



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Issue 60, May 2024, Vol 4 No 2

WELCOME to your **Perth Modernian e-Newsletter, Issue 60, May 2024, Vol 4 No 2** This newsletter offers two way communication with all registered members, volunteers, families and friends to bring you news, event details and articles from the Perth Modernian Society, its members and Perth Modern School. We hope you find its content both interesting and informative.



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

For further information
Telephone: (08) 6189 3690
www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au
info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au
All messages received either by phone or email are promptly forwarded electronically for further action.

DIARY DATES

REUNIONS

2024 ANNUAL REUNION
Saturday Afternoon
31 August 2024

Class of 1959
Monday 18 November
(see further details in this newsletter)

CLASS/YEAR GROUPS
Are you planning a Class/Year Reunion for 2024?
We can help
for further information visit
www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

e-NEWSLETTER
Do you have something to say?
Memories to share?
Where are YOU now?
Send your news item, letters and/or photographs to ...
newsletter@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

NEXT ISSUES
Copy deadlines for

Issue 61, August 2024, Vol 4 No 3
20 August copy deadline for circulation
by **1 September 2024**

Issue 62, November 2024, Vol 4 No 4
20 November copy deadline for circulation
by **1 December 2024**

Thank You

SALLIE DAVIES



After what seems to have been a lifetime of connection and commitment to Perth Mod, **Sallie Davies** has signalled that it's time for her to retire from her active role. While all volunteers connected with the Perth Modernian Society, the Museum Association and the Sphinx Foundation were very sad to hear of her decision, there was a feeling of inevitability.

Sallie Hicks was a student at Perth Mod, then taught at the school alongside her future husband **Jim Davies** (dec), also a Modernian. Sallie retired from her prominent role with Volunteers Western Australia in 2002 and Mod then became the beneficiary of her leadership, energy and enthusiasm.

The Sphinx Foundation asked Sallie to become the coordinator of the PMS Publication Working Party. Her leadership gathered together the diverse interests that wished to contribute, and ensured that Perth Modern School: The History and the Heritage, published in 2005, was a great success.

Sallie continued to actively support the Perth Modern Society but her special interest was always the History and Museum Committee, and she focussed upon researching events and collecting stories.

Under her leadership The Perth Modernian Society Museum Association was established which meant that the museum may now receive grants. Dedicated display space in which the museum is now located was negotiated for with the school. Curated displays are provided for current and former students, and visitors to the school. Valuable records which were once dispersed around the school have been brought together in the museum and in a separate archive.

Perhaps Sallie's greatest contribution has been to establish a digital database. In collaboration with the late Ian Jarvis a searchable database (nearly complete) has been established in which the names of former student and staff and their achievements are recorded. A separate searchable database records images, documents and artefacts. Sallie was one of the inaugural three Modernian Fellows appointed by the Council in 2014.

Recently, health issues have restricted Sallie's ability to be present in the museum. However, she has worked online incessantly to update the data base and to field queries and to answer phone calls. Even in her now "retirement", Sallie is likely to email volunteers most days passing on relevant information and providing answers to questions.



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Acknowledgments

Thank you to all letter writers and contributors:

Peter Farr
Ruth Barrett
Irene Froyland
Michelle Howell
Robert Johnson
Max Kamien
Tony Keys
Judith Lovell
Shirley Randell
Gary Ryan
Roger Stubbs
Geoff Taylor
Tricia Walmsley
Wendy Watts
Robyn White
Janet Williams

Coordinator/Editor

Roger Stubbs
Robyn White

Layout

Stuart Gould
ShoreDigital

The alumni of Perth Modern School are indebted to Sallie Davies for her absolute commitment to ensuring that the people associated with the school and their stories are not lost. For the volunteers, her continual suggestions for improvement will be missed.

Thank you, Sallie.
Dr Robyn White

CONGRATULATIONS

RUTH MICKELSON née HOWELL PMS student 1939-40

On the 9th May, Old Modernian Ruth Mickelson (née Howell) celebrated her 100th birthday. Ruth attended Mod in 1939 and 1940 and loved her time at the school, so much so that she still remembers the school motto and song! It set her on the path to her career as a teacher. She taught in many schools, most notably at The School for the Deaf in Mosman Park. She is pictured here with her great-greatnephews Riley (Year 11) and Jake (class of 2022) Wilson at her celebratory birthday party.



OLD MODERNIANS...THE NEXT GENERATION

By Roger Stubbs

After a day of writing obituaries, I began to wonder if the next generation would achieve as much. I watched the impeccable presentation of the television news by Modernian **Briana Shepherd** then went on-line to search for some of those whom I remembered, now all aged about 30 years. Thank goodness so many have a LinkedIn account. Below are details of what seven have achieved. There are many, many more. Perhaps next issue?

Camille White completed a MPhil in International Relations at Oxford University by writing a thesis on the membership negotiations which established the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank. While at Oxford she was secretary for the Oxford University Strategic Studies group. After graduation she undertook several roles which refined and developed her skills of strategic thinking and analysis. She worked in Beijing for the United Nations Development Program and Demos. On return to London, she worked as a consultant with Strategy& before joining Morgan Stanley as Vice-President of the CEO's Office. Four years later Camille is now based in Beijing with the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank where she is Executive Officer in the President's Office. What will be her next step?

Like so many Modernians before him **Leon Staaden** qualified as an engineer. He completed a Bachelors degrees in science and engineering at Curtin University. To develop better business strategies, he completed an MBA with High Distinction at the University of Western Australia. Leon describes himself as 'Experienced energy industry engineering consultant, working across mining, oil, gas, and carbon capture and sequestration projects on six continents, covering all project life stages.' His employers have included, Mineral Resources Limited, Wood, and Atteris.

Leon is now a Senior Associate with Partners in Performance, an international management consultancy which seeks to achieve operational effectiveness and operational efficiency for its clients.



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on 27 May 2024

2023-24 COUNCIL

info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au
Ruth Barrett, *Honour Awards*
Barrie Baker, *Membership*
Deborah Beresford, *Hon Secretary*
Eve Broadley, *Hon Treasurer*
Robyn White, *Vice President, Museum Rep*
Peter Farr, *Sphinx Foundation*
Ian Hunt, *IT/Communication, Technology*
Evan Kennea, *President*
Salena Loasby, *Communication Marketing*
Barbara Mallett, *Reunions*
Daryl Williams, *Vice President*
Mitchell Mackay, *Ex-Officio, PMS Principal*

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

\$40 per annum now due

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Have YOU completed or updated your **MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION and/or CHANGE OF DETAILS?** Forms are available on the website www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au further information info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au





SPHINX FOUNDATION INC.

2023-24 BOARD

sphinxfoundation@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

Nigel Hunt, *Chair*
Peter Farr, *Director*
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Danielle Jeyes, *Director*



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED

2023-24 BOARD

museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

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Thalia Cole, *Board Member*
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Ashleigh Blechynden, *Board Member*
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Ex-officio:
President Modernian Society

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS
[History Centre and Archives]

Gay Albillos
Deborah Beresford, *Hon Archivist*
Sallie Davies
Frank Hedges
Ian Hunt
Robert (Bob) Johnson
Bill MacPherson
Jill Lucas
Wendy McCallum
Deirdre Owen
Roger Stubbs
Loren White
Robyn White
Sharon Williams
Alison Woodman

FY 2023 DONORS
PMS Museum Fund

Thank you for your generous support

Wendy Horne
Sue Strutt
Bryant Bice
Karen Stanley
Sallie Davies
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Daphne Williams
Pat Long
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Beth Kallmeyer
Robin Silsbury
Edna Youngman
Sharon Williams
Dr Neil Bardsley
Dr Christine Lawson-Smith

MUSEUM SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

facebook.com/perthmodernschoolmuseum/
instagram.com/pmsmamuseum/

Patrick Nykiel says that ‘As a geographer, I specialise in leveraging Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to extract locational insights. My work involves analysing spatial and other data to uncover patterns, trends, and risks.

I have reinforced my education in the atmospheric and broader natural sciences by applying this practice to the analysis of climate-related hazards, natural catastrophes, and scenario analytics’.

Patrick first completed a Bachelor of Sustainability at Murdoch University and then went to the Australian National University to complete a Master of Forestry (Advanced). After roles in the Parliamentary Library and at the Australian National Museum, Patrick spent one year as a research assistant at the Vietnam Academy of Forest Sciences. On return to Australia, he worked as a consultant for Energetics before accepting his current role with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. He is the bank’s Manager of Climate Scenario Analytics and contributes to its climate report and strategic responses to climate change, especially in relation to the future of the economy.

Silas Otto holds Bachelors of Law (Hons) and Commerce (Finance) from the Australian National University. He was admitted as a solicitor and barrister of the ACT Supreme Court and the High Court of Australia in 2019. Silas is a commercial litigator who is currently part of the commercial litigation team at Nicholson Ryan Lawyers. He acts for private and public companies on a wide range of complex commercial disputes. His experience also includes acting for government clients, major insurers, and insolvency practitioner.

Now Assistant Director of the Department of Social Services, **Ashleigh Blechynden** worked with a number of community-based agencies following graduation. She completed a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours, majoring in Anthropology and Sociology. Ashleigh worked first as an Intern with the Goldfields Land and Sea Council Aboriginal Corporation before becoming its Administrative Support Officer. She became Fundraising Manager for Ignite Mentoring before accepting a position with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra as a Research Officer. Ashleigh joined the Department of Community Services in 2018 as a Policy Officer and became its Assistant Director in 2020.

Most will have heard of the Square Kilometre Array, an advanced radio telescope, for which about 100,000 antennas will be installed in the Murchison. **Ryan Bunney** is a software engineer researching HPC (high performance computing) Scheduling for ICAR (International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research) as part of the Square Kilometre Array project. Ryan completed a Bachelor of Science with First Class Honours, majoring in Computer Engineering and Software at the University of Western Australia. His PhD in Data Intensive Astronomy is close to completion. Since he left Mod, Ryan received a Westpac Future Leaders Scholarship. He has worked for Vix Technology, was a Graduate Teaching Assistant and Demonstrator at UWA and has been a visiting lecturer at South West University in China.

Angela Dalstra is a Civil Engineer and works at the Roy Hill iron ore project. She has. ‘Experience in a wide range of areas including heavy haul railway, port, material handling and civil construction. Responsible for the full project lifecycle from development of business cases for financial approval, through to site execution and operational readiness’. Angela is well qualified for the task. She has completed a Master of Professional Engineering at UWA. Before she became a Project Engineer at Roy Hill, she gained experience with Denmac and SAP Products.



Modernian Fellow

Sallie Davies
Malcolm McCusker AC CVO KC
Donald Tyler
Barrie Baker
Ian Jarvis
Peter Farr
Dr Kenneth Michael AC Cit WA

Moderna Scola Award

Deborah Beresford
Alan Porter
Evelyn Broadley
Rosemary Pratt
Dr June Stephenson
Robert Johnson
Anne Celia Christmass
Neil Anthony Coy
Roger Stubbs AM
Edward Lazarus
Barbara Mallett

Honorary Membership

Alison Woodman
Tonya McCusker AM
Nigel Hunt
Brendon Dawson
Sharon Williams



REUNIONS

Class of 1952-56

Ruth Barrett reports that a group of former students from 1952-56 enjoyed a morning tea at Deepwater Point on the 8th of April organised by **Laurie Best** (née Terril). Anne and Lance Brennan were unable to attend but Ruth was able to catch up with them in Adelaide a week or so later. Anne made sure to wear her Modern School hat for the occasion.



Laurie Terrill (née Best) at Deepwater Point



John and Jennifer Brennan at Deepwater Point



Anne Brennan (née Halnan) & Lance Brennan in Adelaide



Rayma Richter Pervan at Deepwater Point

Class of 1954-58

70th (Platinum Jubilee) Anniversary Reunion Luncheon

This momentous reunion followed seven previous successful Class Reunions (and biography booklets or PowerPoints) in 1988, 1993, 1998, 2008, 2011, 2018 and 2021. The 19th April 2024 luncheon was held at The University Club (UWA) and attended by 36 folk, once again including **Bob Jones** from Germany and **Anne Ballard** from Adelaide. The very enjoyable reunion was organised by Wendy McCallum (née Becher), Dr Peter McKerracher (MC), and Peter Farr (Convener, Treasurer). This time the group was celebrating **70 years** from when they started as first years ('fags'!) at Perth Mod, or at Perth Boys HS or Perth Girls HS. There were 36 apologies from folk who couldn't make it. Group photos were taken by Naureen Taylor and a toast to absent friends and the 52 members of the class who were deceased was proposed by Peter McKerracher.



Maxinne Sclanders (née Pougault),
Anne Greenhill (née Farquhar),
Jo Donnellan (née Davies)

Looking back: It was a red-letter day for 120 12-year-old primary school students and their parents when in October 1953 their names appeared in *The West Australian* announcing they had been successful in the Entrance Examination and had thereby won a place at Perth Modern School to start in February 1954. Prior to the exams, in a quaintly worded memo, the Education Department had warned teachers "that the arithmetic papers for the Entrance Exams in August 1953 would be designed to test the child's ability to manipulate vulgar and decimal fractions and percentages extended to simple interest and profit and loss"!



The first years were quickly to discover that Perth Modern School had an imaginary dividing line to separate boys' classes from the girls. The new first years were arranged alphabetically – Class 1A and Class 1C were the first half of the alphabet for boys and girls respectively, so that's where friendships began and continued for 70 years so far.

Remember: Ink wells in the desk tops? What a mess when they were overfilled and the desk was knocked. Punishment for carving names on desks and in the timber lockers? Riding to school by train, tram, trolley bus and Shanks' pony? First bell at 09:10 and second bell at 09:20? In our first three years, all girls did Domestic Science, and all boys did Manual Arts, regardless of aptitude or interest.



Pet McKerracher, Peter Farr,
Phil Jennings, John Silbert

Outside the school grounds girls were expected to wear white gloves and a Panama Hat? Swimming at Crawley Baths at School swimming carnivals and lifesaving training? Peter Goss (dec) recalled in 2021: *"We were, as I remember, very early on introduced, usually reluctantly, to Shakespeare and Coleridge, the French Revolution and that era; Physics and Chemistry, and Maths; and Art classes; and a smattering of French and a bit more of German. Amongst other things, I'm sure. With a bit of woodwork thrown in. Not forgetting a lot of Sport."*

1954 was a memorable year in two other ways: students all got administered at school with the Salk Polio vaccine, and in June the Queen made the inaugural visit by a reigning monarch to Australia, and the school marched up to Hay St Subiaco to see her. In those days it was compulsory for boys in 3rd, 4th and 5th year at Mod to do either Army Cadets or Air Force Cadets. As the late Ian Jarvis recalled, *"I really enjoyed Army Cadets. We drilled weekly at school and also spent some weekends at the Northam Army Camp."* On the afternoons when the boys did Cadets, the girls did Sport. There were many memorable teachers (each with their own idiosyncrasies) such as Elsie Stevens, Beryl Hume, Neville Wilding, George and Mrs Anderson, FE (Frank) Mills, Jerry Haire, Fred Marshall, "Tricksie" Hayman, Clive Hart, Stan Sinden, Eric Strauss, Cyril Calcutt, Harry Orris, John de Laeter, Mr Gannon (Clem's father), Mr White (Chemistry), Ron Hartley, Clive Hart, Wally House and John Greenway.

After navigating the Junior and Leaving examinations, the real world beckoned. For many of the group, it was the first time in those days that a family member had gone on to university and it opened up a new world of opportunities. Lots then travelled overseas for the first time – WOW! Then got married, had children became responsible, bought a house and did the parent thing, which they still do but from a distance now as grandparents. The roller coaster of life swept them up.

2024 ANNUAL REUNION

The **2024 Annual Reunion** of all year groups will be held on

Saturday Afternoon, 31 August 2024

Further details will be provided closer to the time.

UPCOMING REUNION - CLASS OF 1959

The class of 1959 will hold their Annual Reunion:

2.30pm on Monday 18 November at Claremont Tennis Club
cnr Shenton Rd & Shenton Place, Claremont.

Final details will be sent out a month before, but if you have changed your email address or no longer have one please contact:

Merv Lynch – 0478 882 304
Irene Froyland – 0409 102 721



From: Tony Keys

I just wanted to thank you for arranging the article and photos of Norma Keys in the February edition of the Perth Modernian. Mum and the family were thrilled with it. It has generated a lot of discussion as well as rekindling many happy memories in Mum. Thank you once again for your work in arranging this. It was greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,
Tony Keys

From: Professor Shirley Randell AO, PhD

Dear Editor

Thanks again for the magnificent PMS Newsletter.

The article on music and the launch of the history of Music at Mod reminded me of an earlier occasion when the late Dudley Bastian and I played a duet - Beethoven's 5th Symphony at a PMS public celebration - I think at our end of the year graduation ceremony.

Dudley went on to become a distinguished Musician - an outstanding organist - performer and composer in Western Australia.

I maintained my interest in music but more as a mother of my four children - I taught piano to them all when working in Papua New Guinea where they also had their introduction to trombone, clarinet, violin and flute. They played and toured overseas with the Canberra Youth Orchestra when we lived there, and my son Douglas was awarded a trombone as the top musician at the Canberra School of Music when he graduated. Now he is the one who still plays trombone in a church group in Canberra every second month when he is home on leave from his work as a remote maritime doctor. The others lead busy lives coaching Australian and British women rowing while the youngest is an artist- curator-consultant working with indigenous artists in communities around Australia, next in Badu Island, Torres Strait.

I was also interested to read the message from Judith McGuinness recognising her senior Wendy Snow who was head girl in the year when I was a school prefect. Also to see the sad news of John Middleton.

Love Shirley

From: Janet Williams (Michaels)

Thank you for the tribute to my brother Geoffrey Michaels, the violinist.

The second part was a very comprehensive outline of his career but the first section from is very strange.

To say that he turned up mysteriously in 1957 entering second year is ridiculous.

Seven years earlier I entered Mod in 1950 straight into second year having been too young to sit for the scholarship two years previously so I attended PLC for a year and was successful in gaining a scholarship So after special testing and an interview I did the same.

I always look forward to receiving the newsletter.

Thank you and best wishes

***Ed:** Janet, the author was writing about his recollections from 1957. To him and his fellow students it was 'mysterious' that someone in their thirteenth year would arrive and enroll in second year. Few knew about the barriers put in the way of very bright young people who, like you, should have entered Mod a year earlier.*

From: Geoff Taylor

Dear Editor

It was sad to read of the death of former classmate Geoffrey Michaels, but I enjoyed the photo of some old classmates with him that you ran. His lunchtime recitals at school were very enjoyable. I also noted the long life of Professor Andy Cole, whom, as the Science Societ president along with secretary June Kelly, I had invited to give a lunchtime lecture 65 years ago. Then there was the obituary of Caroline Serventy, including her and her husband's efforts to protect the Dryandra forest, which reminded me of a letter I had published in The Australian in 1970 questioning the mining tenements pegged by Alwest (owned by News Ltd). News Ltd replied that it had done so to protect the forest from. Anyway, today, the numbats and the wandoo are still there, thanks to people like Caroline and Vincent. And maybe there is even a descendant of the 2.5m snake I saw while checking out the forest then!

Best wishes
Geoff Taylor



From: Max Kamien

Hi Sallie, Greetings and congratulations on yet another fascinating newsletter.

In 1952 (Year 4), I euthanised a terminally injured blowfly in a bottle of nitric acid. This resulted in my being sentenced to two months of lunchtime detention washing chemistry equipment. My supervisors were Vincent Serventy and the author of West Australian outback tales, Douglas Stuart. They introduced me to the joys of eating witchetty grubs and writing. Fifty years later Caroline Serventy walked into my consulting room. Before she left, I asked her to tell her husband that I and some of my classmates would have appreciated more discussion about Western Australia's flora and fauna about which he was an expert.

Two days later Vincent phoned me. He said he would have loved to teach about the environment and social activism. But, Mr Samson forbade it.

From: Gary Ryan

Hi

I was a student at Perth Mod in the early 60's and would be curious to look through a couple of the Annual Sphinx Magazines.

Is it possible to do this online?

Cheers

Ed: Gary, The State Library has digitized many editions of Sphinx. Check their catalogue. If you have no luck, email me and I will send you digital copies.

From: Tony

Thank you for the February 2024 copy of The Perth Modernian. So many wonderful stories.

Wendy...Sorry to see that we lost Veronica Williams 11 Nov 2023.

Thanks again for your "classy" class leadership.

From: Tricia Walmsley (née Wrightson, then Michaels)

Please could you get rid of that weird photo in the Ghana obituary for Geoffrey Michaels!! It looks a bit like the smiling image of Kirk Douglas lower down on the page, but it is definitely NOT of Geoffrey!

Thanks very much.

Regards,

Tricia (née Wrightson, then Michaels, then finally Walmsley)

Ed: Tricia, we saw the online photo of Geoffrey too and share your dismay but sadly it is beyond us to have it removed. Fortunately, there were many other delightful tributes on-line too.

From: Wendy Watts (Snow)

Thank you for another excellent edition of the newsletter.
Thank you for putting me in touch with my "fag" Judith Lovell for the first time since 1957. We had a very happy reunion at the Dome in Mt Pleasant in November 2023.

Readers, do you too have something to say? Please address your comments to:

Roger Stubbs (rstubbsbunbury@gmail.com)

or

Robyn White (robynwhite5@hotmail.com).





MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Despite the Indian Summer that seems to go on and on, our museum volunteers returned refreshed from the April holidays. The activities in the museum continue unabated.

In early May we were particularly pleased to be informed by Hon. Kate Chaney's office that we have been successful in procuring a Federal Community Grant of \$2,000. The official letter from the Department of Community Services arrived a few days later. This grant will enable additional upgrading of our digital and display capacity.

Since receiving news about the grant, our annual appeal has been emailed to alumni (snail mail will follow soon). As a charitable organisation, our only income is via grant money or our own funding-raising. A sincere thank you to all alumni who support our efforts to collect, catalogue, conserve, research, display and make available records of the school's history and students.


Via the museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au email address, we've recently received many requests for information. They come from former students, those writing obituaries, family historians, authors and curious grandchildren. Thanks to the efforts of our volunteers, especially Deb, Sharon, Alison, Gay, Wendy, Jill and Robyn we have a comprehensive range of resources to consult. They include a complete collection of Sphinx magazines, both digital and physical, the Burvill Biographical Index which contains printed reports including press cuttings, a collection of artefacts and a database (JED) in which the names of many thousands of students are recorded together with any information known about them. There is also a wonderful collection of photographs.

It was with great sadness that our volunteers learned of the passing of **Jim Davies** during the April break. Until last December, Jim had been a constant volunteer in the Museum – particularly responsible for maintaining the Burvill Index with **Frank Hedges**. His extensive knowledge of all things relating to Mod and his quiet good humour made him an incredible colleague. A more complete outline of Jim's life and work is in this newsletter.

Our IT volunteer, **Ian Hunt**, has continued to ensure that our digital support is of professional quality. Via various sources, we are now working with relatively recent hardware and the store room adjacent to the museum is now furnished with a professional server cabinet. This room will also be the ideal location for our scanners.

Although **Bob Johnson**, our military historian, is currently in Canada, his work in researching the stories of alumni involved in military conflicts, has continued. The digital Honour Board and Nominal Roll, found at honour.perthmodern.wa.edu.au, have already registered over 18,000 visits – around 21 views a day. Bob continues to add information and biographies of former students who served Australia in times of conflict. Already, Bob has created so many biographies that we are considering a new project to bring these together into an accessible form.

Generally by this time of the year, we have a number of school reunions organised for which our museum creates appropriate year specific displays. We are in contact with several alumni from the final year of 1964 and 1965, to connect with fellow alumni for their reunion. However, students who completed their secondary schooling in the years 1974, 1984, 1994, 2004 and 2014 have yet to contact us. Reunions some years after school are a terrific way to catch up with the diverse exploits of past friends and acquaintances. Already this year the Class of 1958 met to celebrate the 70 years since they commenced at Mod, while the Class of 1970 will meet on 12 October and the Class of 1959 on the 18th November. If you are considering a class reunion, please contact **Barbara Mallett** or the Museum to support you in finding fellow class-mates.



Education Insight Part II – Perth Modern School
Sunday 9 March 2025
at 1.30pm
Start and finish at the school entrance, Subiaco Road, Subiaco.

Perth Modern School was established in 1909 with the first intake of students in 1911. This was the first government senior secondary school in WA. Volunteers from Perth Modernian Society Museum will provide an interesting history as well as a tour of the school and museum.

We are delighted to announce a new partnership, with the City of Subiaco, as part of the City's 'See Subi on Sunday' free guided walk program. Perth Modern School and the Museum will be showcased on Sunday 9 March 2025 from 1.30pm. For more information please see the City's flyer via this link:

www.subiaco.wa.gov.au/subiacowebiste/media/media/Library%20and%20Museum/PDF%20Docs/A9607-CoS-See-Subi-on-Sunday-Brochure-2024-25-3.pdf



Recently our readers have read about the publication of the Music at Mod book, launched on Friday 1st December 2023. Our Museum volunteers are incredibly proud of the beautiful book that records the history of the specialist music program at Perth Modern School and the musicians before and after – and many were fortunate to be present at the launch. Sales of the books are continuing steadily – but books do remain to be sold. The Museum Association is subsidising the cost of each book by ~30% – ensuring these are affordable as well as beautiful. Books can be purchased via the website at www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au/music-at-mod

For those on social media you can also follow Museum news and events on www.facebook.com/perthmodernschoolmuseum

VALE

Thank you to the volunteers, families and friends who have forwarded/alerted us to the following information and memories of former PMS students and staff for publication and/or inclusion in Museum records

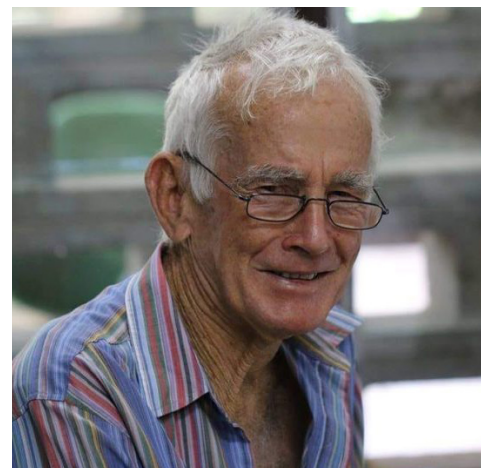
Name	Year at PMS	Position	Deseased
Jean Bunn			13/12/2021
Josephine Giles	1973-77	Student	31/03/2023
Noelle Beverley Aylmore nee Parker	1950-54	Student	26/01/2024
Linley Margaret Wakefield, nee Pirrett	1953 (yr5)	Student	1/03/2024
Harry Pearson	1960-62	Staff	12/03/2024
Arthur Coopes	1951-55	Student	16/03/2024
Dr Harry Cohen AM	1945-49	Student	30/03/2024
James Harold (Jim) Davies	1948-52	Staff 1961 D/Princ 1982-90 A/Principal 1991	6/04/2024
John Gilbert Wager	1945-49	School Prefect	17/04/2024
Ken Betjeman	1955-56	Student	22/04/2024
Hugh Lucius Davies AO	1948-52	School Captain	26/04/2024
Donald Tyler	1945	Student	4/04/2024
Maxine Edwards nee Stooke	1952-55	Student	9/05/2024
Harry Hansen Knarhoi	1945-49	Student	12/05/2024
Alcock Judy, nee Wilson	1955-59	Student	13/05/2024
Allan Green	1954-58	Student	15/05/2024

TRIBUTES

HUGH DAVIES AO PMS student 1948-52

Hugh, one of five siblings who attended Mod, distinguished himself in 1952 by becoming School Captain, earning himself an Exhibition in Mathematics and receiving four distinctions in the Leaving Examinations.

Hugh spent most of his professional career in Papua New Guinea where he had a profound impact. A geologist, he was instrumental in the systematic documentation of the nation's geology and the exploitation of two major mineral resources, gold and copper at Ok Tedi and Bougainville Copper. He became Professor of Geology at the University of Papua New Guinea and influenced the establishment of the Centre for Disaster Reduction. He published widely. The awards he received from the governments of Australia and Papua New Guinea and the American Association of Petroleum Geologists recognise the importance of what he achieved.



Hugh graduated as a geologist from the University of Western Australia in 1955 and later completed a PhD at Stanford University in 1968. He joined the Australian Bureau of Mineral Resources and was posted to Papua New Guinea in 1956 where he worked on geological mapping and tectonic and volcanic studies. He also became friends with the then young Michael Somare.

In 1957 he was attached to the PNG Survey and undertook further projects which documented many of PNG's mineral resources and led to his appointment as the Chief Government Geologist in the early 1970s.

Hugh held many important and influential positions in PNG. He was Managing Director of Ok Tedi Mining, Executive Manager of the Geological Survey of PNG, Chairman of the National Disaster Awareness and Preparedness Committee, and Chief Executive of MRA. He was involved in negotiations for both the Ok Tedi and Bougainville Copper mines.

In 1981 Hugh and his family returned to Australia where he worked for the Bureau of Mineral Resources research marine geology associated with the Solomon Sea and the Southern Ocean.

He was appointed as Professor of Geology at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1989 and created a geology department with an international reputation. He had a particular reputation for mentoring his students and providing assistance to advance their careers.

Hugh was especially prominent in the 1998 Aitape tsunami disaster by providing on-ground support and conducting in-depth research that informed the establishment of the Centre for Disaster Reduction at the University of Papua New Guinea.

The more than 100 research papers Hugh wrote, as well as his several books, provide an in-depth understanding of Papua New Guinea's geology. Hugh retired to Australia in 2018 but continued to research and write about PNG's geology.

The American Association of Petroleum Geologists recognised Hugh's efforts in humanitarian work and in the training of PNG geologists with the award of the Michael T. Halbouty Human Needs Award. This was presented at the Association's Annual Meeting in Dallas, Texas, in April 2004. In 2005 he received the Order of the Logohu from the PNG Government for *services to geological education and disaster relief*. In 2018, Hugh was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for *distinguished services to Australia-Papua New Guinea relations in the area of geological sciences and to education as an academic, author and researcher*.

DONALD TYLER **PMS student 1945**

Don Tyler attended Perth Modern School for one year but such was his experience that he developed a deep respect and affection for the school that inspired his extremely generous philanthropy.

Don became a pharmacist and developed a very successful business in a major suburban shopping centre. But he was also an astute investor and experienced success as the developer of commercial and residential property.



In an address to senior students Don explained that he had endured hardship growing up and it was his education at Perth Modern School that had helped him live a wonderful life as a pharmacist and land developer. He stressed the importance of being generous to others and how he wanted to 'give back' to important causes, especially education.

Don certainly did give back. The school and its students benefitted greatly. Don was the major donor when funds were raised to construct the Tyler McCusker Sports Centre. He also donated \$1,000,000 towards the cost of what is now known as the Cyril Tyler Auditorium (named for his stepfather). He also purchased essential equipment. Don's donations to the Sphinx Foundation provide for academic excellence scholarships and an instrumental music scholarship. His example inspired a number of others to donate generously too.

Don also gave generously of his time and was a regular attendee at events conducted by the Perth Modernian Society and the school. He was also prepared to meet and interact with students, especially those who received his scholarships.

In 2014 the Perth Modernian Society made Don a Modernian Fellow to acknowledge his significant contribution to the Society and thereby the advancement of education at Perth Modern School.

ARTHUR COOPES **PMS student 1951-55**

Arthur left Mod with four distinctions in his leaving examinations to study for an Associateship in Communications Engineering at the then Perth Technical College, the forerunner of Curtin University.

At the same time Arthur was employed as a Cadet Draftsman by the Post Master General's Department which was then responsible for national communications systems such as the telephone and radio broadcasts. He stayed with the organisation until 1996 by which time it had become Telecom, then Telstra.



Arthur's career had a number of highlights. In 1962 he was part of the team which rolled out the National Television Service to regional Western Australia and extended telecommunications into the Pilbara, vital for the iron ore industry. From 1969 he worked on microwave radio design and the installation of the revolutionary co-axial cable between Perth and Port Hedland. By the 1990s he was responsible within Western Australia for the capital works program, the manpower plan and the professional development of engineers.

Telecom had a contract with Saudi Arabia for the operation and management of its telecommunications. Arthur went to Saudi Arabia as the General Manager of the joint venture. At the time of his retirement in 2002 he joined Norconsult Telecommunications.

JOHN WAGER

PMS student 1945-49

John achieved five distinctions and a General Exhibition in the leaving examinations. John became a mechanical engineer with a diversity of experience that led to his appointment as a Professor of Engineering at the University of Western Australia.

During his five-year degree course at UWA, John had vacation experience in aircraft engine assembly with the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation in Melbourne and as a machine shop inspector with the Chamberlain tractor factory in Welshpool. After graduation with Honours in Mechanical Engineering he undertook a two-year graduate apprenticeship with the English Electric Company in Lancashire, England, working on rail traction diesel engines.

He was then appointed lecturer with the UWA Department of Mechanical Engineering, later becoming an Associate Professor and completing a Master of Engineering Science degree. During scheduled periods of study leave and programmed leave from UWA, John completed a Doctorate at Purdue University in the United States on a Fulbright Scholarship and later taught at Cranfield Institute of Technology in the United Kingdom, Waterloo University in Canada, the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa and the University of Lourenco Marques in Mozambique.

John also served as a United Nations consultant in the development of metallurgy and fine instruments in Seoul, South Korea and on a number of occasions worked in England with Cambridge University, presenting projects within co-operating manufacturing companies.

John retired in 1997. He has been a member of the Institution of Engineers Australia for over 50 years and has held a number of posts, including Chairman of the WA Division and National Vice-President for Education and Assessment.

HARRY HANSEN-KNARHOI

PMS Student 1945-49

Harry studied medicine at the University of Adelaide. Following a residency at Royal Perth Hospital he entered General Practice in Williams and then returned to Royal Perth Hospital where he made the decision to specialize in surgery. He studied in England for the English Surgical Fellowship and worked at the Royal Masonic Hospital and others.

Upon his return to Royal Perth Hospital in 1966 he was appointed Senior Registrar in General Surgery. By 1967 he had become a Plastic Surgeon initially operating at Royal Perth, Fremantle and Princess Margaret Hospitals. He remained at Royal Perth Hospital for thirty years and was active in teaching medical students and nurses.

Harry served as secretary of the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons between 1980 and 1984 and was its President from 1989 to 1991. He retired in 1997 and was appointed Emeritus Consultant Plastic Surgeon.

Of his four children, one is a Plastic Surgeon, another a General Practitioner.

HARRY COHEN AM

PMS Student 1945-49

Harry Cohen was a remarkable Modernian. He qualified as a medical practitioner at the University of Adelaide before undertaking studies in London to specialize in obstetrics and gynaecology. He became a visiting specialist at King Edward Memorial Hospital in 1972, where he worked for 45 years and eventually became medical director of gynaecology care and director of post-graduate studies.

But Harry's life was far broader than his significant contribution to King Edward. He was an active campaigner for a range of environmental and social issues. In some ways he was ahead of his time in that some of his stances attracted negative opinion but now the worth of his views is respected.

A member of the Conservation Council of WA he served two terms as its president and was a member of its Executive Committee from 1993 to 2004. Harry was heavily involved in the campaigns to ban uranium mining in Western Australia and to clean up radiation pollution in the mineral sands industry, the Rhone-Poulenc rare earths plant and the Pangea nuclear waste dump. Harry was also a member of Sustainable Population Australia and has served as its state and national president.



As a social activist it was on his initiative that the Trinity Learning Centre was established. Based at Trinity Church it ensured that young pregnant and parenting women could continue their secondary education. Hundreds of young women have benefitted. An active campaigner for peace Harry established the WA branch of Medical Association for the Prevention of War and served as its president and vice-president.

The Hon. Cheryl Davenport advocated for legislation, passed in 1998, which removed abortion from the criminal code. Harry worked closely with her to develop the legislation.

In a very busy life Harry found time to enjoy his and June's (his wife) love of music. He was the founder of the Wagner Society and a member of the Leider Society. He also served as president of Art Song Perth. At King Edward the public art gallery is named for him.

Harry married a fellow Modernian, June Cohen, who shared his love of music. His life continued to intersect with the school. In the 1980s when son Sebastian was part of the music program, he became president of the Parents and Citizens Association and inspired efforts to raise very significant sums of money for the general school program and for music. It was because of his influence that the music students undertook their ground breaking tour of Hong Kong and China in 1984. His negotiations overcame both political and financial obstacles.

In 1995 his contribution was recognised when he was made a Member of the Order of Australia 'for service to medicine, particularly in the field of obstetrics and gynaecology, and to international relations.' The Bessie Rischbieth Conservation Award is the most prestigious award, given by the Conservation Council of WA and is presented 'to an individual who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the WA environment, and who has had the courage to challenge government and non-government decision makers.' Harry was the recipient in 2004.

JAMES (JIM) DAVIES **PMS Student 1948-52**

Jim qualified as a teacher in 1955. Like so many of his generation he was 'bonded' which enabled the Education Department to post him at will to a number of country locations which included Donnybrook, Manjimup, Esperance, Pinjarra and Merredin.

In 1961 he returned to Mod as a teacher and met Sallie to whom he became engaged. In 1962 following Jim's promotion to Senior Master the newly married couple were posted to Margaret River High School for four years followed by appointments as Senior Master English at Collie and Balcatta Senior High Schools. His first appointment as a Deputy Principal was at Mirrabooka Senior High School, his second to Perth Modern School in 1981.

Jim took early retirement in 1992 and in addition to the many interests enjoyed by retirees, began to contribute as a volunteer. He served Kings Park as a guide but when Sallie accepted responsibility for Mod's Museum, increasingly devoted his energies to the Museum. For many years, every Monday would find Jim hard at work maintaining the Burvill Biographical Index.

Other volunteers would agree that perhaps Jim's greatest asset was his calm, cheerful personality and dry sense of humour which help maintain everyone's enthusiasm to contribute. The following tribute says it all, '*A cheerful and resolute friend and foundation volunteer at the museum/history centre at Perth Modern School. Jim readily shared his experiences and knowledge yet was happy to listen. Teacher, Deputy Principal and long-term volunteer loved and respected by all - a true Modernian.*'

KEN BETJEMAN **PMS Student 1955-56**

Ken Betjeman made a significant contribution to the teaching of science in Western Australian Schools. He graduated in geology and zoology from the University of Western Australia and became a science teacher for the Education Department of WA.

Ken's introduction into Western Australian schools of The Web of Life, an inquiry based biological course for senior secondary students, changed the biology was taught. Later, as Superintendent of science K-12 he provided system level leadership and support for the implementation of the program in government and non-government schools throughout the state.

JUDITH ALCOCK (née WILSON) **PMS Student 1955-59**

Judith Alcock has died after a long and difficult struggle with motor neurone disease. She was in the Maths/Science Stream at Mod and in her first year was the winner of the Shell Scholarship. Judy worked as a teacher but is best remembered for her tireless efforts on behalf of young people in drug rehabilitation. She was married to Eric Alcock, a former principal of Mod.



JOSEPHINE GILES
PMS Student 1973-77

Josephine was a music student. Latterly based in Melbourne, she pursued a varied career in the arts as singer (Melbourne Opera), actor, writer and reviewer.

MAXINE EDWARDS (née STOOKE)
PMS Student 1952-55

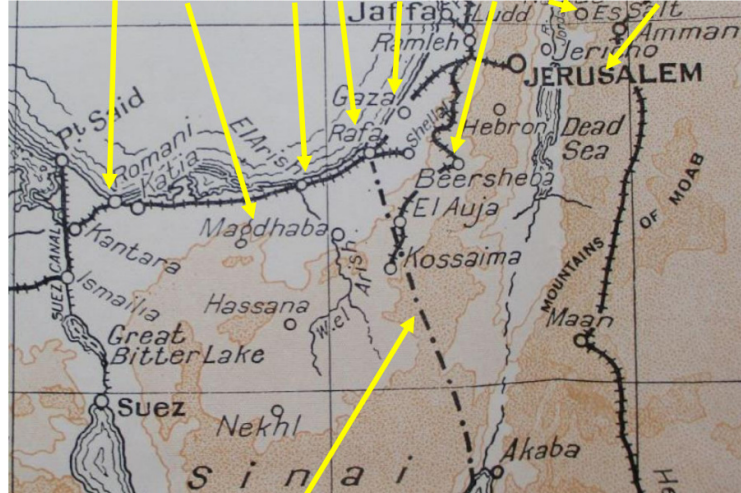
Maxine had a long and committed career as a nurse and educator working in paediatrics, sexual and reproductive health, occupational health and safety and aged care.

MODERNIANS WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

Number 23 in a special series of articles researched and prepared for publication by Robert Johnson, PMS student 1961-65 and Museum

The tragedy occurring in Israel has been receiving considerable attention from world leaders and the media in recent months. Places such as Arish, Rafah and Gaza have been on our TV screens daily. A little over a century ago, three former Perth Modern School students, all members of the legendary 10th Light Horse Regiment, gave their lives in that area. These are their stories.

Map showing Romani, Magdhaba, El Arish, Rafah, Gaza, Beersheba, Es Salt and Jerusalem in 1917.



Border between Egypt (UK) and Palestine (Ottoman) in 1917.

<https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/battles/the-campaign-in-egypt-and-palestine>

GEORGE FREDERICK HALL
PMS Student 1911

George Hall was born on 30 June 1894 to parents Albert and Hester Hall of Midland Junction. At age 16 he transferred from the Normal School to Perth Modern School when it opened in 1911. He studied at Claremont Teachers College and taught at Midland School in 1915.

On 18 January 1916 George enlisted in the 10th Light Horse Regiment and sailed from Fremantle with the 16th Reinforcements on 16 May 1916, arriving in Port Suez on 16 June. For the next four months George was attached to the Australian Stores Depot in Moascar during which time he spent a week in hospital with Pyrexia and three weeks with influenza. He returned to the 10th Light Horse Regiment on 12 October 1916, joining "C" Squadron.



At **Magdhaba** on 23 December 1916 the Regiment distinguished itself by charging through very heavy Turkish fire to secure critical water supplies. George survived **Magdhaba** but lost his life four months later on 19 April 1917 during the unsuccessful Second Battle of **Gaza**. The battle was poorly planned by the British generals and resulted in 6,500 British casualties, three times that of the Turks.

The Regiment's role in the battle was to capture the Atawineh Redoubt, a heavily defended position 15 kilometres south-east of Gaza, but it never had a chance. It took losses in the approach phase, was instructed to halt for several hours under shrapnel and high explosive fire, and then at 5:45pm was ordered to withdraw. While under heavy rifle and machine-gun fire, George was shot through the head. His body was unable to be recovered.

In 1919 a recovery team located what it described as "a heap of bones reasonably expected to be those of Hall" and buried them in **Gaza** Military Cemetery. George is one of 2,514 burials in the cemetery. He was 22 when he died.



HENRY CLAUDE LADYMAN PMS Student 1911

Henry Ladyman was born on 17 March 1890 in Huddleston, South Australia, to parents Henry and Sarah Ladyman. The family was farming near Katanning in Western Australia when Henry, aged 20, commenced at Modern School on 1 February 1911. After five months he left to become an Agricultural Cadet and he later became a wool classer.



Henry enlisted in the 10th Light Horse Regiment on 29 March 1916, two days after his 26th birthday and two months after George Hall. His group, the 20th Reinforcements, departed from Fremantle on 31 July 1916. After seven weeks in the Suez Canal area, Henry joined the Regiment near Romani on 12 October.

In July 1916, Turkish forces from Palestine attempted to capture the ground north of the **Suez Canal** to control passage through the Canal. British forces which included the Australian Light Horse stopped the Turks at the Battle of **Romani** in August. Following that, the Turks were pushed back towards Palestine in a series of actions.

Henry fought in the same action as George Hall at **Magdhaba** on 23 December 1916 and, like George, survived it but lost his life two weeks later. On 9 January 1917 the Regiment was ordered to capture a group of Turkish trenches eight kilometres south of **Rafah** on the border of Egypt and Palestine. During the attack Henry was wounded in the lower left leg by shellfire. He was evacuated to the Field Hospital at **El Arish** in Egypt, 50 kilometres to the west of Rafah, where he died the next day. Unfortunately, his grave could not be found when the dead were relocated to Jerusalem War Cemetery.

Trooper Henry Ladyman is one of 3,300 Commonwealth servicemen who died in Egypt or Palestine and who have no known grave. He is remembered on the Memorial to the Missing in the Jerusalem War Cemetery. Henry was 26 when he died.

DOUGLAS ROY CHIDGZEY PMS Student 1912

Doug Chidgzey was born in Albany on 15 May 1896 to parents George and Frances Chidgzey. He had four brothers and two sisters. He began his third year of high school at Modern School in the Agricultural course in February 1912 and left the school in September 1912.



On 14 June 1916 Doug and his older brother Vernon, both farmers, enlisted in the 10th Light Horse Regiment at Blackboy Hill, two months after Henry Ladyman. They had consecutive Army numbers and both were assigned to the 24th Reinforcements. They sailed from Fremantle on 13 February 1917 and arrived in Egypt on 12 March 1917.

Doug and Vernon reported on 18 April 1917 to the 10th Light Horse Regiment headquarters and were thrown straight into the fray the next day, the fourth day of the Second Battle of **Gaza**. As described above in George Hall's story, the Regiment's role was to capture the **Atawineh** Redoubt but it was unable to do so. Doug was wounded in the left arm and elbow not far from where George was killed.

On 31 October 1917 Doug was with the Regiment when it took part in the Battle of **Beersheba** 40 kilometres inland from Gaza. It was a stunning victory immortalised in the 1987 Australian film *The Lighthorsemen*. This action outflanked the Turks in Gaza and they withdrew a week later.

Doug lost his life on 30 April 1918 in another action that ended in failure, this time at **Es Salt**, 23 km west of Amman in what is now Jordan. The 10th played a minor role in this action and Doug was the only man killed in the Regiment. He was buried in the locality; however, as with Henry Ladyman, his grave could not subsequently be found.

Trooper Douglas Chidgzey is remembered with Trooper Henry Ladyman on the Memorial to the Missing in the Jerusalem War Cemetery. He was 21 when he died. Vernon survived the war and returned home in 1919.





Jerusalem War Cemetery

ON THIS WALL ARE
RECORDED THE NAMES OF
OFFICERS AND MEN OF
THE ARMIES OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM
WHO FELL IN
EGYPT AND PALESTINE
IN THE GREAT WAR
1914 - 1918
AND WHO HAVE
NO KNOWN GRAVES

Jerusalem Memorial to the Missing

LEST WE FORGET

A more detailed and fully referenced version of this article is on the Honour Board
at honour.perthmodern.wa.edu.au

