



St Mary's Old Boys' Newsletter



November 2016

Dan McErlean
12 Werona Street
Sunnybank Qld 4109
Dear Old Boys

Bryan McSweeney
email: julieandb@iprimus.com.au

Coming events include our Pre-Christmas meeting which will be held at noon on Friday 18th November 2016 at the Queensland Rail Institute rooms located beside the “**Deck on Edward**” Café which can be found on the corner of **Edward and Turbot Streets** beside Central Station.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

To assist with CATERING could you please advise Dan McErlean if you intend to come and provide your luncheon preference. We have a limited menu of Fish & Chips, Beef Burger & Chips, or Toasted Sandwiches & Chips, with a few other options. Please advise Dan of your preference so we can advise the Café staff prior to our arrival.

On Friday 2nd December 2016 there will be another of the popular luncheons on the Sunshine Coast at the Headland Golf Club on Golf Links Road, Buderim at 12 noon.

As 2016 draws to a close, Old Boys wish to pay special tribute to our T.B.O.B.A President, Joe Guerrini and his Executive – James Dixon, Greg Butler, Tom Vonhoff, Paul Canning, Greg Manthey and Wayne Peters.

Our thanks also to Kevin Killoran, who attended the college in the 1940’s for taking up Life Membership.

As November is the month of the “Holy Souls” please remember in your prayers a number of Old Boys, Christian Brothers, Priests and Friends of the College recently deceased:

- **John Quinn** – (Year 12, 1971) husband of Yvonne and father of Caitlin & Matthew,
- **Andrew O’Dwyer** – (1946-1954) husband of Mary Lou, father of Marnie, Edward, Jane, Mark and Caroline,
- **Doug Coonan** – (1946 Scholarship) husband of Annette, father of Greg, Darren, and Victoria,
- **Bill Oliver** – (1944-1947) husband of Roma, father of Patsy (Hayward), Wendy (Exelby), Jackie and Teresa (RIP),
- **John Keightley** – (1949-1955) husband of Maria (Cronin), father of Paul, Harry (RIP), Jim and Annice,
- **Pat Peut** – wife of the late Ron Peut,
- **Sharon Peach** – wife of Mark Peach, mother of Jake & Kurt, daughter of Lindsay Fox and sister of Andrew and Matthew.

There are a number unwell or recovering from surgery including, **Dr Keith Wilkinson, Tim Coonan, Colin Green, Trevor Muller, Tom & Daphne Hutchinson, Bill McErlean, Reg Taylor, Joe Short, Philip Stephens, Bob Sullivan,** and **Mrs Kathleen Horne.**

“Coming Events”

18 th November 2016	Brisbane TBOBA Sub Branch Meeting at 12 noon – Queensland Rail Institute, cnr. Edward and Turbot Streets beside the “ Deck on Edward Café ”
2 nd December 2016	TBOBA Sunshine Coast meeting at the Headland Golf Club on Golf Links Road, Buderim at 12 noon. Contacts: Bernie Murphy (54780742), Terry Murphy (54564340), or Redmond Byrne (54776705)

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T.B.O.B.A. (Brisbane Sub-Branch) Meeting – 16th September 2016

Present

Apologies

Bryan McSweeney (Brisbane Sub-branch President) John Bagget Nev Card Nat Chandler Brien Dunne Terry Gesch Rolly Griffin John Hagan Doug Lee	Pat Mullins Jim Long Dick Lynch Dan McErlean Justin McErlean Peter McMahon Pat Stringer Graham Swenson Kerry Taylor Glen Wiedman	Brother Barry Buckley (AM) Fr Paul Chandler Fr Tyrone Deere Frank Adamson Laurie Atzeni (Hon.) Darryl Baker Bernie Collins Noel Cronin Jack Davis (Hon) Frank Deighton John Drew Alan Duncan Les Duncan Graham Ehler Des Franklin Tim Hagan Merv Henson	Tom Hutchinson Peter Kennedy Barry Kuhnemann Jim Mullins Pat Mullins Bernie Murphy Terry Murphy Rod McDonald Chris McMahon John Noonan Reg Oliver John O'Neil Martin O'Sullivan Jack Parker Reg Taylor
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 **Lawn Bowls** 

The second match in our annual Old Boy's InterCity series for the "Kevin Lee Memorial Shield" was held on Sunday 9th October 2016 at the North Toowoomba Lawn Bowls Club. Our special thanks go to the organisers of these events held for the past fourteen years between Toowoomba and Brisbane Old Boys in a true college sporting spirit. Particular credit must go to **Eric Howe, John Wilson, Ron Jones, Laurie Blacka, Terry Gesch and Gordon Robertson** and to the Bowls Clubs for catering for our events. We also thank our sponsors in Brisbane, **Holy Cross Funerals**, and in Toowoomba, **Heritage Funerals**.

Those participating in the event on 9/10/2016 were;

Toowoomba – **Al Pal, G Andersen, T Conley, P Dilleen, Ron Jones, G Kelly, Cameron King, Justin McErlean, John Mullen, Reg Murphy, Merv Otto, G Gray, M Tewes, and J Wilson.**

Brisbane – **L Blacka, B Collins, B Corcoran, G Flynn, C Flynn, T Gesch, Leo Jones, Dinny Madden, C Peek, G Robertson, R Jendra, L Fitzgerald, L Reis, and Mrs L Mulhall.**

Best on the day were **T Conley, J Mullen, and G Gray** for Toowoomba and **Greg Flynn, Terry Gesch, and Chris Flynn** for Brisbane.

On the bell Toowoomba led Brisbane by 32 shots (93-61) and although being behind after the Stafford match on 10/04/2016 by 24 shots, Toowoomba won the two match series this year by 8 shots when scores were aggregated.

Annual Membership Fee (\$10.00) for Calendar Year 2017 is now due / or

Life Memberships are available (Fee \$100.00)

Cheques for Membership should be made payable to the "Toowoomba Brothers Old Boy's Association"

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**Cheques as donations towards the Indoor Sports Complex should be made payable to
'Br. Baptiste O'Sullivan Building Fund'.**

They are fully Tax Deductible and will be receipted.

Bill Oliver (15/10/1932 to 6/10/2016)



Vale Bill Oliver: Successful betting plunges, football memories, a career in the DPI and some fiercely competitive family sporting contests were recalled when the life of Bill Oliver was celebrated on Friday October 14

at St Mary's Catholic Church Kingaroy.

Bill died just short of his 84th birthday. He was a towering South Burnett figure in primary industries, sports administration and horse racing and a much-loved family man.

Bill, his wife Roma and their four girls moved from Biggenden to Wondai in 1968.

Despite spending stints in Toowoomba, Brisbane and Maroochydore, Bill and Roma's true homeland was the South Burnett, to which they retired in 1991.

He was a passionate rugby league administrator at a time the South Burnett was one of the most prominent nurseries for footballing talent in the state. He was made a life member of both the South Burnett and Wide Bay rugby leagues and managed the Queensland side in 1975.

He had a lifetime love of horse racing and was the on-course caller at South and Central Burnett tracks through the 1970s and early 1980s.

He was also a prominent figure in the Department of Primary Industries, where he worked in the Dairy sector from 1962 to 1985, before switching to the Queensland Fisheries, where he helped launch a scheme to stock major freshwater storage dams with fish fingerlings in the mid-1980s.

Former long serving Wondai Shire Mayor Percy Iszlaub AM said Bill Oliver's foresight changed the fortunes of dairy producers in the district.

"It was quite remarkable what Bill did with the dairying industry. He revolutionised it," Iszlaub said.

"A few farmers told me the procedures Bill advocated for almost doubled their production.

"Later with the fisheries, he introduced fingerlings into the dams which gave us a vital recreational distraction and lifted tourism, something that continues to this day."

Bill Oliver played a key role in luring the touring English rugby league team to play a game against Wide Bay in Wondai on their 1970 tour.

"It gave local football fans the chance to see a top international side up close. Bill organised a formal dinner after the game and the English players had a ball," Iszlaub said.

"Sometime later there was a report that filtered back from England how the highlight of their tour was visiting this little town called Wondai."

Brisbane Broncos Chairman Dennis Watt, who started both his rugby league and journalism career in the South Burnett, described Bill Oliver as an administrator "ahead of his time."

"He was an architect and driver of rugby league during the halcyon days of the game in the region and a passionate advocate for local players," Watt said.

The competitive instincts Oliver had in his working life were also evident on big family occasions. During one memorable Easter rugby league contest, 'Grandad Bill' returned to the afternoon drinking session dripping with blood after coming off second best with a garden of rose bushes and a gravel road.

While rugby league remained an interest in his life, it was racing where Bill's greatest passion lay. Close friend Rick Humphries recalled a number of orchestrated 'plunges' over the years. "Bill would plan them meticulously, often with runners trained by (fellow close friend) Barry Green," Humphries said.

"He would line a number of us up to go to different bookies. He would stand in the middle of the betting ring and the signal for us to go was when he lifted his hat. Some landed, others didn't, but gee we had a great time doing it."

Bookmaker Wayne Gannon can remember many punting duels with Oliver.

"He was a good judge and a punter I respected highly," Gannon said. "Not much got passed him. He was very hard to beat."

For many years, Bill Oliver wrote the 'Turf Topics' column in the South Burnett Times and mentored callers like Ross Stanley, who still broadcasts today. Bill's love of racing remained until the end. One of his last treasured gifts was a cap of the great race mare Winx, which hardly left his head in his final weeks.

Bill's eldest daughter Teresa died tragically in 1971, but he is survived by his wife Roma, daughters Patty, Wendy and Jackie, nine grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Bill's daughter Wendy has provided us with a snapshot of Bill's life;

My father was a humble man and would have been surprised so many people cared enough to attend today. And then he would have said, "Right let's get this show on the road"

This is the Bill Oliver we knew and loved. Dad was a smart man but not at all worldly.

Who else would be on a tour of the Colosseum in Rome and look around and say to the very patriotic tour guide, 'ever think of fixing this place up?' And then, "All your buildings are dilapidated and could do with a good coat of paint" and later check that the taxi driver could read all the road signs as they're all in Italian- and to top it off "Where's your race track?" Bill was tough, competitive and determined. He enjoyed telling stories about his school days at the Christian Brothers in Toowoomba. He revelled in telling us he got double the cuts because he refused to cry or even flinch.

Dad was innovative and his initiatives, especially in his work and sport administration, were ground breaking in the 60s and 70s. He had the ability to connect with anyone and everyone- It is a testament to his nature that he formed so many lasting friendships with people from all areas of life. When he was in the DPI, he spearheaded the introduction of dairy discussion groups in the South Burnett. He believed in the value of team work, forging relationships with economists, agronomists and farmers. Together, they developed a Dairy Accounting Scheme which resulted in an unprecedented increase in dairy production. In Toowoomba, Dad organised the first Qld Dairy Seminar. 3000 dairy farmers from all over the world attended.

Dad used these same skills in Administration of South Burnett and Wide Bay Rugby League. My father loved a challenge and hated NO for an answer. He persuaded the Cronulla Sharks including several internationals to play a match against SB in Wondai. A highlight of his football career was organising the Great Britain Test side to play in Wondai. The team landed in a private jet at Wondai Airport and the QRL president was astounded the airstrip wasn't sealed. Dad simply replied, "You didn't ask me."

My father had a keen sense of social justice. Growing up, I never remember a bad word being spoken about others in our home. Two conversations stand out for me. Dad believed in equal opportunity for women and encouraged us to pursue careers. Marion Trunks told me she loved Dad because he was the first

administrator to include the wives and families. My second conversation was with Eric Law, a talented footballer in the 70s, now an elder in the Cherbourg community. There was still racial segregation in hotels and only the white players were permitted inside to eat their meals. Eric told me Bill made it clear to the proprietors that unless all his players could come inside none of them would. And from then on, the team ate together.

He loved country music especially Johnny Cash and Slim Dusty. He performed at concerts and family singalongs but his best performances were reserved for us, and later with his grandchildren perched on his knee, he would delight in singing Old Mc Donald complete with the best barnyard sounds around.

This may come as a huge shock to most of you....Horse racing was Dad's passion. He grew up in a home next to Clifford Park Race Track in Toowoomba, so he'd perch himself in the camphor laurel tree and call the races. He told us he was excellent with figures because he ran a book at school on the Melbourne Cup as soon as he could add up. He was a jockey until he grew too tall, a race caller, a racehorse owner, a radio commentator, newspaper columnist and a punter. The races were a familiar sound around our house on Saturday afternoon but none of his daughters shared this passion. Now it will be the silence on Saturdays that is deafening.

My father had many contradictions. One was his love of flowers, in particular his roses. He had 100s of roses and knew them all by name. Many people thought he was joking when he said he had to get Mr Lincoln or Barbara Streisand ready for the show. But Dad, the man at home on the back of a bull or tearing someone apart on the football field would then earn himself Champion bloom of the show. Dad could also be naïve. I remember one day when Dad took each of the girls at the Kingaroy DPI a big bunch of roses. At dinner, that night I remember him saying, "I know you're supposed to give girls flowers today but what the hell is Valentine's Day anyway'. We were mortified.

Dad was also a disciplined man. He taught us the value of hard work, good manners, respect, decency, duty, reliability and commitment, all qualities my father held in high esteem and practised every day on this earth. He was straight forward and expected the best from his daughters. Provided he heard from us regularly and saw us whenever possible he was content. Mum and Dad shared a strong faith in God and every night of our childhood the family would gather to say the rosary.

My father was also a softie. He never raised his voice to us, in fact he shied away from all discipline deferring to Mum instead, saying, “Roma you need to talk to those girls” or he would quietly take Mum aside and ask, “Roma, Can you get Teresa to turn that music down?” and “Is it the fashion for Patty’s hair to be that colour?” or “Do you think you could get Jackie out of those jeans into a nice dress?” and “Roma, What are those things Wendy is wearing?” to which Mum would reply in order- I’ll try Bill, Yes Bill, No Bill, Hotpants Bill

Dad did not live in the past. He embraced the social and cultural revolution and he was particularly defensive of young people always trying to understand their views. He said a man has to keep up with technology- but that doesn’t mean he was good at it. He enthusiastically took to mobile phones and his grandchildren were always chuffed to receive his texts. Mum and Dad went to TAFE to learn about computers, not least because so much racing information was now online. Mum mastered them effortlessly but Dad took longer. He was talking to Nathan one day about all the problems he was having with his computer, especially the monkey. Nathan eventually worked out it was the mouse he was talking about. Even the remote control was a challenge for him. Every one of his grandchildren could tell a story of fixing something technical when they visited.

Although we learnt to share Dad with all his different pursuits, there was no question Dad loved his family. His mother was one of 12 children, some around Dad’s age. With his brother, Reg, he thrived in the Callaghan clan and later, together with Mum, he raised 4 strong daughters. He was an adored husband, cherished father, respected father in law, an active grandfather, doting great grandad and loyal friend. He was proud of each and every one of us. In his final weeks, despite being very ill, his face always lit up when his grandchildren and great grandchildren visited.

My father was a fighter. He showed strength, determination and love to the end. His fortitude to keep fighting was fuelled by his lust for life and all that it brings. We are grateful Dad enjoyed more than 8 decades of good times and were blessed to be able to care for Dad in the last weeks of his life. His absence leaves a profound sadness in its wake that is only outweighed by pride. Bill Oliver left a bit of himself in all of us and his legacy will live on forever.

Andrew O’Dwyer (17/11/1936 – 29/09/2016)



The following eulogy was provided by his daughter Marnie with the comment that his St Mary's friends were a constant, important part of his life and he really enjoyed the regular catchups with his old mates.

Dad asked us not to give a eulogy so he’ll be up there looking uneasy at the show we’ve put on for him here. He was a modest man who never sought the limelight. He would be so pleased though to see all his family and friends here in his honour.

Because he genuinely liked people and he did love a gathering. He was great company. He made it easy for people to be around him and had no airs and graces. He was a man of few words who really was more interested in hearing about you than telling you about himself.

Dad kept friends for life and was still regularly in contact with his earliest school mates and the many friends he made throughout his life. We were constantly reminded of this during his illness and its borne out with all of you here today.

He didn’t change for different crowds – he was the same man to his school mates, as to our friends, his mates at the track, people he met in business and the community around him. He was happy in his own skin and it was the same skin for everyone.

He had dignity and a character of simplicity, humility, honesty and genuineness. He was, though, a man of conviction and was no pushover. He never wanted anything for himself but he wanted the best for us. But we knew where we stood on the pecking order. Jim Atkins stables to see the horses first, and then each of the boarding schools second.

Always together, Mum and Dad shared a love for racing and had so much fun with their racehorses. Indeed, you could say that horse racing was the love of his life behind mum.

There were a few weddings that you would find them racing out of the church, if it had gone on just a little too long, to catch the race of one of their horses.

He was a wonderful rider himself, riding well into his latter years and his affinity with an animal was evident when he was working a set of stockyards in his own quiet, commanding way. He loved Mount Manning, as we all do, creating, together with mum, a beautiful life there. Each of us kids had a unique relationship with him, different at each life stage. He kept us on a fairly short leash when we were young. We spent our entire school years being sure our father was the strictest of all our friends' fathers. But while he was the disciplinarian of our youth, he was the softy of our adult lives. He was the father that cried watching Rocky as well as during the shopping scene of *Pretty Woman*.

The boys were so proud to have the dad who shook the hands of every player as they came off the football field. He knew the name of all our friends and right to the end was asking how they were all going.

There is no doubt that his determination to keep his family as a happy and whole unit is the reason we are all still so close. He made it his mission to give us the best education with the skills to manage our lives independently. He gave us that independence but his whole life was devoted to worrying about each of kids.

He was terribly deaf for a long time but somehow always heard the joke and got the punchline. He loved a joke and it's so sad that I've not got his talent for telling one for you now because he'd love to see us all have a laugh. He was funny. His quiet and sharp humour surfaced always at just the right moment, with perfect and often surprising timing. He loved laughing at himself which he continued to do right to the end.

I'll give you just one little story. Only a couple of months ago, at their usual Aratula pitstop, after tipping what seemed to be an astonishing number of bottles of oil in to the car, when they got going again, Mum asked him "when was the last time you put oil in this car?" Without blinking he came back with "the last time you did".

To the grandkids Reuben, Mia and Oscar, Ha Ha was just always happy and he was so proud of each them. Indeed, he told the older ones the last time he visited that he got prouder of them every time he saw them. He invested so much in all our lives and we are truly rich for having had him.

• 1945 – 1954 Class Reunion

In the *St Mary's College Newsletter* on the 30th August 2016 the Principal, Mr Michael Newman, expressed the pleasure he had in joining the 1945-1954 Class Group of Old Boys as they celebrated their reunion. It included a luncheon at "Fire and Ice" (Southern Hotel) in Toowoomba on Saturday 27th August and Mass at St Mary's College Chapel celebrated by Reverend Father Michael McClure at 10:45am on Sunday 28th, followed by a BBQ lunch and tour of College facilities.

Mr Newman wrote "these men, like so many Old Boys are real gentlemen; they are humble, gracious and men of real faith". They really loved their time at St Mary's College and were extremely proud of their Alma Mater. This was particularly expressed in their Prayers of the Faithful during the mass where they prayed – "We pray for all members of the Class of 1945-1954 and their families that they continue to live out the lessons and ideals learnt at St Mary's College"

St Mary's College is renowned for its significant roll call of past academic achievers, professionals, business men, religious and priests, sportsmen and ex-servicemen.

The history of St Mary's College is rich and rare, boasting Old Boys including: Frank Forde (15th Prime Minister of Australia), Sir Walter Campbell (Governor of Queensland), Rear Admiral Patrick Perry (CBE, RAW), Air Vice Marshall Harold Hawkins (GLM, JCD, CBE, AFC) (Ret), Major General John Cantwell D.S.O.A.O. (Ret), Brigadier Ian J Miebusch A.M., Colonel Keith O'Neill D.S.O (Ret), Air Vice Marshall Joseph Dietz, Tom Gorman – rugby league international, Archbishop Virgil Copas, Rev Brother J.B. O'Sullivan, Dr John Simpson (MD) and Dr Keith Wilkinson (MD).

The Class of 1945-1954 achieved their goals in various fields of endeavour, so seventy years after the lads enrolled at St Mary's College it is fitting that we will recognise some of their accomplishments in future newsletters.

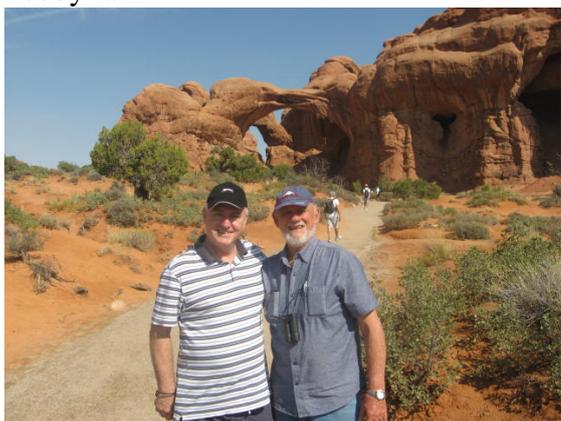


1945/54 Class Reunion – August 2016

Back Row (From L) Reg Murphy, Lester Brosnan, John Vallely, Pat Sedl, John Mullen, Kev Killoran, Lindsay Fox, Lindsay Reis, Don Jago
Front Row (From L) Terry Ranger, Lyle Dornbusch, John Bagget, Justin McErlean

<Other News>

- **David Wilkinson** reported in on catching up with some old school mates for the Rugby League Grand final. Chris Flynn hosted the party also attended by his brother Greg, Gerard Bradley, Tim and Peter Pemble-Smith, John Byrnes, Paul Hogan, Tony Jensen along with their wives and relations.
- **Peter and Leanne Betros** jetted off for a Tasmanian holiday after attending the Grand Final in Sydney. Peter is the Chairman of the Queensland Rugby League.
- **Gerard Davis (1978)** and his wife **Marianne** celebrated a belated 30th wedding anniversary in August with a 20-day tour of USA and Alaska. They viewed some of the most spectacular natural sights of the USA including the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Arches National Park, Bryce Canyon and Yellowstone National Park followed by a 7-day Alaskan cruise. There were so many highlights of the tour that it is impossible to single out a particular experience. One unexpected moment came over a casual dinner conversation with another passenger on the tour, where the discussion lead to reveal the fact he was Ron Hamilton who taught Gerard maths at St Mary's in 1977-78. They hadn't seen each other since then – what a small world! Ron taught at St Mary's from 1972 until 1985. Ron has just retired and he and his wife Gloria are living at Yeppoon on a small hobby farm.



Gerard Davis and Ron Hamilton

- **John Drew** reports that classmates from 1957 – 1965 took the opportunity to get together and enjoy “A Long Saturday Lunch” at Rydges Southbank on October 8th 2016. Greg, Brian, Tom and Graham shared their journey along the “long and winding road” from when the

Beatles first sang this song to the present day. A great time was had by all and suggestions were made that we make this an annual event.



Back Row (From L) John Drew, Greg Windle, Wayne Nuss, Trevor McGovern, Des Kelly, Darryl Baker, Leo Cruise
Front Row (From L) Tom Kelly, Graham Ehler, Pat Walsh, Pat Carroll, Ross Fallon, Brian Conrick, Kieran McMahon, Jim Fraser.

- Old Boys Jim Long and Barry Kuhnemann are watching keenly the efforts of their grandsons in the Queensland Bulls Cricket squad. Jim's grandson, James Peirson, a wicketkeeper/batsman, is playing in the one-day Matador Cup competition after spending last season with the Cricket Australia XI. Matthew Kuhnemann, Barry's grandson, also plays for Gold Coast in the Brisbane First Grade competition and recently took 6 wickets for 57 runs off 22.3 overs in a match against University.
- Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Sunnybank, is currently refurbishing the Church and it is hoped to launch a book on the history of the Parish shortly. It has been compiled by one of our 1943/48 Old Boys and former Toowoomba Chronicle journalist, John Morris. Over the past two years John has researched the history and stories of both the Sunnybank and Acacia Ridge parishes and has found many interesting facts about parishioners, the four parish schools, priests, religious sisters and both churches.
- Cowboy's backrower Ethan Lowe (Yr12 – 2008) was named the Club's most improved player for the 2016 season at their presentation ball on 7/10/2016. His tackle count averaged 32 a game and he scored a career best 9 tries. Ethan had to miss the clubs final game against eventual premiers Cronulla due to a pinched nerve in his neck. After recent surgery he hopes to recover from the injury that cut short his brilliant 2016 campaign in time for the first NRL round in 2017.

- Old Boys were pleased to see Johnathan Thurston in the Kangaroo squad for the tour to England for the Four Nations series. In the Australia v New Zealand test in Perth on the 16/10/16 Johnathan stretched the Kiwi defence with a long ball that allowed Darius Boyd to glide over untouched for the first try, shortly after being hit with a vicious high tackle.

- Following the recent passing of John Hutchinson it was fantastic to be sent a lovely article in the Sunshine Coast Daily by John's niece, **Caroline Hutchinson**, about a letter the family found among John's possessions that he had written to his brother Bill in 1948. Bill was 19 years old and teaching at Wallumbilla near Roma. John had just turned 12 in Toowoomba.

"Dear Bill, Mum gave me a birthday party on Saturday.

She gave me an ice cream cake with green and pink decorations. It was a lovely cake.

Have you ever tasted one? Sorry I can't send you a slice of it.

I asked 7 of my school mates. They are Tom Long, Eric House (sic), John O'Neill, Bill Bagget, Tony Seridan, Frank Drew.

Each of them brought me a present. The presents were a fountain pen which I am writing with, an Eversharpe pencil, a 4/0 shillings, a box of lollies from Assie, a box of chocolates from Ruby and Mum, a packet of playing cards and a chocolate, a cricket ball, a pair of socks from Mum, seven and sixpence from Dad and thanks for the lovely book

"Thunderhead" (It's all about a lovely horse) you gave to me. I have read 13 pages of it and Dad has read 58.

We are just home from Mass and it is the Feast of Christ the King - in case you didn't know what day it is.

The bishop is sick and can't attend Corpus Christi this afternoon. It is raining here now and we hope it keeps up. It is badly needed here.

The gobbler is gobbling in all his glory since the death of his wife. I have almost sold all my lettuce and I have made 3 pounds on them so far.

I am going to pay my own fare to Sydney and back. I will have 3 pounds to spend. So I will be able to go everywhere.

Bobby Lambert is out at the Dalby butter factory learning to become a manager. He was too good for them here. Bub Kraft is not married yet.

At least I haven't seen any wedding car picking a bride up from there. There might be a chance for you still.

Sox and Cocky are very well. Mum threatened to throw Sox out.

He is disturbing all the seedlings at the front fence. So I am going to give him a hiding each time I catch him to make him stop it so I can keep him. We set a fowl on 17 eggs and she has broken 2 so far and she has about 1 week to go.

With love from your LUCKY brother John."

- Congratulations to Old Boy **Chris Shapland** on his swim across the English Channel on 20/9/2016 in 16 hours and 28 minutes after having earlier attempts thwarted due to poor weather conditions. Aged 68, he can now claim to be the second oldest person to have achieved this swim.



He swam 33.79km, as the crow flies, from Dover to the beaches of France, but swam much further because of strong tides. The sea temperature was 18.9 degrees, the wind was calm and waves were just 0.2 metres high.

As reported in the last newsletter Chris has been training for this event for two years and knew the importance of being mentally prepared. His aim was to remain relaxed and focused which is the key to a successful swim. A support team lowered food to him every 30 minutes so he could keep his strength up. The way people swim the Channel has not changed much since it was first completed by Captain Matthew Webb in 1875. To be considered official, Chris had to follow regulations which include no artificial aids and the wearing of a standard swim costume.

It was at the Toowoomba Municipal Baths which his parents leased from the Council between 1947 and 1960 that Chris learned the art of swimming. The cold temperature of the Baths, about 16 degrees, was similar to the frigid waters of the English Channel.

Chris says "it is more of a mental than physical battle – it is not such a physical feat if you know how to swim properly". He has fond memories of swimming in Toowoomba at a time when endurance swimming was respected.

NEXT MEETING CLAIMER DATE

FRIDAY MARCH 10th 2017