
FOLLOW FAIRBRIDGE THE FOUNDER



MAY 2017

THE OLD FAIRBRIDGIANS' ASSOCIATION - MOLONG

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hello everybody. As usual, time flies, with nearly half of the year gone already. Dennis and I had an exciting start to 2017, celebrating his 70th birthday on the 8th January with a party for 55 guests and great sixties music.

We travelled to Penrith in March for the AGM and enjoyed catching up with so many of our friends at the meeting. David Hill gave a moving account of the UK Inquiry into child migrant abuse. I'm sure I speak on behalf of all OF's in thanking David for the wonderful work he is doing in this regard.

I recently booked our accommodation at Templers Mill Motel in Orange for next year's reunion. I was pleasantly surprised to find they give a discount for Senior's Card holders, so be sure to ask about this when you're booking. I'm a bit put out though that I sounded old enough on the phone to be asked if I had a Senior's Card!

Once again as the deadline approached to do this newsletter, I had received only one story to put in it. With some help, we've contacted people and have some interesting personal stories in this issue. If you enjoy reading them, please give some thought to sharing your story. I'm sure your OF friends would enjoy hearing news of what you're doing now or recollections of the past. I'm happy to help if it's needed or contact your area representative or one of the committee and I'm sure they'd be happy to assist.

PLEASE NOTE: Closing date for the November 2017 issue is 16th October

Best wishes to everyone, especially those not enjoying the best of health or going through difficult times.

June Piercy
Editor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi once again to all Old Fairbridgians, Associate Members and families. I am pleased to report that at the 79th Annual General Meeting of our Association, held at the Penrith RSL Club on 19th March 2017, 35 members were in attendance with seventeen apologies accepted. This is despite having to postpone the meeting for a week, for which I sincerely apologise. I understand the inconvenience this may well have caused many of you.

With Secretary Brian over in the UK, our Queensland Area Rep Mary O'Brien kindly volunteered to record the minutes. As anyone who has ever filled the role of "minute Secretary" can vouch, it is not an easy task, particularly if you are recording them for someone else to "decipher and type up" later. Shorthand is the way to go, which fortunately counts me out. Again, many thanks Mary.

A detailed description and update of the British Government's Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was given by David Hill and was well received. (David will do a report for us when the Inquiry is completed later in the year.) David had only just returned from the UK where he attended the Inquiry as a core participant and witness for and on behalf of former child migrants, especially the Fairbridge kids. He is expected to return to the Inquiry in June/July. David's report was well received, with a healthy round of applause in appreciation.

As a result of receiving several Newsletters marked "return to sender" or "not at this address" recently, I am asking that anyone "moving house" please notify either myself and/or Secretary Brian and provide us your new contact details, including telephone numbers, (landline and/or mobiles) and email addresses where applicable.

Additionally, if you know of anyone who has passed away please notify us with whatever information you have. It has always been OFA policy to contact the

partner of a deceased Old Fairbridgian, firstly to offer our condolences, secondly to see if said partner wishes to continue their membership, (annual subscriptions cover member and spouse) and finally to ascertain if a deceased Old Fairbridgian may have had any memorabilia the family might like to donate to the OFA.

It would be remiss of me not to offer sincere thanks from Brian and myself to our current Committee members for their efforts this past year, with a very special thank you on behalf of all OF's to June and Dennis Piercy for their continued great work in producing our bi-annual Newsletters. Well done guys!

Please keep your stories, news, jokes poems etc coming, addressed to:

Mrs June Piercy
Newsletter Editor
32 Symphony Avenue
STRATHPINE QLD 4500

If emailing, please mark 'FAIRBRIDGE' in the subject line and address to:

junepiercy@netscape.net

PLEASE NOTE:

Closing date for November Issue is 16th October

Put this in your diary or on your calendar.

80th REUNION and ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

10th - 11th MARCH 2018

At Orange Ex Services Club.

We remind you that Orange is very busy that time of year so you are advised to make your accommodation arrangements sooner rather than later. The booking forms will be included in the November issue of our Newsletter along with any other relevant information re the weekend.

In closing, to any OF's not enjoying the best of health we wish you well and a speedy recovery.

Derek Moriarty
President

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hi Everyone. This report details the activities that your committee undertook for the period between November 2016 and May 2017.

The Committee held one meeting in 2016 and one following the AGM in Penrith in March 2017. I was unable to attend for the meeting in November 2016 due to a reoccurring hip problem. Thankfully the issue resolved itself without surgery. I was also unable to attend the AGM in March 2017 due to some family commitments in the UK. Many thanks to David Hill and Mary O'Brien for taking the minutes. An item discussed at the Executive meeting in March 2017 was the possibility of a property as a location for the next AGM in Orange. Will keep you all posted on that one. It was gratifying to see that 35 OFs attended the Bi Annual AGM in Penrith in March 2017.

David Hill gave a moving account of the Enquiry in Child Migration, which he attended in early March in the UK and in which he is a significant participant. We must acknowledge David's efforts in this issue, which he does on behalf of all Old Fairbridgians.

I have as the Secretary received advice on the transfer of all files previously held by the Fairbridge Foundation. The files have been transferred to the Family and Community Services of NSW. Phone number is 02 9377 6000 or email facsinfo@facs.nsw.gov.au. Contact person is Abigail Wallace.

There are a total of 373 files being held in trust including files with names of 86 former OFs who have outstanding funds in bank accounts. This file is headed GROUP ACCOUNTS transferred from CBB of Sydney-Molong. A copy of this letter received is included in this Newsletter.

I have recently had a complaint regarding a non-registering of an email address to our Internet database. This email address was mistakenly missed when setting up our database on the computer. There was

no malice on my part in the omission and I sincerely apologise for the omission. Please just RING me 0412 501137 if yours is not on our database. I must say I was extremely upset when I received this written complaint. After all, I am a human being, not a Robot and I do sometimes make mistakes, don't we all.

Address List	
Financial Members	184
Associate Members	25
Other Associations and organisations	8
Known Deceased	191

VALE. Total 191

Brian P. Kirkby
Secretary

WEBSITE UPDATE: oldfairbridgians.org

We still get enquiries from the general public seeking contact with Old Fairbridgians they knew many years ago. You can be assured that no addresses or contact details are given out to the enquirer without the consent of the OF involved.

One such enquiry came last month from a family who had known an OF in the sixties. I was able to mail the details to the OF concerned from the person making the enquiry. Hopefully they can all re-establish contact.

Please send more stories relating to the Farm School to me. This all contributes to the build up of the history of the Farm.

The Vale section is up to date as of May 2017 with all KNOWN deceased Old Fairbridgians. Please submit to Kirkby@senet.com.au or post to my home address as shown on the Newsletter. Many Thanks.

Brian Kirkby
Webmaster

TREASURER'S REPORT

As usual we have included a statement of Financial Standing in this Newsletter. However, if you did not receive one do not

be alarmed, it just means you are paid up to or beyond 2020.

Members are reminded that annual subscriptions are \$10.00 per year (including Spouse) and covers the year from 1st July to 30th June each year. Please make cheques/money orders payable to Old Fairbridgians Association-Molong and forward to:
Sandra Moriarty - Treasurer
Old Fairbridgians Association-Molong
46 Holborn Street
Berkeley NSW 2506

Receipts will be mailed out with the Newsletters to defray costs.

Sandra Moriarty
Treasurer.

AREA REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Mike Walker – Western Australia

Just before Christmas 2016 I visited Yeoval in the Central West of NSW to attend a 50th Wedding Anniversary. I was a groomsman at the ceremony in 1966. I had been working in the area for a couple of years and became friends with local young men of my age. Trevor the groom became an especially good friend. So I was delighted to be joining the celebration and looked forward to seeing people I had not seen for fifty years. One of these was fellow Old Fairbridgian Bill Foakes, also a groomsman.

Before heading over to NSW from WA I had a phone chat to OFA President Derek and he mentioned the idea of checking out a few re-located Fairbridge cottages in the general area. There were five cottages and the chapel. I said I would have a look and take a few photos of what I saw.

Derek mentioned that Nyassa Holmes had reported that Rose Cottage was in Cumnock which I had to drive through to get to Yeoval. So on my way I kept a look out for any possible cottages. They are quite distinctive in profile so that should make it easier.

Sure enough there in the main street of Cumnock was an obvious former cottage. No one was home so I took a few photos. I chatted to a neighbour who said yes it had been re-located from Fairbridge in the 1970's. I checked out the local carrier who had done the move but learned he had died with no known relatives, so on I drove to Yeoval.

The 50th was a wonderful gathering and I recognised many people from the original wedding, though obviously we have all changed shape a lot – some more than others! Bill Foakes was there, having travelled down from Taree. He looked very prosperous and extremely well-fed.

I drove around Yeoval town and looked for likely cottages but could only find the former Fairbridge Chapel (which I helped to erect), looking rather forlorn.

After the reunion I went back to Molong where I was staying with my brother and went via the locality of Garra. I had heard there were two cottages in this area. Well I looked around but could not see anything familiar and was leaving the area and took one last look back and saw a roof with those distinctive gables many cottages had, so I backtracked and made myself known to the occupant. She turned out to be the original purchaser from the 1970's. She had a copy of Rutherford's book about things Fairbridge and we noted on the village map that this was Canary Cottage. The lady invited me in to have a look around. I was amazed at the sturdiness of the place. It still looked very strong and well-made. It had been built of good quality materials, I could see. Most of the lining boards were still in place and many of the original fixtures including doors and cupboards. Naturally there had been modifications but it was a very large and comfortable family home.

When I asked about other re-located buildings she said there was one close by and directed me to it. This turned out to be Brown Cottage – my old gaol! Again the owners were very welcoming and invited me in to have a look at the place. Stepping through the front door I noticed on the

immediate right-hand side the original lockers where we used to keep what treasures we were likely to have. I was amazed how well- worn they were. Here too there was extensive change but the size of the place was most impressive. Everything was very solid looking with original fixtures as before, cupboards, wall lining boards and many original doors. The original dining room looked immense and was serving as the main living area with the other rooms with wooden floors and lots of space. A good big family home. The cottage mother's quarters had retained some features but had been modified to suit. These owners too were original purchasers in the 70's. They said they thought that another cottage had gone to Goodooga up near the Queensland border while Canary's owner said she thought one had gone to Eugowra. Hmmm?

Back in Molong I followed the rumour that Canonbar was somewhere about but only saw Lilac Cottage, a well- known landmark.

When I returned to WA I emailed my friend Trevor a photo of a cottage with a gable to help identify the possibility of locating Gowrie Cottage near Yeoval. The return email had a photo and the information that Trevor's farmer son was leasing the property where the cottage was!

Trevor also sent me a CD of "The History of the Fairbridge Settlement, Molong" compiled by David Hill and Ian Bayliff. I had forgotten that I had a copy of my own. When I played it I was able to confirm the location of the re-located cottages as follows.

1. The cottage in Cumnock is Red Cottage, not Rose.
2. Canary was indeed at Garra.
3. Brown is also at Garra.
4. The Chapel is in Yeoval.
5. Gowrie is near Yeoval.
6. Canonbar is located at Springwood in the Blue Mountains. Interestingly I drove back to Sydney and stopped at Springwood to visit the Norman Lindsay Art Museum. Of course I did not know about Canonbar then.

But what of Rose Cottage? Is it at Goodooga, Eugowra or somewhere else?

While I was visiting the Central West I called in to the new Orange Museum, quite an impressive building with items of local history on display. I noticed a small item about Fairbridge. A photo showed two girls setting the table for a meal. What totally flummoxed me was that they were using REAL CROCKERY! I never saw real crockery in the ten years I was at Fairbridge. Did the girls have this privilege?



RED COTTAGE



CANARY COTTAGE



BROWN COTTAGE



GOWRIE COTTAGE

Photos by Mike Walker

(If you would like a colour photo of "your" cottage, please e-mail Mike walk.even20@gmail.com)

MOLONG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Extract from MHS Newsletter)

This past year we estimate that we have had over five hundred visitors to the museum. Several have been Old Fairbridgians, some coming from overseas and interstate to view our Fairbridge room and photos and some leave their written memories. Speaking recently with David Hill, he said, "What you have is like nothing else in Australia". We often receive requests for photos from overseas museums, planning exhibitions on child migration; this illustrates its place in Australia's history. I don't see it stopping.

The Museum's first Exhibition is titled "JOURNEYS; people place stories" explores the region and people through time. This includes stories from all the regional museums in the Cabonne, Orange, Blayney Council areas. Molong Historical Society has contributed to the Rural History display (Shepherds Box, barbed wire story, gold scales and various tools), Migration (Story of Fairbridge Farm) and other sections.

BRIAN KIRKBY

Molong Remembrance Drive

Derek Moriarty and myself met with Angus McDonald the voluntary curator of the trees growing on our Remembrance drive in Molong in March 2016. Considering that I was not at the last AGM in Penrith I

thought it appropriate to relay to you the contents of that conversation between the three of us.

* There has been a change of CEO in the administration of the Molong Council. The previous CEO placed a lot of emphasis on all the landscaping that surrounds the town including the Memorial Drive. This emphasis is no longer a priority it seems, for whatever reasons. There is also a cost cutting exercise underway in the Council and it seems landscaping and its maintenance including the frequency of the cutting of the grass around the trees, are the victims. The Council is also undergoing amalgamation issues with the Carbone Shire and Orange Regional Council.

* Angus McDonald does most of the care in relation to the trees on behalf of the Molong Beautification Committee. Angus is truly a remarkable person who has dedicated much of his time in the care of these trees. We owe him many thanks for his efforts.

* Angus has been in discussion with the Council and other Horticultural people regarding the replacement of some of the Prunus species. Some of the Prunus trees are really struggling with the harsh, stony soil conditions on some sections of the Drive. Also, the Poplar tree roots are competing with the Prunus that are planted beneath them on the Gamboola side of the highway. The species are clearly unsuitable for some of the conditions that exist on this stretch of highway. Over the last four years some of the Prunus species have been infested with scale, which is a sign of stress. The consensus seems to be that the replacement trees should be a Callistemon (Bottle Brush) species. Angus has agreed to pursue this issue and progress a replacement programme. There are some funds still left in the Remembrance account for this to occur.

* Angus as of late has been removing some rogue Wattle trees at the top of the hill in the drive, which would have been a future problem for the Golden Elms

growing there. There is also a future issue with the Golden Elms which are really growing quite well on all sections of the drive. The issue relates to Dutch Elm disease, which is caused by the Dutch Elm beetle. Apparently there have been signs of this disease in the district. I am unsure if any of the Ulmus trees are affected though in the Drive. The disease is widespread in Europe, mostly affecting the common Ulmus procera which is the common Elm planted there. I will contact Angus in late May to follow up on this.

* The Fairbridge sign is also going to be repainted soon, as it is looking quite faded.

President Derek is going to write to the Mayor of Molong addressing the maintenance issues as per the request at the AGM.

Cheers Brian K.

NEIL KINGSWELL

Hello I am writing to you in regards to my late Uncle who attended Fairbridge in the late 1920's/30's. His name was Ronald James Kingswell. Would you happen to know if any photographs exist that may include my Uncle. Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Neil's e-mail address is nvk54@hotmail.com if anybody has any information for him.
Ed.

DENNIS PIERCY

Secretary Brian Kirkby has been contacted by Allen Mawer Jnr regarding the finding of an Honour Board with the heading "The Allen Mawer Memorial", showing the names of fourteen Fairbridge children. They are:

1953	James Smith
1954	John Orringe
1955	David Sinclair
1956	Malcolm Orringe
1957	Thomas Barker
1958	Ronald Sinclair
1959	Malcolm Field
1960	Douglas Miller
1961	Patrick O'Brien

1962 Graham Lee
 1963 Reginald Miller
 1964 G. Lee
 1965 Dennis Piercy
 1966 L. Lipscombe

Fortunately the board was saved from being dumped. In my file I have a copy of a letter from Mr Woods to The Director of the Fairbridge Society in London dated 3rd February 1966. Part of it says, "Dennis is doing very well in the Army and he was selected last year to receive the Allen Mawer Memorial Prize for the Best Pupil of the year." The letter was dated February 1966, I won the award in 1965 but left Fairbridge in January 1964! I've heard there was a prize of 25 pounds but not surprisingly, I didn't see it. A photo of the Memorial Board is included in this newsletter.

If anyone has any information about the origin of this award, would you please contact President Derek or Secretary Brian.

NEWSY BITS

David Eva is bursting with pride. His grandson Lawson Eva was picked in the Australian under 16's cricket team last summer on a successful tournament in Dubai and David thinks if he keeps going he will make the senior Australian team. Not *that* David is taking the credit. He readily admits he was 'bloody hopeless' at all sports at Fairbridge.

Sorry to hear that **Janet Barby** has been unwell and has been in hospital. We wish her a full and speedy recovery.

Congratulations to **Ian 'Smiley' Bayliff** on becoming a grandfather to beautiful identical twin boys. After the birth of Harry and Oscar, Smiley travelled to London to visit his daughter Kristie and son-in-law Mark and help bring the family home to Sydney. The twins were so identical they could not be told apart. Whenever Smiley picked one of them up he was given strict instructions to make sure that he put him back exactly where he found him.

Eventually they painted one of Harry's toe nails. Smiley reckons that now they are eleven months old the parents can tell them apart – but he isn't yet totally sure.

Congratulations to **Eric 'Chook' Fowler** for having a terrific article on growing flowers published in the Tamworth Times recently. We all knew 'Chook' was an accomplished gardener but didn't know he also writes for the newspaper.

His knowledge of flowers is amazing and he gives advice on species most of us have never heard of. Most of us know what a daffodil is, and maybe even freesias and hyacinths. But "Chook" is also an authority on such exotically named flowers as anemones and ranunculus.

Where did he get this interest? Well 'Chook' was in Gowrie Cottage, whose cottage mother for many years was the dreaded Mrs Johnstone. Known by many of us as 'the Witch', Johnstone was obsessed with winning the annual cottage gardening competition at Fairbridge and drove her kids like slaves to achieve it. Most of the kids hated it but it is good to see that at least 'Chook' got some lasting enjoyment out of the experience.

DAVID EVA

"LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE MY OWN HORSE AT FAIRBRIDGE"

We all remember as kids in England, being promised that when we reached Fairbridge we would each own our own horse that we would be allowed to ride to school. And of course, when we got there we found out that it wasn't true. But I was one of the lucky few – because I ended up with my own horse.

I arrived at Fairbridge in 1954 having had my eleventh birthday on the ship coming over. I never knew my parents as I was put into a home when I suppose I was three or four. I can remember going in a car to hospital and seeing a woman in bed and she said to me, "I'm your mother". I never saw her again. A long time after that

someone came into the home and said to me 'Do you want to go the Australia'. Arriving at Fairbridge was a shock and I never liked the place. But horses were my lucky break. Each of the Fairbridge kids was assigned work before and after school and I was given the job of looking after the horses and cleaning the riding gear that was kept hanging inside the Principal's house. At the time, I knew absolutely nothing about horses and don't ever remember seeing one before I came to Australia.

There was only a handful of horses at Fairbridge, kept in the paddock in front of Nuffield Hall on the way down to the vegetable gardens. Two of them, Beauty and Kitty belonged to the 'Boss's' daughters, Memory and Nyasa. The other horses, including Sandra, Betty and Honey belonged to Fairbridge. With 150 kids wanting to ride, it was only once in a blue moon that most of the Fairbridge kids got access to one of the horses on a free afternoon.

Memory and Nyasa were most of the time at boarding school in Bathurst, so I looked after their horses while they were away. It meant that I learned to ride and developed a great love of horses. I had a further piece of good luck when an older Fairbridge girl Mary Middleton left to go to nurse training and she somehow owned a horse named Melody which she gave to me when she left.

The highlight of my years at Fairbridge was the horses. It kept me sane. I don't think I could have survived the place otherwise. I loved most riding into town on Saturday mornings with a packed lunch to the Molong Pony Club with Memory and Nyassa Woods and Billy King, who also developed a love of horses at Fairbridge and rode Betty or one of the other Fairbridge ponies. Billy was lucky too because one of the farmers who came to the Pony Club gave him his own horse named Tassie, which Billy took back to Fairbridge.

As well as the regular Pony Club meetings we used to go to the local country shows

at Cumnock, Cudal and Manildra. They were all a fairly a long way from Fairbridge and we would leave around five in the morning when it was still dark, to ride there.

I loved Melody. When I finally left Fairbridge I got a job on a sheep station outside of Nyngan and gave Melody to Marina McMahan. When Marina finally left Fairbridge my boss agreed to bring a float to Fairbridge to pick Melody up and take her back with us to Nyngan. She stayed with me until she died.

IAN 'SMILEY' BAYLIFF

Every Fairbridge kid can recall their trip to Australia and for most it is a wonderful memory. I vividly recollect going at eight years of age with my brothers Syd, Graham and Stewart from Manchester to Knockholt in Kent to stay in that magnificent John Howard Mitchell House before we sailed. Like most children who went to Fairbridge we came from an extremely poor family and we couldn't believe the luxury of Knockholt. Huge, regular meals, big hot baths and a completely new wardrobe of summer and winter clothes (that mysteriously disappeared as soon as we reached Molong). Our voyage on S.S. Strathnaver in October 1955 was totally out of this world to us. The ship was so big; bigger than any building we'd ever seen. After initially all of us being sea sick in the Bay of Biscay we enjoyed plenty of good food and we were free to do just about whatever we wanted. We had terrific escorts and the happiest adventure – a complete contrast to the harsh reality of Fairbridge when we arrived.

Practically every Fairbridge kid I have talked to recalls having had a similar wonderful experience - but I reckon the greatest adventure of all must have been the trip to Australia described by Peter Bennet and Margaret Watts in David Hill's book. Peter was only six and came out in 1940 with his nine year old sister Marie and the Watt sisters Joy and Margaret. It was in 1940 and the second world war had started so all shipping was unsafe.

They left Newcastle on the *Duchess of Richmond* and sailed up the north east coast of England in the North Sea and into the North Atlantic as part of a war time convoy. Passing through icebergs in the north Atlantic, two merchant ships they were sailing with were sunk and other ships damaged by German U-boats. They sailed across to Quebec in Canada and up the Lawrence River to Montreal where they were put on a train that took them five days to cross Canada and the Rocky Mountains. There is a terrific surviving photo of Peter and the other children standing at a railway station next to the train. When they reached the west coast of Canada they stayed some weeks at the Fairbridge Farm School on Vancouver Island before boarding the *Orangi* for the long voyage across the Pacific. Stopping at Hawaii the kids were disappointed that approval to go ashore did not arrive from the US authorities until it was too late so they had to stay on board ship (this was the year before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour). They were luckier when they reached Fiji and were taken around the island and fed loads of coconuts, pineapples and bananas. The Fairbridge kids had never seen the fruit before and didn't know what it was. After Fiji they sailed on to Auckland in New Zealand where for most of the kids, they saw their first ever movie. They finally reached Sydney after eight months travelling – probably the longest trip of any Fairbridge kids to reach the Farm school at Molong – but probably one of the best.

SYDNEY LEE

A Farewell to my Best Friend Peter Burnham.

I am sorry to report that our great friend and former Fairbridge kid Peter Burnham died on the 7th April. His funeral was in Wollongong and it was good to see so many other former Fairbridgians there to say farewell.

I first met Peter more than sixty years ago in March 1955 when I arrived at Fairbridge as an eleven year old. I was separated from my three brothers, Graham, Ian and

Stewart and put into Red Cottage. Peter, who was then ten was already there, having come out as a six year old almost four years earlier.

Peter had no brothers or sisters at Fairbridge and never had any other family members in Australia. He never knew either his mother or father. It was not until he was in his 50's that he found a sister in England named Vera. A few years before he died he found out he also had a brother – but the two never met.

Red Cottage was an awful place and for years we had to live with the dreadful cottage mother Mrs Blackburn. While we lived in an unhappy place we kids stuck together and managed to create some fun for ourselves. One of my favourite memories was on Sunday afternoons when we would go rabbiting with Peter and other kids in our cottage in what was our only free time of the week. Having chased the rabbits into their burrows Peter was the only one prepared to stick his arm down to pull them out. The rest of us were too worried about grabbing hold of a poisonous brown snake.

Peter was a typical Fairbridge kid. He was tough, a sensitive and loyal friend and good at all the sports we played – but he didn't like the place. I recall he and I and a couple of others ran away once. We spent several days on the run, stealing food and hitch hiking. We were finally caught and locked up by the local police at Richmond before being taken back to Fairbridge to face the usual brutal punishment.

Like most Fairbridge kids Peter was given only the scantest education before leaving school at fifteen and working around the farm as a trainee. At seventeen he was found a job on a remote sheep station outside Nyngan in the north west of New South Wales, living in a shack with a dirt floor. As with many others who left Fairbridge he found living and sleeping alone traumatic because at Molong he at least had the friendship and the company of the other kids all through his childhood.

He then ended up in the Illawarra, where I and a number of other ex Fairbridge kids

lived and worked at the steel works, in the coal mines or in other local factories. Peter worked as an engine driver on the BHP steel trains. At one stage Peter and I flattened together with my brother Ian and Mick Drury. There were always other ex Fairbridge kids dropping in and sleeping on the floor.

Peter married Christine Maycock, another Fairbridge kid and they were together for more than fifty years. I can still remember being at the wedding, which was shortly before I married Jan. Together Peter and Christine had four children, Sean, Paul, Sarah and Julie. Right now our thoughts and sympathy are with Christine and the family.

Peter and I saw each other regularly over the years, including spending holidays at my place in Wallerawang and Jan and I would often visit the Burnham's at their place at Oak Flats. Their house was always jam packed with children, grandchildren, great grand-children and assorted other friends.

I will sorely miss him, he was my best friend for over sixty years.

PETER HARROP

Dear Derek and the Old Fairbridgians

My name is Peter Harrop, the son of John Emslie Harrop and grandson of Harry and Margaret Harrop. I am writing this email to inform you that my dad, John, passed away after a long illness on the 22nd October 2016. My Aunty and his sister, Julie, mentioned to me that she had contacted a few of hers and dad's Fairbridge friends about my dad's death, however I thought that all those that knew him or knew of him should know of his passing if they have not heard already.

My dad loved talking about the old Fairbridge farm school and the memories he had of it, most of which involved my grandfather, whom I recall was heavily

involved in its operations. Dad also looked forward to receiving the newsletters or hearing any news that came from your association as it brought back fond memories for him.

In the coming weeks I plan on going on to Molong and visiting the trees that were planted there in honour of Fairbridge's history. My dad was always keen on visiting them when he had the chance.

One request I have is if there are any photos of my grandparents Harry and Margaret and even my dad at Fairbridge, would it be possible if copies can be made of them so that myself and my brother (also named Harry) can have a look at important aspects of our family's history. Even stories or memories of my grandparents would be greatly appreciated.

These could be sent to my email or sent to my address: 3 Mellor Place, Bonnyrigg Heights, NSW, 2177.

My contact number is 0423 057 865

Last and certainly not least, on behalf of my family, I would like to thank everyone who knew my dad John as a good friend and a loving and caring person. As I said, he loved talking about Fairbridge and its history and he cherished all the memories he had from the time he spent there helping out his parents.

Kindest regards,
Peter Harrop

VALE

It is with deep regret that we record the passing of:

William Boyle (91 years) - 19th January 2017
 John Basil Stocker - 21st February 2017
 Keith Wood - 2nd September 2014
 Peter Burnham – 7th April 2017
 John Emslie Harrop – 22nd October 2016
 Colin Harris – 5th December 2016

“The Village” by Jim Napper

Some cottage mothers were cold and stern
 With no love in their hearts to share
 Giving us rules that we had to learn
 But none not one covering love or care.

If we played up and then got caught
 For our caning we went to the store
 Mr Woods said you will be taught
 So don't be sent here any more.

Lying awake in our creaking beds
 Wondering what life had in store
 So many thoughts entering our heads
 Till sleep gently closed the door.

The village centre was Nuffield Hall
 Where we ate our breakfast and dinner each day
 An imposing building with a tower so tall
 Something you remembered as you drove away.

The cottage gardens we helped to make
 Neatly set out with white painted rocks
 Gravel roads all around for us to rake
 With feet so sore with no shoes or socks.

They taught us how to milk a cow
 And feed and water the chooks
 And some of us even learned to plough
 The rest we would learn from text books.

I was so excited but really scared I guess
 When I left the school and my friends
 It was up to me now to make a success
 Of my new life as my childhood ends.



David Calver
Chairman
Fairbridge Foundation
155 King Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Calver

I refer to the meeting held on 28 September 2016 between yourself and representatives of NSW State Records, Recordkeeping Innovations Pty Ltd and the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) regarding the possibility of FACS accepting custody of the Foundation's surviving out of home care records under s.170 *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act*.

FACS has recently received the listings and preliminary assessments compiled by Recordkeeping Innovations of the Foundation's records.

Following careful consideration of that material, FACS would be delighted to accept custody of the records listed in the attached schedule.

Although FACS has no capacity to accept the other surviving records, I note that they may be of interest to the State Library of NSW.

Abigail Wallace will be FACS' contact person for the physical transfer of the records from the Foundation's premises to the State Archives at Kingswood. Ms Wallace can be contacted on 9716 3499 or via Abigail.Wallace@facs.nsw.gov.au.

Please be assured that the records will be appropriately maintained and that FACS will provide ongoing access for the Foundation's care leavers to their personal information in the records.

Yours sincerely,

 12.12.16
Juliet Munro
Director Records Access

Department of Family and Community Services
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