

December 2023 Vol 51, No 3

From the President

Welcome to **AMICUS**, Volume 51, Number 3. As we transition to a biannual publication in 2024, the September/December editions have been combined. From 2024, **AMICUS** will be published in April and October. As you may be aware, the **BSHAlumni** Facebook group has also been created this year and is providing an ideal medium to engage with an increasing number of past students. My personal thanks to **Rhonda Binnie** (Class of 1982) for creating our Facebook group and accepting the role of administrator for this social media platform.

Individual Facebook groups have also been coordinated for each and every class from 1951 to 2023. Class groups can be found by searching '**BSHS Class of ____**' in the search field on Facebook. The effectiveness and immediacy of social media is a major component in this decision, which is also partially due to the limited resources at our disposal. Our communication with past students will be enhanced by the biannual publication of **AMICUS**, notifications via **State High Connect** and ongoing communication via **Facebook**.

The **BSHAlumni** acknowledges and thanks those past students who have become Life Members and those who have renewed their financial membership in 2023 as well as those current students who have joined as Associate Members. All current students are encouraged to become Association Members of the **BSHAlumni**.

To ensure that our Association remains viable and retains the ability to support the school, all past students are encouraged to:

- [Become financial members of the BSHAlumni](#)
- [Register your details on State High Connect](#)
- [Join the BSHAlumni Facebook Group](#)
- [Follow the BSHAlumni Facebook Page](#)
- [Connect to your 'BSHS Class of ____' group by searching on Facebook](#)

I wish all of you a wonderful festive season and I look forward to your support of your association in 2024.

Regards,

Barry Irwin (Class of 1961)

BSHAlumni President and Registrar

From the Editor

As 2023 draws to a close, it is a good time to reflect on the year that was. Thankfully, we have left the global pandemic behind. However, 2023 has come with other forms of uncertainty, including an ongoing war in Ukraine and conflict in the Gaza strip. Closer to home, there is an undersupply of new homes being built due to increases in the costs of supplies and labour. This is coupled with increasing interest rates and stubborn high inflation, placing pressure on household budgets. Thankfully, unemployment remains low.

Amongst all of this, many of our Alumni have found solace and inspiration by connecting with each other, with friends, peers and teachers, from their school days. It seems that this trend is catching on, with **BSHAlumni** enjoying growth in membership and engagement throughout 2023.

The **BSHAlumni** hosted **State of High Arts** on Riverfire night on 2 September 2023. It was our second year of running an annual networking event, which brought together Alumni from all age groups. Personally, I had the chance to reconnect with people I hadn't seen for years. It made me realise that it was too long since I had seen them, and I only wish I had stayed in touch more often. The event is growing each year and I'd encourage you to attend next year's event, tentatively scheduled for August 2024. Thank you to all who attended the event.

For the Class of 2023, we wish you all the very best for the future, no matter where your chosen path takes you. Remember to stay connected with your alumni, they will become increasingly important as times goes on. Keep in mind that the **BSHAlumni** will be here to help you to do so.

We were very saddened to hear of the passing of **William (Bill) George Hayden AC** on Monday 23 October 2023. Bill was an Australian politician who served as the 21st Governor-General of Australia from 1989 to 1996 and was one of our most prominent alumnus. I remember very fondly the day that Bill, as the then Governor-General, came to open what was then **State High's** junior campus in 1990. An incredible day to see a former **State High** student return to the school as Governor-General of our country. Our thoughts are with his family during this difficult time.

As this is the last edition for this year, I'd like to thank you for reading and contributing to **AMICUS** in 2023. I'm sure you'll agree that the alumni we have profiled this year have achieved some truly remarkable things. May you and your dearest enjoy the Christmas and New Year period and I look forward to sharing the stories of our alumni in 2024.

Regards,

John Cowie (Class of 1994)

AMICUS Editor and **BSHAlumni** Vice President

Our Amazing Alumni

Animation milestone



Earlier this year, award-winning independent Australian animator **Dennis Tupicoff** (Class of 1967) celebrated the release of his new film '*The Only Photograph of Emily Dickinson, American Poet*'. Dennis is known for using hand-drawn animation and live action to create films that portray life and death.

Queensland Theatre welcomes Criena Gehrke



Queensland Theatre has announced the appointment of **Criena Gehrke** (Class of 1984) as their new Executive Director. Criena has an extensive background in the arts industry having dedicated her career to fostering creativity and championing artists and the arts. Criena was the inaugural CEO of HOTA (Home of the Arts) on the Gold Coast.

Martin Green is hot property in solar



Professor Martin Green AM, Class of 1965 and **State High Legend**, is receiving the rich accolades he deserves. Last year, he received the Millennium Technology Prize and in October he received the prestigious Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering. Martin was first to describe, and his team was the first to develop and demonstrate, two fundamentally different approaches to improving silicon cell performance that now underpins all modern silicon solar cell designs. At the heart of Martin's success has been the development of technology that markedly increases solar energy efficiency.

Okine gives back for Book Week



Matt Okine (Class of 2002) was welcomed back to State High for Book Week to speak to Year 8 English classes about his book, *'Being Black 'n Chicken & Chips'*. Since graduating, Matt has thrived in the arts industry as an award-winning comedian, actor, author and presenter. Matt was one of our special guests at the recent **State of High Arts** event. A very big thanks to Matt for his invaluable contributions.

Matt also featured in a remake of the iconic Australian sitcom *Mother and Son* and an ABC documentary, endeavouring to demystify death, *Matt Okine is Going To Die*.

Goulding mural inspires students to aim high

Chris Goulding (Class of 2005) is firing in his incredible 17th season in the National Basketball League. A regular member of the Boomers, Goulding is now playing for Melbourne United. Chris is a dual Olympian and won a bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics. He also won a gold medal at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and is inspiring the current student cohort to aim high. A mural at **State High** overlooking the Oval acknowledges his contribution to basketball.



Fletcher flies the flag for the Lions



231 games with Brisbane, Geelong, St Kilda and Fremantle.

Jaspas Fletcher (Class of 2021) played for the Brisbane Lions in the 2023 AFL grand final. Although the result didn't go the Lions's way, Jaspas has made a grand final in his debut season in first grade. Jaspas is the son of former Lion, Adrian Fletcher, who played a total of

Lewis's son smashes records



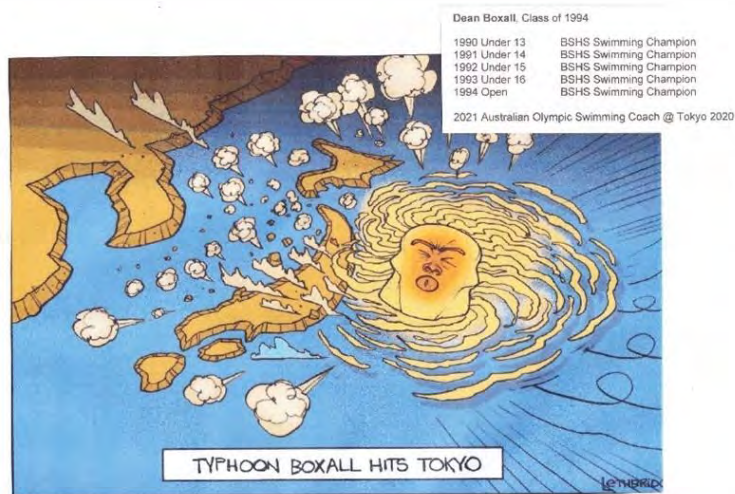
Kai Taylor, the son of **Hayley Lewis** (Class of 1991), attended the 2023 World Aquatics Championships in Japan, 22 years after his mother. Kai became a world champion in the 4x100m relay when his team snatched gold. Hayley is now a Queensland Mental Health Ambassador and runs her own small business, *Coming up Roses*, in Balmoral.

Liveris Keynote at Summit



Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Organising Committee President, **Andrew Liveris AO** (Class of 1971) was a keynote speaker at the prestigious Asia Pacific Cities Summit, which was held in Brisbane recently. The Summit, an initiative of Brisbane City Council, is a key forum for government and business leaders throughout the Asia Pacific and beyond.

Future Brisbane Summit



Dean Boxall (Class of 1994) was named the *Olympic Coach of the Year* at the 2023 Swimming Australia Awards. Dean was also a panelist at a *Future Brisbane* Summit that explored how the 2032 Brisbane Olympics and Paralympics can be a catalyst to improve livability in Brisbane. The summit featured leaders from government, business and sport.

Plath's Grand Final Glory



The Brisbane Broncos march to the 2023 NRL Grand Final recalled memories of earlier success. **John Plath** (Class of 1987) front and centre in the photo from *The Courier Mail* (Monday 28 September 1998), played in four NRL premiership winning Broncos teams in 1992, 1993, 1997 and 1998.

Wally steps up for 'Hear and Say'



Wally Lewis AM (Class of 1977) recently stepped up with former teammate, Alan 'Alfie' Langer AM, to raise money for local charity, *Hear and Say*. On offer was the chance to play a game of touch football in either Team Wally or Team Alfie.

Taulagi plays for Samoa



Murray Taulagi (Class of 2016) ruled himself out of selection for the green and gold in the Rugby League Pacific Championships, instead playing for Samoa. Born in New Zealand but raised in Australia, Murray supported Samoa throughout last year's World Cup where he made his debut for Australia and faced off against the Kangaroos in October, scoring a try in Samoa's 38-12 loss to Australia.

Bush composes for Bluey



Joff Bush (Class of 2002) has played a key role in QPAC's stage adaptation of the worldwide Brisbane animation hit, Bluey. Joff is the composer for *Bluey's Big Play* which runs from 30 December 2023 to 20 January 2024.

McCallum chronicles travel wonders

In a recent editorial, **Kerrie McCallum (Alcorn)** (Class of 1991), Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Director at News Corp wrote in the *Escape* travel magazine –

"...The older I get, the further back I want to go. If you had told a sullen 15-year-old me, as I prised open my sleepy eyes in a red-brick prison – I mean classroom in humid Queensland – that I would grow to love those ancient history lessons, I would have strangled you with my favourite Wham T-shirt....Travelling for historical experiences has become one of my favourite things..."



The reference to a "red-brick prison" would have escaped the eye of many readers who had not had the privilege to be a student at our alma mater.

Tucker-Evans guides taste enthusiasts



Anooska Tucker-Evans (Class of 2000), Queensland Taste Editor at News Corp, keeps her readership informed about the culinary delights that are to be found in the Sunshine State.

Watt announces funding package



Australian Government Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management Australia, Senator **Murray Watt** (1989 School Captain) recently announced relief for people affected by bush fires in the Western and Darling Downs areas. The package included one-off payments and income support.

Other Alumni News

Oh, What a Night – *State of High Arts*



On Saturday 2 September 2023, the **BSHAlumni** executive hosted a celebration of **State High's** contribution to the arts. The night featured **State High** alumni **Matt Okine** (Class of 2002), Actor-turned-Councillor, **Paul Bishop** (Class of 1984) and **Fiona Kennedy** (Class of 1978), Creative Director of Ad Astra. **Aimee Gust**, Head of The Arts at **State High**, generously participated in the evening and emceed an entertaining panel discussion. Our Patron and Executive Principal of **State High**, **Wade Haynes**, rounded out a stellar lineup.

The night was spectacular, with a stunning view of Riverfire. Numbers were up from last year, and the evening featured a live band, tasty morsels of food and flowing drinks. A big thank you to all who attended and for our special guests who supported the night. The 2024 event, scheduled for August 2024 is an event not to be missed.

State High Masters



On Friday 6 October, the **State High Foundation** hosted its annual Fundraising Golf Day. The greens were alive with excitement as our community came together for a fun day of golf and giving. With the sun shining, clubs swinging, spirits soaring and plenty of games, this event was a success, thanks to the dedicated players, generous sponsors, organisers and volunteers.

The proceeds from this fundraising event will be directed towards acquiring a much-needed sound system for the Indoor Sports Complex. The Foundation thanks every player who joined the event and special guests **Duncan Armstrong** (Class of 1985) and **Bo Hanson** (Class of 1990). Duncan and Bo are both Olympians and have been inducted as **State High Legends**.



From the Past



The **State High Museum** recently acquired this wonderful photo of the 1922/23 State High Cricket XI. It has been enhanced and will be framed with names of the team added and displayed in the school museum.

Cricket World Cup



Marnus Labuschagne (Class of 2011) is a World Cup champion, scoring an unbeaten half-century during a successful run chase in the Cricket World Cup final in Ahmedabad. He combined with centurion Travis Head in a 192-run partnership for the fourth wicket, helping Australia chase the 241-run target with 42 balls to spare. The right-hander peeled off an unbeaten 58 not out from 110 deliveries, patiently rotating the strike and picking the gaps without attempting anything extravagant. If not for the coloured clothing and white ball, it easily could have been mistaken for one of his Test knocks.

School News

Amphitheatre resonates with BSHAlumni



A new Amphitheatre on the Merivale Street Campus has recently been completed in conjunction with the **State High Foundation**. The **BSHAlumni** was very pleased to contribute \$30,000 towards the construction, leaving a lasting legacy for current and future students. Current students now have an opportunity to become Associate Members of the **BSHAlumni**, with funds raised from this cohort going directly towards projects for the benefit of current and future students.

Foundation Day Ceremony

In July, **State High** celebrated its 102nd year as the oldest public high school in Brisbane, exemplifying excellence in public school education. This year, the theme was 'Shining Legacies – Inspiring the Future'. The school welcomed back **Sean McCarthy** (2015 School Captain), who hosted a



panel, together with panellists, **Dr Naomi Paxton** (Class of 2011), **Kieren Dolores** (Class of 2016), **Tait Lawsen** (Class of 2016), **Bek Ash** (Class of 2017) and **Jaspa Fletcher** (Class of 2021).

State High Day brings sweet success



On Saturday 6 August, our First XV Rugby team ensured that **State High Day** was a celebration like no other, coming from 3-17 behind to win in a boilover 18-17 against St Joseph's Nudgee College. Bittersweet for Nudgee's coach **Andrew Scotney**, BSHS 1988-1993, BSHS First XV 1990-1993, winning the GPS premiership in 1992 and 1993 and captaining the team in 1993. The victory enabled **State High** to regain the Paul Morgan Cup. Additionally, the **BSHS** First V Basketball team had a resounding win 104-61 on the court to thunderous applause to cap off a great day.

The **State High** First XV Rugby team's success is reminiscent of the 1964 game against Nudgee College that was reported in the media on 5 July 1964:

*"State High winger **Juris Muizneks** is collecting tries on an average of two per week. He scored a double against Terrace, BBC and Brisbane Grammar and touched down for High's loner against Nudgee. A straight down-the-line scorcher, Juris sets his sights on the corner and – whoosh. Bereft of a star kicker High nevertheless, were able to draw 11-all with Nudgee when lock Paul Morgan booted a penalty right on fulltime."*

State High went on to be undefeated GPS rugby premiers in 1964.

Speaking of Rugby, **Patrick Byron** (Class of 1998) who was Director of Rugby and a HPE teacher at **State High** since 2013, has been appointed as the Head of Sport at St Laurence's College.

State High's new boats

In October, the '*Sacha Bartlett*' and '*Russell Christofis*' were christened at the 2023 BSHS Rowing Family BBQ and Boat Naming Ceremony. **Sacha Bartlett (Balandinos)** (Class of 2006) and **Russell Christofis** (Class of 1971) were acknowledged for their dedication to the development of BSRA and GPS Rowing programs at **State High**.

Young Innovators Program



The Young Innovators Program aims to give **State High** students a comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurship. It is an initiative of the **State High Foundation** and has been facilitated by the University of Queensland Ventures Department.

In August, nine teams pitched their innovative ideas, which they developed during the program. The judges – **Andrew Jeffreys** (Class of 1996), **Nimrod Klayman** and **Justin Lemberg** (Class of 1983), had the challenging task of



choosing the winners. Special thanks to **Katie Page** (Class of 1973), CEO of Harvey Norman, for making this program and competition possible through her generous support.

AI Masterclasses



In September, **State High** alumni **Ben Pender** (Class of 1994), from AI Digital Hub and **Thuy Lam** (Class of 1994), from Blackbook AI partnered with the school to deliver e-sport masterclasses for our students. Over seven weeks, e-sport and streaming industry professionals delivered masterclasses around healthy gaming habits, careers in e-sport and streaming, and an overview of the professional gaming industry.

Class Reunions

Reunions in 2023

The **BSH Alumni Executive** thanks the coordinators of, and the past students who attended, their Class reunion in 2023.

Class of 2002 | 21st Reunion

Date: Sunday 17 December 2023 at 3:00pm

Venue: The Burrow, West End

Bookings and details: [click here](#)

Reunions in 2024

The Classes of 1969, 1989 and 2009 are requested to provide information to the BSHAlumni via email if a reunion is planned for 2024 – bshalumni@gmail.com

The following Classes have confirmed preliminary details for their 2024 reunions. Keep up to date by following the relevant Facebook '**BSHS Class of _____**' group page.

Class of 1964 | 60th Reunion

Invitation extended to the Class of 1954

Date: Saturday 17 August 2024

Venue: Kurilpa Roof Terrace

Contact: Kevin O'Brien | kjob4@live.com

Class of 1974 | 50th Reunion

More details to come in 2024.

Class of 1979 | 45th Reunion

Date and venue: TBA

Contact: Beverley Tavo | beverleytavo@gmail.com

Class of 1981 | 43rd Reunion

Date: Saturday 27 April 2024

Venue: Pig 'N' Whistle, West End

Contact: Amanda Tindall (Bull) | paul.tindall3@bigpond.com

Class of 1984 | 40th Reunion

Date: November 2024

Venue: TBA

Contact: Jason Greenhalgh | jason.greenhalgh00@gmail.com

Class of 1994 | 30th Reunion

Date: Saturday 24 August 2024

Venue: Kurilpa Roof Terrace

Contact: Natalie Jones | natalie.a.j@gmail.com

Class of 1999 | 25th Reunion

Date: Saturday 20 April 2024

Venue: Kurilpa Roof Terrace

Contact: Merrin Burgess | shkmezza@hotmail.com

Class of 2014 | 10th Reunion

Date: Saturday 7 September 2024

Venue: Kurilpa Roof Terrace

Contact: Laura Waldie | lwaldie97@gmail.com

Class of 2004 | 20th Reunion

Date: Saturday 12 October 2024

Venue: Kurilpa Roof Terrace

Contact: Anya Meng | anyameng@gmail.com

2023 Reunion Reports

Class of 1953 | 70th Reunion



Nine of us enjoyed a meal and a good time together to celebrate our 70th year reunion. I printed and shared the replies I had received with apologies due to mobility and distance problems, so we were together in spirit. Many stories were told, old teachers reviewed and a few nefarious 1953 ventures uncovered. I'm sure it can't be that we look much older than we were in 1953, although Garth sent me a photo of some very handsome footballers from the First XV of '53 and they did look a bit fitter than we looked the other day!

– Kaye Pitman OAM

Class of 1963 | 60th Reunion



On Sunday 1 October 2023, some 50 students for the graduating class of 1963 along with a few partners and one teacher met at Victoria Park function rooms for lunch. Mr Kleinschmidt, whose first-year teaching coincided with our first year at **State High**, addressed us after lunch. It was a great afternoon.

– 1963 Reunion Committee

Class of 1968 | 55th Reunion



The organisers greeted over 60 guests, including a few partners for the first time and the sister of our year's School Captain, **Rod Cane** (dec'd). The Botanic Gardens Cafe proved a pleasant and spacious venue. The hours flew by, many photos taken and experiences (some less memorable), mostly fondly recounted. Some serious catching up was done with ex-students for whom this was their first reunion. The plan is to meet at this venue, at roughly the same time on an annual basis while the interest exists. Special thanks to **Peter Gregg** who contacted as many as could be reached, and his helping the cafe with scheduling meals. Thanks to **Rhonda Binnie** (Class of 1982) for her assistance.

– **Pam Hennell (Flynn)** on behalf of the 1968 Reunion Committee

Class of 1973 | 50th Reunion

Class of 1978 | 45th Reunion



Awesome turnout and a great bunch of people at the Port Office Hotel. We haven't aged at all!

– 1978 Reunion Committee

Class of 1982 | 41st Reunion



Most of the Class of 1982 who attended our *No Reason Reunion* are pictured in the photo above. We had lunch La De Lah at South Bank and then went to Fritzenberger South Bank for more drinks. The last of the girls left just after 7:00pm and some of the boys stayed on until later! Our illustrious School Captain **Warwick Bowd** flew in just for the day. **Joanne Wren Bruton** just happened to be in town from Abu Dhabi and **Natasha Playne** was still in Brisbane before heading back to the Cayman Islands. It was awesome to see everyone! Thank you to BSHS alumni **Andrew Squire Jeffreys** (Class of 1996) for providing the venues for us to have such a fun catch up, 41 years after finishing school. We highly recommend other year groups to hold annual reunions going forward.

– Rhonda Binnie

Class of 1983 | 40th Reunion



The Reunion Committee is pleased to report that we and the Class of '83 had a great night on Saturday 5 August at our 40-year reunion. We started the day at **State High Day** and were lucky to watch the Rugby First XV match on the Principal's veranda – and **BSHS** won!

Around 90 people attended the event at the Greek Club – the food was great, there was plenty of liquid refreshments and the company was absolutely fantastic.

– **Greg Lemass, Alec Harries, Lexia Willmington (McMillan) and Julie Skillern (Munn)**

Class of 1993 | 30th Reunion

The Class of 1993 celebrated their 30th Reunion at the Kurilpa Roof Terrace on Saturday 14 October. It was a special night with more than 120 people attending and reconnecting as old friends. Many people flew in from interstate and around the world to mark the occasion and for those who couldn't attend in person, they were able to join us via live stream!



The night was filled with stories of the good times we had at **State High** and in the background, there was a slideshow playing, with more than 400 school photos on loop. With all the reminiscing that was going on, it felt like we were back at school living those days with all the intensity of the **State High** spirit. The choice to celebrate thirty years in the area we knew as *The Farm* was also special, given the amount of time we had spent there as students.



Warm acknowledgment must go to **Barry Irwin**, the **BSHAlumni** President, who kindly conducted a tour of the school before the reunion for 45 people. The patience he showed while being asked so many questions about the school was greatly appreciated. Further to this, we must acknowledge the guiding work of **Rhonda Binnie** (Class of 1982), without whom the reunion would not have been

the success it was. Rhonda's experience helping to organise reunions, her connections to people and attention to detail proved invaluable as our reunion came together. To everyone on the Committee, we were in awe of Rhonda's willingness to help and were so fortunate to have her input into all aspects of planning and preparation.

Upon reflection, this reunion was not only a wonderful event but a showcase of the extraordinary talent that exists within our year group and an acknowledgement of the teachers who truly believed in us. Throughout the night, it was often raised in conversation how extraordinary our teachers were and the lengths they went to nurture our talents. For us, we will always be grateful to the teachers we had at **State High** and for their unwavering support over the years.



To conclude, this reunion of thirty years was meaningful to many and we look forward to meeting again in ten years time, to reflect, reminisce and appreciate why being part of the **BSHAlumni** is the best place to be for giving back to the school we love. On behalf of the 1993 Reunion Committee, we thank the Class of 1993 for your continued support of the **BSHAlumni** and ongoing activity within this vibrant community. Until next time!

– **Michelle Penman** (1993 School Captain) on behalf of the 1993 Reunion Committee

VALE



The BSHAlumni extends condolences to the family and friends of the following past students:

- **Peter John ALLAN** (Class of 1953) | Australian and Queensland Cricketer Member of the 1996 **State High** 'Dream Team'
- **Raymond Thomas BEILBY** (Class of 1955)
- **Joseph DENIS DONNELLY OAM** (Class of 1953) | **State High Legend** and **BSHAlumni MFL**
- **Graham Walter EBBAGE** (Class of 1956)
- **Glenis Margaret GOSS (CAMERON)** (Class of 1974)
- **The Hon William (Bill) George HAYDEN AC (BSHS 1948 - 1949)** | **State High Legend**
- **Dr David Henry McCONNEL** (Class of 1956)
- **Victor Henry POWELL** (Class of 1956)
- **Jeffrey C WALL CSM CBE** (Class of 1966) | Awarded the *Companion of the Star of Melanesia* for his service to PNG and Malanesia.
- **Phoebe WANG** (Class of 2011)
- **Philip WREGG** (Class of 1965) | **Ken Swanwick** and **John Eastman** paid their respects at the Centenary Memorial Gardens

Vale

The Honourable William (Bill) Hayden AC
CLASS OF 1949



1990: H Block – dating back to 1864 – was restored and opened together with I Block as the Junior School by past student and former Governor-General of Australia The Hon. Bill Hayden AC (Class of 1949).



The Hon William (Bill) George Hayden AC, BSHS 1948 - 1949, former Federal politician, 1961-1988 and Governor-General of Australia, 1989-1996. In 1990, he officially opened the **BSHS** Junior School, that included the restoration of the former South Brisbane Intermediate School, now the school's Administration Building and the first 'I' Block, that was demolished to enable the construction of the Kurilpa Building. He was inducted as a **State High Legend** in 2007.

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JULY, 1990

DENIS DONNELLY

The year, 1990, is a very significant one for Denis Donnelly in his association with Brisbane State High School.

It marks the fortieth anniversary of his enrolment at B.S.H.S. as a Student and the completion of thirty years as a Member of Staff.

But as impressive as the statistics are, the real significance lies in the commitment to the School that has occurred during those thirty-four years.

In his four years as a Student at State High, Denis Donnelly (1950-1953) was engaged in numerous activities.

At a time when only two crews were entered in the Head of the River, Denis was chosen in the Second IV in 1951 — quite an achievement for a Junior.

The future looked promising after the crew was beaten by only a canvas but unfortunately his involvement with State High Rowing was put on hold when the School left G.P.S. Rowing for a few years.

The Sportsmaster of the day, George Lockie, suggested the young Donnelly try out for Rugby. The result was that he was in the First XV in 1952 and 1953.

Frustration dogged his efforts in Athletics.

As an U15 880 yards competitor, Denis placed the 1951 G.P.S. Athletics Championship as a strong chance.

However, a poliomyelitis scare in that year saw the government decree that students in its schools were not to engage in strenuous activities. So, while the other G.P.S. Schools competed in 1951, B.S.H.S. was forced to withdraw.

Denis had to wait till 1953 for an event but a heavy dose of the 'flu saw him finish fifth in the Open 880 yards.

In the Army Cadets, Denis rose to the rank of Cadet Lieutenant and commander of the Anti-Tank Platoon for two years.

Finally, in his Senior Year, he was appointed School Vice-Captain.

In 1961 Denis was appointed to B.S.H.S. as a Physical Education Teacher. However, through the Sixties, by choice, he also taught French, English, Maths and Science.

When Health and Physical Education

was introduced as a course in the early Seventies, Denis returned to teaching HPE and was appointed Subject Master in 1973.

Out on the sports field, Denis was virtually everywhere.

As B.S.H.S. had re-entered G.P.S. Rowing by 1961, Denis became involved again, coaching crews through the entire thirty years.

From 1963 to 1968 he coached the First VIII to two seconds and four thirds.

In Rugby he coached teams through the Sixties and turned to the administrative side of the game in the Seventies.

In Athletics, the frustrations Denis experienced as a Student were rectified as a Coach.

He began by coaching Distance Runners but specialised in the Throwing Events, particularly the Shot Put.

In the great run of nine G.P.S. Athletics Premierships from 1975 to 1983 inclusive, the Denis Donnelly coached

throwing squad was a force to be reckoned with, particularly in 1976 and 1978, when State High scored four firsts and one second in the five Shot Put events.

Denis also helped out with the G.P.S. Cross Country Team, in its inaugural year of 1971 and again this year.

The four years as a Student and the thirty years as a Member of Staff are mirror images.

For while each encompasses the usual mixture of frustration and success, they both reveal the great determination of the man in his quest for the best for Brisbane State High School.

Consequently, the B.S.H.S.P.S.A. is pleased that Denis accepted the invitation to be Guest of Honour and Guest Speaker at the 1990 Annual Dinner.

In the history of Brisbane State High School there is no finer example of commitment over time than that of Denis Donnelly.

BRISBANE STATE HIGH SCHOOL MAGAZINE, 1951.



ROWING CREWS.
 Back: W. Bourke, A. Morton, J. Donnelly, F. Bullock (2nd Crew);
 Middle: R. Cochrane, P. Rolfe, J. Mavor, B. Browne (1st Crew);
 Front: L. Sutherland, E. Dixon (Coxswains).

Who would have imagined what was to follow the enrolment of **Joseph Denis Donnelly** at **State High** on 6 February 1950?

73 years of involvement and dedication to the school that he treasured followed! His connection to **State High** was enhanced when he married **Jeanette Townsend** (Class of 1956). Their children **Kate** (Class of 1981) and **Michael** (Class of 1984) attended their alma mater. After his 33 years of service as an educationalist at **State High**, Denis continued to contribute to the

extra-curricular program at an unprecedented level until relatively recently. Denis was inducted as a **State High Legend** in 2014 and 2024 will mark the 25th anniversary of the running of the Donnelly Dash that is named in his honour.

Russ Christofis (Class of 1971) added some information from a rowing perspective for the 30 years following Denis's retirement in 1993. Apart from coaching the First VIII from 1963 – 1968 to two Seconds and three Thirds at the Head of the River, Denis also coached the First VIII with **Bill Sole** in 1971 and 1972 for a further 3rd place at the Head of the River.

Denis coached rowing crews continuously from 1961 until his retirement as a teacher in 1993. He continued to coach **BSHS** rowing crews every year for a further 21 years through to 2014 – a staggering 54 years. He also continued to row at our Redlegs Club up until just recently. Denis's speciality was teaching in the 'learn to row' program which turned all of his novices into rowers, and some into Olympians.

Denis was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2009 for service to education. He was a Life Member of the **BSHA** Alumni, the Commercial Rowing Club and Queensland Secondary Schools Athletics Association (QSSAA).



Pictured: **Bill Sole OAM**, Class of 1958 (1940-2018), and **Denis Donnelly OAM**, Class of 1953 (1936-2023), in the State High Rowing Shed, that is named in their honour.

BSHAlumni Meetings

Reconnect with your alumni by attending BSHAlumni Meetings.

The Annual General Meeting of **BSHAlumni** will be held at 9:00am on **Saturday 3 February 2024** in the School Museum located in the Assembly/Sports Hall on the Vulture Street Campus. Access is via gate V3 on the corner of Vulture and Edmondstone Streets. The **BSHAlumni** Executive for 2024 will be elected at this meeting.

The February General Meeting will be held following the Annual General Meeting. All are welcome to attend.

Submit your suggestions

Do you have an idea for a good story?



Please send us your information, photos or suggestions for articles to be included in future editions of AMICUS by emailing: bshalumni@gmail.com

Advertise to get your business seen



If you would like to get your business in front of thousands of alumni every issue, please contact **Barry Irwin** (President and Registrar, **BSHAlumni**) by emailing: bshalumni@gmail.com for our very reasonable advertising rates.

Your contact details

If your contact details change, please advise the **BSHAlumni** to ensure that you continue to receive *AMICUS* via bshalumni@gmail.com

2023 BSHAlumni Executive

President: **Barry Irwin**

Vice Presidents: **John Cowie, Anthony Photiadis, Anne Rogers and Charles Stubbs**

Treasurer: **Robert Jeffrey**

Secretary: **Ian Scotney**

Registrar: **Barry Irwin**

AMICUS Editor: **John Cowie**

Museum Sub-Committee: **Barry Irwin, Anthony Photiadis, Glenise Scotney and Ian Scotney**

Brisbane State High Alumni

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