



The Wheatsheaf

Volume 9, Issue 01

February 2017

Calendar of Events

Barn Market

When: 9am to 12pm
Sat 4th March 2017

Where: Old Barn
Urrbrae
Agricultural High School

Old Scholars AGM

When: From 6pm
Wednesday 29th March

Where: Staff Room
Urrbrae
Agricultural High School

Barn Market:

When: 9am to 12pm
Saturday 1st April 2017

Where: Old Barn
Urrbrae
Agricultural High School

Wetlands Open Day

When: 10am to 4pm
Sun 9th April 2017

Where: Urrbrae
Wetlands

News from the President

Dear Old Scholar,

Welcome to the Wheatsheaf for February 2017.

I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and has had a good start to the year. The end of 2016 saw a successful 30th Reunion of the Class of 1986 where a school tour was enjoyed by members as well as our annual Christmas Lunch at the school that was well attended by our members. I would like to thank the entire committee for their effort on the day. To begin this year we have already had a very successful ten year reunion of the class of 2007 which was held on Saturday the 11th February. We had a great turnout with the reunion consisted of a tour of the school and then drinks at the Edinburgh Hotel.

Since the last edition the committee has elected and filled the positions that were left vacant at the last AGM. All members who have filled these positions have been very active in their roles over the last 8 months. Secretary: Wes Parker this adds to his role as Wheatsheaf editor and website manager. Public Officer: Kevin Stretton, Patron: Don Blesing

John Byron has interviewed Don Blesing on his career and his life and you can find the interview in this edition of the Wheatsheaf.

As President I have represented the Old Scholars' Association at school council meetings that occur twice a term. These meetings allow for networking, for us to have an understanding of what is going on in the school and to contribute to decisions that are made by council. 2016/2017 has been a successful year for the committee. The achievements include:

- Growing the Facebook page
- Presenting the Old Scholars' Award at the school's senior presentation night
- Establishing online banking
- Holding multiple successful reunions
- Establishing meeting procedures
- Working to update our constitution
- Networking
- Continuing to update our database

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 29th March 2017 at 6pm in the staff room at Urrbrae Agricultural High School. There will be a BBQ beforehand and guest speakers and we would really like to see you there if you are interested in joining the Old Scholars' Committee.

I would like to thank the committee for all their hard work over the last 8 months. We have made a lot of headway and I look forward to working with you to continue to make progress.

Cheers, Rebecca Faulkner (2003 - 2007)

President

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Committee News

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' Association would like to congratulate **Tahliah Lockwood** who won the Peter Waite Urrbrae Old Scholars' Award at Presentation Night. Tahlia has been involved in a range of agricultural clubs and has made a significant contribution particularly to the Suffolk Sheep Club where she has been a Club leader. Tahlia's club involvement has enabled her to display leadership, responsibility and a focused approach. Through her involvement in showing the Urrbrae Suffolk sheep Tahlia has participated in the junior meat sheep judging competitions at the Adelaide Show culminating in her receiving first place this year and her being selected to represent South Australia in the national competition in Melbourne next year.

In year 12 this year Tahlia studied Agricultural and Horticultural Science, Animal Studies and Cert 2 in Agriculture.

Tahlia has successfully completed rural industry work placements on a sheep and goat property and in a milk testing laboratory

In 2015-16 she competed for the Young Rural Ambassador and Tahlia is a member of the Mt Barker Show Society. She is also a member of the Eden Hills CFS.

In 2017 Tahlia is planning to attend Adelaide University to study Agricultural Sciences. As the Peter Waite Urrbrae Old Scholars' prize winner, this entitles her to Life Membership to the Old Scholars' Association. Congratulations.

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' Association held their annual lunch on a warm Sunday afternoon on November 27th 2016. The BBQ went down a treat, and a big thanks for all that attended. Was a great catch up and lots of stories were shared among Old Scholars.

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' Committee would like to welcome to the role as Public Officer **Kevin Stretton**. The role of the Public Officer's is to lodge forms and ensure the association is following correct procedures with the Department of Business & Consumer Affairs. Welcome Kevin to this role.

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' would like to welcome to the role as Patron **OAM Don Blesing**. The committee are very excited to welcome Don as Patron. His experience is second to none, you will be able to read about Don more in this edition of the Wheatsheaf, and also hear him speak at the AGM. More details below.

The Annual General meeting of the Urrbrae Old Scholars' is happening on Wednesday March 29th from 6pm. The association is putting on a sausage sizzle and we have Paul Bagshaw who was recently inducted into the AFL Hall of Fame as a guest speaker. OAM Don Blesing will also be speaking .

The association would love to see you at the Urrbrae Staff Room on March 29th. See the insert or website for more details.

Committee News Continued

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' Association would like to welcome our newest members:

- Shane Niemz
- James Barford
- Brian Rayner
- Tyson Hewett
- Daryl Bubner
- Christopher Tiller
- Justin Broadbent
- Shane Wisseman
- Doug Montgomery
- Taylah Hayes
- Jason Godfrey
- Jimi Bascombe
- Royce Pitchford
- James Pitchford
- Sarah Nankivell
- Glenn Pitchford
- Emily Buddle
- Ashlee Rayner
- Sam Leonard
- Graham Rush

The Urrbae Old Scholars Association would like to mention the passing of the following members:

- Keith Nicol was aged 97
- Mark Whittington
- Kingsley Nieass
- Mervyn Ferme
- Catherine A. Gaskins
- Bob Davis

The annual Urrbrae Old Scholars' Association Christmas Lunch has been booked for Sunday 26th November 2017. The venue and time will be confirmed closer to the date.

Reunions

The following reunions are scheduled to occur this year. Please check the Urrbrae Old Scholars' website, or facebook page for further information, or email Urrbrae.old.scholars@gmail.com

- Class of 2007 10 Year High School Reunion Saturday 11th February 2017.
- Class of 1959 58 Year High School Reunion Saturday 15th October 2017 details will be confirmed closer to the date

Urrbrae Drone Goes Wild

Shortly before the end of 2016 the TV show "Totally Wild" came to Urrbrae to film a segment on our use of a drone. Two of our Year 12 students (then in Year 11), Claire Pearce and Harry Bond, were the face of Urrbrae, along with one of Mr. Joy's PE classes. They discussed how the drone can be used to watch and assess sports in PE, as well as their potential uses in agriculture. Our students were fantastic ambassadors for the school and it was great to be recognised for the innovative work we do.

You can check out the video on the link below. It is the final segment of the show starting at (00:19:35).
<https://tenplay.com.au/channel-eleven/totally-wild/season-24/episode-55>

Who is OAM Don Blesing

OAM Don Blesing is Patron of the Old Scholars' Association. The Patron's role is to support and promote the association and its objects to the general community.

Don's current involvement in agriculture includes;

- Chairman of Australian Growers Direct Pty Ltd a South Australian company specializing in the sourcing and exporting of lentils, faba beans, broad beans, lupins, vetch, peas, oats, chickpeas, wheat, barley, canola and rye
- Chairman of several farm advisory boards and one farm contracting company
- Chairman of and a lead consultant for Fulcrum deCerno an agribusiness advisory company
- Advising several farms on sheep management and farm management

Don is married to Dianne, and they have three children. He was an active farmer until recently, combined with being an agricultural and agribusiness adviser for the past 35 years. Don left Urrbrae Agricultural High School after completing his Leaving Certificate in late 1956, when he was dux of the class and an accomplished table tennis player. At sixteen years of age, he went to work on the family farm at Caltowie to support and grow a farm expansion program. From his early twenties he farmed in his own right, commencing by leasing the family farm. He soon moved into syndication of farm machinery progressing through shared farm operations and joint land purchases, a jointly owned shearing shed and a syndicated merino stud. This commenced with two friendly neighbors and grew to a loose group of seven like-minded farmers.

Don's farming career was characterized by eagerly learning on the job and the extensive use of syndication, business partnerships, land leasing, and innovative farm practices and structures. Over the years he developed strong skills in wool growing on developed pastures and on native pastures in the rangelands, and in pastoral sheep management. Other skills developed include performance ram breeding; farm management; and efficient and sustainable cropping systems. He remained the principal of a large grain and wool farm until 2004 and a merino stud until 2007.

Significant early influences on his farming included;

- A learning culture and communication skills gained from his mother and teachers at Urrbrae
- Strong involvement in the Rural Youth movement at local and state level
- A Rural Youth study tour to New Zealand in 1960 for 4 months
- Reading the textbooks required for an Economics undergraduate degree
- Lots of business reading, travel, private farm visits and conferences across Australia, NZ and elsewhere.

Farming achievements include:

- Leadership in many profitable syndicated and group farming businesses in SA
- Establishing a merino stud based on measured performance, in the face of strong peer resistance
- Speaking engagements across Australia on farm syndication experiences and principles in over 100 places
- Leadership in the Australian Farm Management Society, including attendance at meetings, workshops and conferences across Australia, being SA and Australian President, and over thirty years attendance and presentation of papers at International Farm Management conferences and associated study tours
- Membership of a soil conservation Regional Committee and then the state level Advisory Committee
- Writing weekly and monthly farming articles in state and national papers and journals for over fifteen years.

Who is OAM Don Blesing? (Continued)

From his early forties Don worked off farm as a company director and later as an agribusiness adviser progressively building his skills and networks. This work included;

- Sheep farms, cropping farms and pastoral properties
- Mining companies and agribusiness firms
- Rural research corporations and agencies
- Rural and remote communities: including pro bono work with Aboriginal businesses and farms in SA; the senior pastoral consultant for native title claimants developing Indigenous Land Use Agreements in SA; and chairing the Lake Eyre Basin Community Group and Rangelands Australia Inc
- Universities, including the University of Adelaide, the University of Queensland and the University of New England

Business skills gained include;

- Corporate governance, business planning, strategic planning, futuring and foresight, business reviews and project management
- Negotiation strategy, rural finance issues and native title issues and agreements
- Research and development strategy, science policy and strategy, environmental strategy, and rangelands policy.

Business highlights include;

- Chair of AGD Pty Ltd (current): personalized grain marketing for leading edge growers
- Chair of the Rural Business Counseling Service in SA: supporting distressed farms
- Chair of the Australian Grains Research and Development Corporation: R&D strategy and management
- Chair of the Christmas Island Phosphate Mining Company: phosphate rock marketed to Australia, NZ and SE Asia
- Chair of the CSIRO Soils Division Advisory Committee: strategy and advice
- Chair of Rangelands Australia Inc: national educational joint venture between UQ and MLA
- Chair of the Lake Eyre Basin Coordinating Group: across sectors and across border NRM leadership
- Member of the Australian Science Technology and Engineering Council: strategic advice to Minister.

Agribusiness and rural achievements include;

- Supporting native title groups negotiate ILUAs based on recognition; respect; past injustice; protection of important country; access; benefits for children; and involvement in future decisions
- Leading the Australian grain industry to invest significant grain levies into R&D to drive decades of innovation and increased productivity
- Leading the establishment of a skilled statewide rural financial counseling service in SA.

Key values;

- Listening to people
- Fairness and justice
- Ethical governance
- Best practice in business management
- Giving back to the community

The committee would like to thank John Byron who went and interviewed Don Blesing and wrote this article.

Paul Bagshaw (1959 - 1962)

Paul Bagshaw, known in football circles as “Mr Magic” was born 22nd August 1946. Paul grew up on a fruit and vine property at McLaren Flat, South Australia. In 1959 Paul travelled to Adelaide to live with his grandparents at Malvern so he could attend secondary school at Urrbrae Agricultural High School. His parents wanted him to get an education at Urrbrae as it was the only agricultural school in South Australia at the time. Paul attended Urrbrae from 1959 to 1962 and walked or rode his bike to school. Urrbrae broadened his horizons and was a change from his previous school that only had 50 students. Paul would travel back to McLaren Flat on the weekends to spend time with his family and to play football.

At the time Paul attended Urrbrae the student population was 400 students with approximately 50% coming from farms across South Australia. At about the same time Urrbrae was in financial difficulties (and only just survived). So, to increase staff numbers the school brought staff (teachers) out of retirement to teach and appointed new staff straight out of teachers’ college. Unlike today where students have a large technology centre to undertake classes back in the 1950s Paul and his classmates caught a bus down to the bottom of Glen Osmond



Road to undertake woodwork classes (it was on one of these trips that he remembers seeing a TV for the first time in a little shop). In this period all students at Urrbrae had to complete their intermediate certificate (education) and then they could choose to go on for another year to complete their leaving certificate (which was optional). Paul did complete his leaving certificate however he commented he didn’t do very well, just scraping through. Paul stated that at the time Urrbrae was fairly laid back as a school and had lots of open space, including three ovals. Coming from a fruit block had provided him with a farming and agricultural background however Urrbrae provided him with greater knowledge of farming and agriculture. In addition it allowed him to learn about welding and farm mechanics that were useful life skills. Paul’s favourite teacher was a Mr Jim Ferguson who was fresh out of teachers’ college and taught him in his 3rd and 4th year. Jim Ferguson became a mentor for him. Urrbrae gave Paul many lifelong friends and he even met his wife through a friend he met at Urrbrae. Paul stated the best part of the school day was lunchtime when they were let outside and they could go and kick the football around.

According to Paul in the late 1950s and early 1960s Urrbrae was ripe with talented football players who would go on to be some of South Australia’s best and well known players for the SANFL and who also represented South Australia in state games. These players included Bob Clayton who went on to play 151 games for Port Adelaide, Doug Horne who played for Woodville and Keith Chessell who played 181 games for Sturt. Keith Pattinson played for Glenelg and for the state team. All of these boys were in the same year together. In addition John Kalleski who played for Sturt was the year ahead of them.

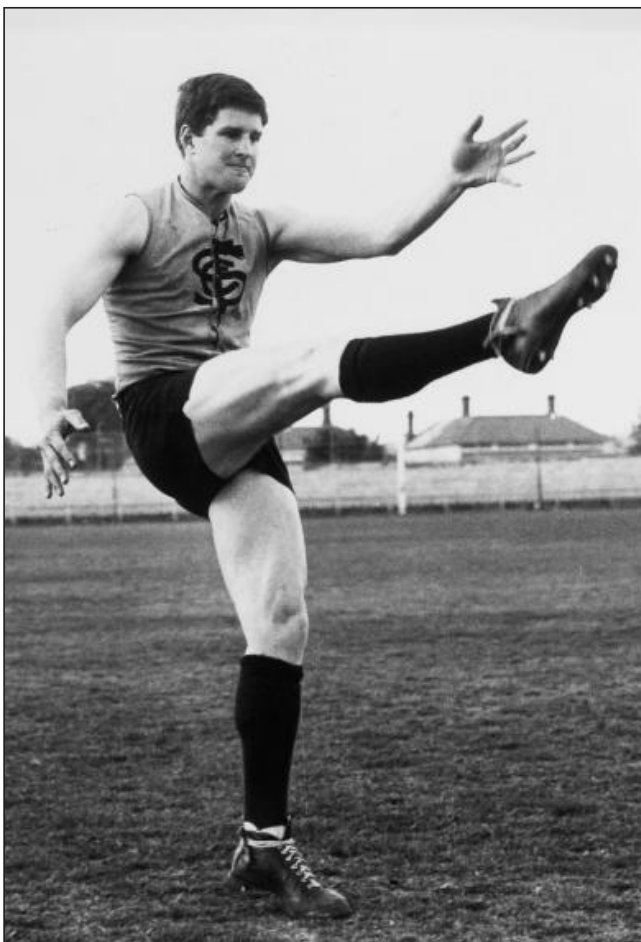
Paul Bagshaw Continued

After completing his education at Urrbrae Paul returned to the family farm at McLaren Flat and in time purchased a plot of land of his own. Paul had to clear his newly purchased plot, covered by scrub, on his own with an axe, 'this was very hard Yakka.' Paul then planted grapes on the property for wine. In addition to earn an income Paul worked on his father's property as a labourer and was paid very little. His father stated that he would pay him very little to work on the property but in the end you will inherit it so it all worked out. After Paul married he built a shed on his property in which he and his wife lived for two years in order to save the money to build a house on the property.

Paul sold the property 20 years ago and went into creating timber furniture e.g. tables.

Paul and Football

Paul Bagshaw, well known Sturt Legend and Urrbrae Old Scholar was one of five South Australians inducted into the AFL Hall of Fame in 2016. The Old Scholars' Committee would like to congratulate Paul on this honour. Paul was inducted into the South Australian Football Hall of Fame in 2002 and is a member of Sturt's Team of the Century. Across his school years he played football at his local club at McLaren Flat where he would travel home on the weekends to play football for the Colts. He only played for Urrbrae in his first year as he then started playing for the Sturt football club. He played for the Under 14s however was often called up to play with the Under 17s. When in his 3rd and 4th year at Urrbrae, playing for Sturt's under 17s he was at times called up to represent the league side. Playing football in the 1950s and 1960s wasn't like today



with the large salaries attached and in fact players were paid very little but Paul stated that the extra income was very useful. One of the major benefits from playing football was that you received medical cover.

Paul went onto play for the league side in 1964 and played until 1980. In this time he played 364 SANFL games, including representing South Australia 14 times. He played in seven premierships coached by Jack Oatey and won five best and fairest awards for the club. In his first two years playing in Sturt's senior side he was runner up for the Best and Fairest.

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' Committee and Association would like to congratulate Paul on his admission into the AFL Hall of Fame.

If you would like to hear a bit more from Paul or ask some questions, he will be guest speaker at the 2017 Old Scholars AGM on Wednesday 29th March.

Agricultural School Report 2016

2016 has been the wettest in quite a long period of time, this is just one of the issues that has been important to the Agricultural faculty at Urrbrae in 2016.

A brief summary of the notable or important events that have occurred are:

- Horticulture obtained a new refrigerated container to keep fruit and wine during summer
- Through co-operation with TAFE a new forklift was obtained to replace the previous older one that had reached its end of its working life
- ABC programmes Behind the News chose Urrbrae to film their Horse Safety segment and Catalyst filmed a segment on antibiotic use in the piggery
- Attended the Broken Hill Agfair with school promotional material
- Urrbrae students participated and were successful in the All Breeds Dairy Camp, Sheep Expo and Junior Heifer Expo
- Hosting the Governor of Noth Chungcheong Province from South Korea for a visit to the wetlands and farm
- Operational use of the drone on the farm for filming observation and bird scaring
- Sale of several Suffolk ewes and one ram for export to China for a breeding program
- Urrbrae provided a large group of Suffolk sheep to support the success of the re-established Sheep Expo in the April school holidays
- Collection of memorial rose cuttings from RAAF Edinburgh to grow out and maintain an ongoing collection of rose plants for provision to relatives and dignitaries, in honour of members of 7RAR who have died on active service
- Successful sale of rams at the Fleurieu Prime Ram Sale and at the Mount Pleasant British Breeds Ram Sale
- Success in livestock showing at a number of country shows, and in student handling and judging competitions
- Obtaining bronze medals for 2014 Urrbrae Estate Merlot and 2014 Urrbrae Estate Shiraz in the National Schools' Wine competition. The Shiraz came second in its class
- Exhibition of eggs, sheep and steers at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, Australian Sheep and Wool Show Bendigo and Royal Melbourne Show
- Purchased five new Suffolk ewes from Towarri stud in Kerang Victoria, the first new female bloodlines introduced to the Urrbrae stud for many years
- Establishment of a new stand of lucerne
- Over 100 students volunteering in the Agricultural Learning Centre at the Royal Adelaide Show

Our Details

The Urrbrae Old Scholars' are on Facebook, so if you have not already liked our page, please do so. You can find the page by following the link below:

www.facebook.com/urrbrae.scholars

While you're on the internet don't forget to check out the Urrbrae Old Scholars' Website:

<http://urrbraeoldscholars.weebly.com>

Don't forget that if you want to become a member, or find out more information about the Urrbrae Old Scholars' send us an email at the following address.

old.scholars.urrbrae@gmail.com