

As part of the planning for implementation, guidelines used in the Preparing for School trial and feedback from the schools will inform the policies and standards relating to the provision of the preparatory year. These guidelines, including the educational design brief which will guide the building of new facilities and the upgrade of existing facilities, draw on international and Australian standards for early childhood programs. The focus is on the features of a learning environment that support the objectives of the play and inquiry based curriculum.

The provision of facilities is a major focus of the implementation and funding for this must be efficiently and equitably managed; however, the statement that 'traditional classrooms may suffice' is not accurate. The range of 'classrooms' across the State is enormously varied. It is anticipated that where existing facilities are appropriate, for example suitably located preschools, these will be used for preparatory classes. In schools without facilities, building will be provided. However, in schools where existing buildings are available; these will undergo various upgrades to ensure they are appropriate for preparatory classes, The intention is to provide the highest quality possible to ensure that children's educational experiences are not compromised.

With respect to professional preparation, in particular the point you make about working with families, I agree that parent involvement and building a sense of community contributes significantly to children's engagement with learning and formal schooling. Partnerships with parents and carers are significant component of the draft (our emphasis) Early Years Curriculum Guidelines being used in the ... trial. ... Should you have further questions in relation to the .. trial, I invite you to contact Ms Anne-Marie Boyle, Principal Advisor, Strategic Implementation Branch on 07 3237 0765.

NOTE: The letter we sent is enclosed with the Newsletter. The Executive is meeting soon to plan follow up action regarding this area of advocacy.

NOTE: Another advocacy area that members might consider is a public response to the articles based on the trial evaluations that were published recently in The Courier Mail.