



The Mail

THE ASOPA CHALKIES NEWSLETTER

Number 110 – April 2007

TOKTOK GRIS

Keith Jackson

KEN MCKINNON mulls over the title of his talk for October's reunion. The Brisbane organisers suggest *ASOPA - educating New Guinea: an episode of historical importance which resonates today*. Heavy! I favour *ASOPA: reflections, recollections, reminiscences*. Light! Ken says he has in mind a talk offering his perspective on "the worth of all our efforts, including some of the earlier history that led up to cadet training at ASOPA, the initiation and development of the E course, and other developmental history in which I was involved." Whatever the title, it sounds just fine to me.

COLIN HUGGINS is organising a rehearsal of the 'River Cat Crawl' to be offered as a reunion activity. The rehearsal is planned for Saturday 26 May starting from the Sofitel Whistle Bar on the Concourse of Central Railway Station where people will gather from 10.15 am for a bulk load of kilojoules before the Crawl starts at 11 am. There will be some walking, a River Cat experience and then lunch at Southbank. "The Crawl is open to anyone who wants an early mini-reunion and who own sneakers," says Colin. Contact him on 07 3357 1883 or at Colin.Huggins@brisbane.qld.com.au.

HENRY BODMAN seeks photos for a video feature to provide a backdrop to the Grand Reunion Dinner. According to Henry "they should be graphic (stark teaching conditions), amusing (animal acts), high points (Dave Argent educates PNG prime minister Paias Wingti), group shots, plenty of ASOPA stuff..." Email photos to hmacdb@ozemail.com.au or post to 37 Norman Street, Fig Tree Pocket 4069. After ploughing through hundreds of fading snapshots, Henry observes: "I can confirm there was a time when we were very young, earnest, pimplly people."

"YOU KNOW how it goes," writes Peter Blackburn (ASOPA 1967-68). "Terry O'Keefe passed it on to Michael Davies who passed it on to me." Peter says he enjoys reading *The Mail*. "I am now located in Hobart (unlike most who opted for warmer climes) and am always

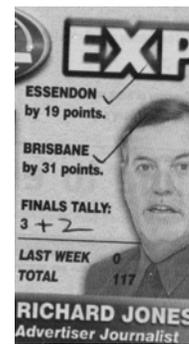
happy to welcome ASOPA graduates for a meal and a glass of the necessary."

ROB CUTTELL [ASOPA 1969-70] says the late John Beagley was a contemporary of his at the School, not a 1967-68er as recorded in *The Mail*. Rob says he last saw John in 1971 when he visited him on Buka. "I was at Iarowari High for a year and Goroka High for a year before going to Christmas Island for three years," says Rob. "I then returned to Australia and have lived and taught in Canberra ever since."

ALBERT MISPEL has wondered for some time what happened to John Hunter, who was at Kukuipi and Goroka and probably other places. Albert used to emerge unannounced from the Gulf swamps and throw himself on John and Jan's hospitality "which looking back", he says, "seems rather thoughtless, like not even with a bottle of red." John may have ended up in Tasmania or gone home to New Zealand. Albert would dearly like to say 'hello' again so, if you know John's whereabouts, contact Albert at mispelit@gmail.com.

THERE WERE many familiar faces at Saturday's 'back to ASOPA' gathering at the old School – which retains a certain dignified beauty despite being a little battered around the edges. The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust is doing a great job in trying to ensure that the site will appropriately commemorate the existence of ASOPA and ITI, but your help is needed to make this a reality. See the story 'Can ASOPA live again?' on the next page.

A WEBSITE dedicated to aerial pingpong www.australianrules.com.au asked a number of celebrities to pontificate on the big questions about this year's AFL season. Among great names like WA Premier Alan carpenter and Sudhir the Astrologer is former *Bendigo Advertiser* sports editor and ASOPA old boy, Richard Jones. Richard hopes "that now the Cats have not won the NAB cup and mozzed the season proper, the said season proper becomes a bonanza for the hooped marvels". I am sure that, appropriately translated, these words will be a beacon for the nation.





CAN ASOPA LIVE AGAIN?

They may be greyed and a little stooped, but the spirit is still there. Nearly 60 former staff and students of ASOPA and ITI returned to the old campus this weekend to discuss how to demonstrate the significance of the site and its buildings. While the site's conservation is already agreed, there remains a need to assemble a powerful reason for appropriately interpreting the existence of the School.

What this means in reality is whether the School will be marked by a simple plaque or by something more substantial, such as a research centre or a commemorative display.

"There's a great feeling of belonging that exists among people who have been associated with this place," said Bob Clarke, Sydney Harbour Trust architect responsible for the site.

But he added its significance needs to be demonstrated and the best people to do that are those who worked and studied there.

Ingrid Jackson is coordinating a project on behalf of the Trust in which people are being asked to provide information including:

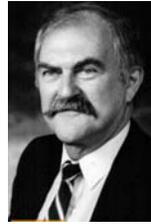
- Reasons why ASOPA/ITI should be considered a site of significance.
- Comparable institutions in other countries.
- Indications of photographs, documents or other memorabilia in your possession that may be of interest to a research centre

You can help keep ASOPA's memory alive by emailing Ingrid at grasmere@bigpond.net.au or faxing her at (02) 9904 0960.

200 EXPECTED IN BRISBANE

More than 200 Australians who taught in Papua New Guinea leading up to Independence in 1975 will gather in Brisbane for a three day reunion in October. It will be the largest gathering of former PNG education officers, who will come from Japan, Great Britain, Scandinavia and throughout Australia.

The ex-teachers will be addressed by Emeritus Professor Ken McKinnon, Chairman of the Australian Press Council, who earned a reputation as a visionary Director of Education in Papua New Guinea from 1966-73.



"From the late 1950s, as Australia began to accelerate the pace of national development, hundreds of Australians were recruited to teach in PNG," said head of the organising committee, Henry Bodman [left].

"ASOPA ensured we were prepared for the rigours of serving in remote regions of PNG, teaching tribal people many only recently contacted by Australian patrols."

Many former PNG teachers went on to contribute at a senior level to education in Australia and around the world.

"Thirty years on they are a closely knit group, bonded by the challenges they faced in often harsh physical conditions," said Mr Bodman.

"First, build your classroom' was often the instruction given before the teachers left Australia. And, in their remote schools, they often had to play the role of health advisor, technician and mediator of tribal disputes.

"One of their great contributions to education in PNG and Australia was the way they involved their schools in community development issues that went way beyond formal education.

"A number of State education departments later adopted the same process thanks to the experience developed by those teachers in PNG which filtered back to Australia."

HEAD CHALKIE FOR REUNION?



Dr Joseph Pagelio [left], PNG's Secretary for Education, has been invited to speak at the Brisbane reunion. Joseph has spent more than 30 years as a teacher and educational administrator. After

secondary school he attended Goroka Teachers' College and, in 1975, became a high school teacher in Morobe Province. More recently he has gained a doctorate in education from Queensland University of Technology.

Since his appointment as Secretary early last year, he has led an education system facing a array of difficult geographical, social and economic challenges. "Progress may seem slow," he says, "but you must remember we started in 1993 from a very low base."



Inveterate
traveller

Jean Lowe [ASOPA 1961-62],
recently in Indo-China, writes of
palaces, spiders, Golden Buddhas
and Pol Pot's killing fields.

Back home after a month in Indo China. Two weeks in Vietnam visiting Saigon, the Mekong Delta, Viet Cong tunnels, China Beach (anti climax), Hoi An's quaint old time seaport and home of same day tailoring and exquisite needlework pictures.

Then Hue, the capital of Kings, the Nguyens, who have conferred their name on seven pages of descendants in the Sydney telephone directory.

A cruise in a junk in Halon Bay [*pictured*] through beautiful sculptural rock formations in a sea full of caves and grottos. Then a train journey in a four-berth sleeper to Lao Cai en route to the lonely mountain resort of Sapa.

Hanoi, including Ho Chi Minh's tomb, is shut down for the Set New Year holiday. We wander around the large parklands surrounding his two homes, and are quietly pleased to be spared his embalmed body.

Laos is an eye opener. It was a hard line Maoist regime. Vientiane is a small pleasant capital with French colonial buildings and a former royal palace: the royal family being murdered by the communists much to the dismay of the people. Two younger sons escaped to France and a daughter runs a hotel in Luang Prabang, the former capital.

Out of the small town of Van Vien II think it means "basic accommodation" in Lao) we shot the rapids down the Nam Song River, rode a 'water buffalo' (a covered cart pulled by a tiny ancient tractor).

Of the 18-strong party, four of us decided to scale Karst Mountain. The toughest thing I've done and I wondered if I'd completely lost my senses. After a long climb we reached a cave with an incredible golden Buddha (the millionth one I'm sure. The scramble down was terrifying.

Phnom Penh in Cambodia is a beautifully laid out capital, wide boulevardes, gardens, Royal Palace, museum... But brooding over it all are Pol Pot's killing fields. I just broke up – and sat in a little park away from it all while the others

Travels

did a guided tour. Then a tour of the torture chambers and gaol, which others and I could not face.

I remember too well the accounts of Pol Pot's atrocities. Three million Cambodians murdered: most of the intellectuals and professionals (particularly school teachers and doctors), foreigners not spared and all older people.

Next day to the Museum and Royal Palace and a lovely walk along the Mekong, lined with market stalls selling roast water beetles, snails, cockroaches, crickets, bugs of all kinds and large, black tarantula spiders. Our guide told us people were reduced to eating anything that moved and promptly ate a spider.

I've been waiting 35 years to visit Angkor Wat, the thousand year old Hindu temple shrine and tomb, and now I was there. It was more than I expected. We spent three days visiting many of the different ruins, some overtaken by jungle, and climbing the steep stairways to the temple mounts.

The last visit is to the great lake, Loni Sap with its floating villages and fish and crocodile farms. The Loni crocs are a smaller version of our salt-water beasts.

Then home, catching something on the plane trip between Siem Reap and Saigon and under the weather since, trying to cope with mail and the business of just surviving.

2 DO IT TOUGH ON CONTINENT

Ingrid and I are on the eve of a six-week jaunt to Europe, which will delay the distribution of *The Mail* next month. After spending Easter in London, we're off to Athens, where I'm speaking at a public relations conference, before cruising the Mediterranean, driving through the Italian Riviera and then hunkering down in the Cotswolds. The *ASOPA PEOPLE* blog will continue, so keep those emails flowing.

This newsletter is published for people associated with the former Australian School of Pacific Administration. It's available for news, anecdotes, opinions and idle thoughts. Write to Keith Jackson at PO Box 1743 Neutral Bay NSW 2089 or email him at benelong@bigpond.net.au



Vignettes

"Father," he barked, "there are only three rules for selecting staff...." **Keith Jackson** recalls his first attempt at recruitment

Radio Bougainville was my first station as a fully fledged manager. And like Radio Rabaul, it had run into problems with the people it was broadcasting to. Soon after I arrived, I did a stocktake at the station. The storeroom was crammed to the rafters with new radios - still in their cartons. In those days, to encourage radio listening, the Government gave radio sets away free to the people. I asked why the radios hadn't been distributed. The people don't want them, I was told.

Stories had come back to the station about villagers burning their radios and chopping them apart with axes. "The Government station broadcasts propaganda," it was said. "It tells us the copper mine is good for us -and we know it isn't. So we don't want to listen." The conclusion was inescapable. There was no point operating a radio station that didn't have an audience. Having been through a similar experience in Rabaul, I wasn't anxious for a repeat.

Indeed, the Kieta radio station was notorious for its pro-Government, anti-islander broadcasts and the only instruction I'd been given by the Controller, Jim Leigh, was to regularise the situation as best I could. In practical terms this involved getting the District Commissioner and his

cohorts off the air and excising their influence from the station's programs. The police guard was removed from the studios. We took advice from village leaders and offered Bougainvilleans a greater say in what was broadcast, interviewing more people on air and giving the station a real local feel. We held huge outdoor concerts for local string bands and dancers. We went on patrol to villages armed only with our tape recorders.

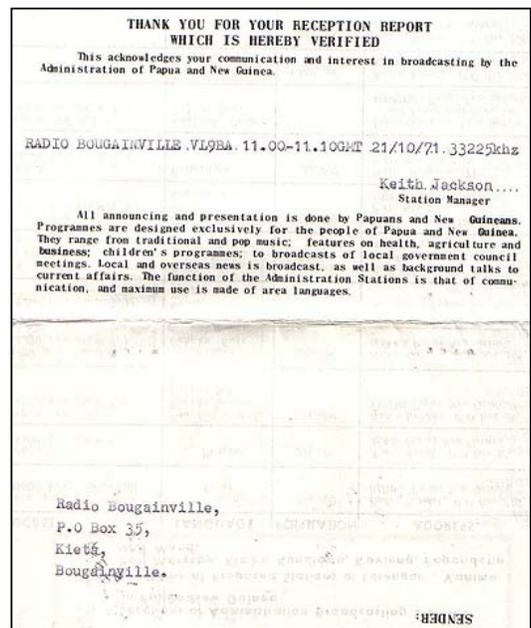
We also recruited and trained more young Bougainvillean broadcasters. The inimitable Controller of Broadcasting, Jim Leigh, called me on the radio telephone from Moresby to advise me about this process. "Father," he barked, "there are only three rules for selecting staff. One, be rational not emotional. Two, put 'em under pressure. Three, check their references. Over."

As luck would have it, Jim was in Kieta for an annual inspection of the station when one of the young hopefuls came in for interview. Jim told me he'd sit in on the session to see how I went. The applicant was a fine-looking 18-year old Bougainvillean woman from a nearby village. When she walked into my office, Jim was immediately infatuated.

"What's your name, dear," Jim simpered. "Perpetua Tanaku," came the reply, "but my friends call me Pepi." "Pepi," Jim sighed. And the delightful Miss Tanaku added: "Pepi is short for Perpetua and comes from the word perpetual which means everlasting." Then she turned

to Jim with big black eyes and added: "You can call me Pepi."

The preliminaries over, I was just about to jump in and ask my first objective question which I hoped would put Pepi under some pressure preparatory to checking her references when Jim leapt to his feet and yelled, "You're hired!"



Photos: Top - Kieta Harbour looking north. Above - Vintage Radio Bougainville reception report card. The cards were sent to shortwave radio buffs to verify they had indeed tuned in to the station in question. Courtesy SWL QSL Card Museum

CONTRIBUTIONS

With Brisbane 2007 looming, we'd like *The Mail* to feature some of your own treasured reminiscences, reflections and anecdotes. Email them to benelong@bigpond.net.au or post them to the editor at 28 Benelong Road, Cremorne 2090. We'll return your pics.

Reunion diary

EVENTS

1961-62 REUNION: CEDAR LAKE 24-26 AUGUST

Contact David Keating:
PO Box 73, New Farm, Queensland 4005



KIAP REUNION: BUDDINA 11 NOVEMBER 2007

Kawana Waters Hotel, Nicklin Way, Buddina,
Queensland (bar opens at 11 am)

Contact Bob Fayle on 07 5444 7446 or email
bobfayle@hotmail.com

THE BIG REUNION: BRISBANE

Sofitel & Novotel Hotels

12-14 OCTOBER

Information about Brisbane '07 on this website:
<http://www.bohlen.com.au/Brisbane.htm>

ACCOMMODATION

SOFITEL HOTEL - \$195

To book room at discount rate, quote code ASO1007. Floors 10-21, \$195 per night. Concierge Rooms, \$235. Club Rooms, including Sofitel Club, \$270 single, \$300 double. Club accommodation includes free breakfast and afternoon canapes and cocktails in the Sofitel Club. Reserve by providing credit card details to JadeThompson-H5992-SB06@accor.com or phone 07 3835 3535. If you extend your stay you will be given the same room rate subject to availability.

NOVOTEL HOTEL - \$150

To book room and get the special deal, quote code ASOPA2007. Make your reservation by providing your credit card details. Pay when you leave the hotel. Bookings through LauraOusby-H1749-RE01@accor.com or phone 07 3309 3309. If you extend your time at the Novotel you will be given the same room rate subject to availability.

PROGRAM

FRI 12 OCTOBER

Meet & Greet. 6pm: Drinks & dinner at Sofitel Chez Bar & Bistro (1962-63) and Novotel pool deck (1960-61).

SAT 13 OCTOBER

ASOPA Golf Day. 7.30 am., Victoria Park Golf Course, Herston [5 mts from Brisbane CBD]. Transport from hotels can be arranged. Nine-hole event organised by Les Lyons leslyons@iinet.net.au and Bill Welbourne wwelbour@bigpond.net.au.

Rivercat Crawl. 10.15 am for 11 am start. Sofitel Whistle Bar [behind Concourse newsagency at Central Railway Station] for eats prior to walk and ferry to Southbank.

Lunch: Southbank.

Evening: 7 pm: Main Event at Sofitel Le Grand Ballroom 3, \$95 a head including three-course meal and beverages. Keith Jackson, master of ceremonies; Ken McKinnon, guest speaker. Reps from each year will deliver brief remarks. Friends welcome. \$50 deposit required to reserve table. People not wishing to organise a table be allocated. Provide Henry Bodman at hmacdb@ozemail.com.au with one of the booking codes below to indicate your group

SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER

Goodbye, Farewell, Adios. Lunch: Southbank or Riverside. 7 pm: Last Supper - Bow Thai Restaurant [cost \$30-35, not including drinks].

BOOKING CODES

G1	1957/1958	G2	1958/1959
G3	1959/1960	G4	1960/1961
G5	1961/1962	G6	1962/1963
G7	1963/1964	G8	1964/1965
G9	1965/1966	G10	1966/1967
G11	1967/1968	G12	1968/1969
G13	1969/1970	G14	1970/1971
G15	1971/1972	G16	1972/1973
G17	1973/1974	G18	1974/1975
G19	E Course Teachers & Missionaries		
G20	Former Lecturers, Staff & Friends		
G21	Patrol Officers & PNG Expatriates		

PARKING

Novotel: Free

Sofitel: \$20 per night

Brisbane '07 roll call

ARGENT DAVE	Kerry	1962-63	
ARNOLD DICK	Jo	1960-61	Novotel
BODMAN HENRY	Janelle	1962-63	Sofitel
BOHLEN DIANE	Bill	1962-63	Sofitel
BOOTH COL		1962-63	Sofitel
BOOTH WENDY		1962-63	Sofitel
BRIGG PAUL	Margaret	1960-61	Sofitel
BRUMBY ED		1964-65	
BURRELL DENNIS	Ros	1962-63	Private
CAMERON ANDREW		1960-61	Novotel
CHAPMAN JEFF	Robyn	1962-63	Private
CLARKE DICK	Numa	E-Course	Novotel
COCHRANE BOB	Kay	1958-59	
COLWELL JOHN		1966-67	
CRAINEAN JOE	Kathryn	1962-63	Private
DANIELS DONALD		1966-67	
DAVIS BOB		1962-63	Sofitel
DOYLE JOHN	Cheryl	Friend	Sofitel
DUGGAN JUDY		1960-61	
DWYER MARGARET		1962-63	Private
FINTER JUSTINE		1962-63	Private
FLANNERY BARRY		1962-63	Private
FREEMAN MIKE	Sandy	1964-65	
GRAINGER SONIA		1962-63	Sofitel
HARD ROD		1962-63	Sofitel
HUGGINS COLIN		1962-63	Sofitel
HUGGINS GRAHAM	Gail	Friend	
HUNTER ROGER	Jan	1960-61	
JACKSON KEITH	Ingrid	1962-63	Sofitel
JONES ALLAN	June Paterson	1962-63	Private
JONES RICHARD	Judyth	1962-63	Novotel
KESBY DAVE	Elissa	1962-63	Novotel
KOROSEC JACK		1964-65	
LEWIS PETER	Margaret	1962-63	Novotel
LIVINGSTONE DOROTHY		1960-61	Novotel
LOWE JEAN		1962-63	Novotel
LYONS LES		1962-63	Sofitel
LYONS MARGARET		1962-63	Sofitel
McKINNON KEN	Sue Walker	1954	Sofitel
McLEAN IAN		1962-63	Sofitel
MOLONEY CHRIS	Diane	1960-61	Sofitel
NEITZ JOHN			
O'BRIEN RORY		1962-63	Sofitel
PATERSON BARRY		1962-63	Novotel
PATERSON JANINE		1963-64	Novotel
PHILPOTT RODGER		1962-63	Sofitel
POLLOCK HELEN		1966-67	
RALPH HOWARD	Glenda	1962-63	Novotel
RENTOULE DICK	Kay	1960-61	Novotel
RIVERS VAL		1962-63	Sofitel
SCOTT THERESA		Friend	Private
STANLEY ROGER		1962-63	Novotel
STENNING BILL		1960-61	Novotel
ST JOHN TONY		1960-61	
TOWNSEND DAVID		Friend	Novotel
VALARIS EMMANUEL	Anna	1964-65	Sofitel
WELBOURNE BILL		1962-63	Sofitel
WHITTINGHAM MARGARET		1960-61	Novotel
WILKINS KEN	Robyn	1964-65	
WILLIAMS DON		1964-65	
WILSON BILL	Anita	1962-63	

At 22 March 2007