



Birkonians Australia
Association

NEWSLETTER

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From the Editor

I am Tony Moody, ex Birkenhead School, and now a vigneron in Orange, NSW. I have offered to take on the occasional job of putting together a newsletter for our loose and woolly Association, of survivors of Birkenhead Institute, Birkenhead High School, Birkenhead School, and Birkenhead Park High (boys n' girls) who live south of the Timor Sea and west of Tahiti – ie Anzac territory.

It will only work on two conditions:

- I get contributions (news of good ole Birkenhead, expats-in-Aussie-whinges, fun-things-I-just-did, meetings with other BAAs etc)
- We develop a good wide mailing list for alumni of all schools (what about Yozzers and St Anselms?) which I am happy to keep **EMAIL only**, and mail will all be sent bcc, for privacy sake.

All due recognition should be made to John Jordan (BI) who started this initiative some years ago, but who, with his typewriter ribbon, and stamp licking tongue, have earned a rest. Well done John!

So, please, if you can add to my list, please email me other addresses. And to avoid the risk of us all dying off quickly, please also suggest some younger qualifiers!

While I write this there is commentary of the Waratah-Hurricane match on the ABC. Oh, Kiwi friends, do you reckon Kiwi commentators deliberately accentuate their accents when they know Australia is listening?

*“He just run **suxty** metres!”*

*“Soleolo just stamped on Takiri’s **lift** elbow!”*

*“The pass went in front of **hum**”*

From Pauline Killip (née Bradshaw)

Birkenhead Girls Grammar School Old Girls Association Reunion.

On 4th October 2008 my sister who lives in Kyabram, Victoria, and I travelled to the U.K. to attend, among other things, the above Association's Centenary celebrations.

The reunion was held at the Prenton Golf Club and attended by 92 Old Girls. It was a highly successful evening though the one big flaw was that we were not given any name tags. It would have been very helpful to know who was who -particularly their maiden names. People change considerably over 50 -60 years (*oh, really? Ed.*) so I'm sure there would have been people there I had known but did not recognize. Pity - it was a long way to travel and not meet anyone I knew at School

One of the Committee had made a beautiful cake and the raffle included a water colour of the School, items of crystal, including a small clock, and even the vases from each table were given as prizes-No, I did not win anything!

While we were there we made an appointment to tour the School. Fortunately the old building- is still intact with modern additions in the form of a 'talking' elevator, a mainly glass reception area, an enormous canteen and large computer rooms. Also there are now male pupils (what would Miss Howell think of that?!). The gym and assembly hall are still there as are the wall boards with the names of all the Head Girls painted in gold lettering. Those were the days!

Pauline Killip (née Bradshaw)

Short trip to Merseyside, September 2008 – Chas Griffin

In September 2008 I was in Merseyside briefly, visiting my sister in Claughton Village. How do you park in UK streets these days? They are so narrow! I had no time to catch up with school contacts, except to visit Chas Griffin down in Llandysul, Pembrokeshire.

Chas and I together learned how to shoot sheep humanely with Bren guns on CCF camp at the Holcombe Moor range.

Since then he has deserted teaching in Nottingham to set up (20 years ago) an organic small holding in far SW Wales, and written terribly funny books about the experience – I recommend them. Check his website:

<http://www.thirdleafbooks.co.uk/>

“Scenes from a Smallholding” and “More Scenes from a Smallholding” – there are extracts on the website.

Anyway, he was someone I had to visit, and as Llandysul is only 223km from Claughton Village – well, I thought, that’s like Orange to Narromine, ‘bout 2 and a half hours – will get there for lunch and drive back in the evening.

Ho Ho. Driving in Wales? They see you are a saesneg and throw in front of you:

- Little old ladies driving slowly to see their friends;
- Council front end loaders;
- Bloody great RVs driven by other saesnegs;
- Tractors pulling loads of hay.

I arrived as the pallid sun was setting over Cardigan Bay, and Chas smiled “Didn’t think you’d make it by lunch” – but instead enjoyed a massive vegetarian risotto, and hours of stories... leaving in the morning to drive the indirect route back via Bala. But, Wales.....

I recommend those books!

Well, I guess we are all feeling rather numb after the events in Victoria. I sincerely hope that none of you have been touched. Believe it or not, just as I had finished listening to the ABC coverage on Wednesday morning, the phone rang – a lady in Sydney, National Parks Association “Did I want to adopt a Fairy Penguin?” Doh.

So, any content for future newsletters, any new contacts – please send them!

Indecent plug: check www.moodyswines.com.au

Another plug:

Ian Bumphrey’s excellent series of photo histories of Birkenhead – I have several, all fantastic.

<http://www.yesterdayswirral.co.uk/index2.html>

And we can circulate any web sites!

All the best

Tony Moody, 14 February 2009