



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Issue 67, February 2026, Vol 4 No 9

WELCOME to your **Perth Modernian e-Newsletter, Issue 67, February 2026, Vol 4 No 9**

This newsletter offers two way communication with all registered members, volunteers, families and friends to bring you news, event details and articles from the Perth Modernian Society, its members and Perth Modern School. We hope you find its content both interesting and informative.



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

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

DIARY DATES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Monday 4 May 2026

REUNIONS
Class of 1963 - 80th birthday
Wednesday 21 October 2026

Class of 1959
Date TBA

Class of 1958
Date TBA

See **Upcoming Reunions** for details

CLASS/YEAR GROUPS
Are you planning a Class/Year Reunion for 2026? We can help
for further information visit
www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

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

NEXT ISSUES
Copy deadlines for
Issue 68, May 2026, Vol 4 No 10
20 May copy deadline for circulation by **1 June 2026**

Issue 69, August 2026, Vol 4 No 11
20 August copy deadline for circulation by **1 September 2026**

Issue 70, November 2026, Vol 4 No 12
20 November copy deadline for circulation by **1 December 2026**

Congratulations

PERTH MODERN SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025



The graduating class of 2025 set a new level of achievement - even for Perth Modern School!

The outstanding achievements of students in the 2025 West Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) reflected not only exceptional academic talent but also the dedication, resilience and hard work they have demonstrated throughout their years at Perth Modern School. It was very pleasing to see student interviews reflecting on the support of their very dedicated teachers and also the collegial support received from fellow students. Too often people outside the school consider the student culture to be one of competition for high achievement. Yet students at graduation and other times, speak of the wonderful collegiality, assistance and encouragement experienced amongst the student group.

Congratulations to the ten outstanding students below who achieved an exceptional **99.95 ATAR** - setting both a school and state record:

- Ishika Balram
- Trung Thanh (Anthony) Bui
- Kshithij Chandrashekar
- Hannah Chen
- Anoushka Gupta
- Aakash Jois
- Ethan Kelly
- Vihaan Pujara
- Evan Tan
- Liam Welfare

In addition to this remarkable milestone, the School is celebrating a new State record: **83 Perth Modern School students achieved an ATAR of 99 and above**, the highest number ever recorded by any school in Western Australia. Congratulations to those students.

This year, 22 Perth Modern School students achieved a General Exhibition, placing them among the top 52 eligible students in the entire State.



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- VALE and TRIBUTES
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Acknowledgments

Thank you to all letter writers and contributors:

Ruth Barrett
Peter Farr
Steve James
Bob Johnson
Tony Keys
Mitchell Mackay
Robyn Verboon
Robyn White
Sharon Williams

Coordinator/Editors

Robyn White
Peter Farr

Compilation

Stuart Gould

Layout

ShoreDigital

This recognition is based on the highest WACE scores, calculated from the average of five scaled marks, including at least two subjects from both the Humanities/Arts list and the Mathematics/Science list.

Our General Exhibition recipients were:

- Aakash Jois
- Evan Tan
- Trung Thanh Bui
- Ishika Balram
- Ethan Kelly
- Hannah Chen
- Kshithij Chandrashekar
- Samantha See
- Ran Ji
- Jasmine Wu
- Marc Tan
- Alex Crosbie
- Rayan Kedar Jape
- Shermaine Chan
- Hayden Kelly
- Thu Thu Zin
- Mahek Aribenchi
- Ranjeev Ratheesh Nambiar
- Liam Welfare
- Alexia Chen
- Anoushka Gupta
- Ruofan Lin

In addition, seven students achieved a Subject Exhibition, awarded to the top student in the State for each WACE course:

- Chloe Christiansen - Drama
- Aakash Jois - Economics
- Parie Barzanji - English
- Benjamin Bauer - Geography
- Ishika Balram - Italian: Second Language
- Ethan Kelly - Mathematics Specialist
- Luvenia Yeo (Year 11) - Music

These achievements highlight the strength of Perth Modern School's academic programs, the dedication of staff, and the unwavering support of families. Most importantly, they reflect the remarkable effort and passion of students, who continue to inspire with their pursuit of excellence. Their achievements are particularly special, given that they began their Perth Modern journey in 2020 when COVID reached Western Australia and they faced so much uncertainty during that time.

Congratulations to all students on their exceptional results and thank you to their parent community for the encouragement and partnership that make accomplishments like these possible. We look forward to hearing of their future success.

Warm regards,

Mitchell Mackay and Robyn Verboon
Principals

SAVE THE DATE

Our 31st Annual General Meeting will be held on **Monday 4 May 2026**.

Full details will be emailed to members closer to the time.



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

2025-26 COUNCIL

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

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

\$40 per annum now due

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

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



SPHINX FOUNDATION INC.

2026 BOARD

sphinxfoundation@perthmoderniansociety.org.au
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Sphinx Scholarship Fund
Professor Shirley Randell AO
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museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

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Ex-officio:

Daryl Williams AM KC, *Perth Modernian Society President*
Philippa Roy, *School Representative*

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

[History Centre and Archives]

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

MUSEUM SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

facebook.com/perthmodernschoolmuseum/

instagram.com/pmsmamuseum/

MODERNIAN HONOURS

awards@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

Modernian Fellow

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

* Deceased

Moderna Scola Award

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

* Deceased

Honorary Members

Alison Woodman
Tonya McCusker AM
Nigel Hunt
Brendon Dawson

AUSTRALIA DAY HIGH HONOUR TO BRUCE ARMSTRONG AC FAA HonMD

On the occasion of distinguished Modernian **Emeritus Professor Bruce Armstrong** (Student 1957-1961) receiving the Australia Day honour of being appointed a **Companion of the Order of Australia** (AC), the Perth Modernian Society Council joined with the Sphinx Foundation Board and the Perth Modern School executive in congratulating Bruce.



Bruce Armstrong with
Council Secretary Deborah Beresford
(Photo taken at Mod in 2017)

In part, we said:

"We take extra pride in knowing that your secondary education started at Perth Mod in 1957 and gaining your Leaving with an incredible seven distinctions in 1961, which eventually led on to distinguished university accomplishments at UWA culminating in your Doctorate degree from Oxford University. Your subsequent support to Perth Mod has been fabulous, and we are very gratified that you came back to Mod in 2019 to present the Annual Oration titled 'Out of the Ivory Tower', and that there is a chapter about you in the Mod history book, 'A Celebration of Contribution'. It was very good to see you at the 2025 Annual Oration in November 2025."

PMS Principal **Mitchell Mackay** also congratulated Bruce as follows:

"Congratulations on your well deserved award. It was wonderful to see a distinguished Modernian recognised with such a prestigious honour. As a proud member of the Class of 1961, you continue to bring great credit to your alumni community, and we are immensely proud of all you have achieved. Our students are upholding the strong traditions of Perth Modern School, with last year marking new records in academic excellence. Your continued support plays a meaningful role in sustaining this legacy, and you stand as an inspiring role model for our current students, who look to your accomplishments and aspire to contribute to society with the same dedication and impact. Warmest congratulations once again, Bruce, on this remarkable achievement."

UPCOMING REUNIONS

Class of 1963 - 80th Birthday Reunion

Wednesday 21 October, 2026, from 10.30am for informal coffee, nibbles and chat at The Old Laundry in Angove St, North Perth.

Contact Mary-Jane Whitehead: mjw461@outlook.com

Class of 1959

The annual reunion will be held at the Claremont Tennis club later this year. Please contact Daryl at chloeb@inet.net.au for information.





SPHINX FOUNDATION INC.

MEET THE SPHINX SCHOLARSHIP FUND'S NEW EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Since its beginnings in 2008 when the late Jim Cundill donated the funds for the Cundill perpetual Creative Writing scholarship, the **Sphinx Scholarship Fund** has grown into a major source of support and encouragement for Perth Modern School students. The Fund now manages **\$1.5 million** of investments and has enabled **650** scholarships and bursaries over its 18 year history. In December 2025 alone, 103 awards were made or renewed, totalling **\$111,350**, and the cumulative value of scholarships awarded surpassed **\$1.0 million** in February 2026. Amongst public schools in WA, this fund is unsurpassed and stands as one of the Perth Modernian Society's several outstanding legacies.



Modernians will appreciate that administering a program of this scale requires significant expertise and careful stewardship. In recognition of this growth, the Sphinx Foundation Board of Directors, chaired by Honorary Modernian **Nigel Hunt**, is delighted to introduce the Fund's first part time salaried Executive Officer, **Mrs Jordan Moro** BA, BCom, appointed in January 2026. This marks a significant milestone for the organisation, as hitherto all work for the Foundation and the Sphinx Scholarship Fund has been undertaken voluntarily by Directors.

Jordan is herself a Modernian, having attended Perth Modern School from 2003 to 2007 during the Music School era, and serving as Student Council President in her final year. She brings a strong professional background in marketing, communications, project management, and budget oversight. Her career spans sporting organisations, local government, and the not for profit sector, including roles at PLC, Cancer Council WA, and the Perth Children's Hospital Foundation.

The creation of this new role enables long serving Director **Peter Farr** to step back from the demanding operational responsibilities he has undertaken voluntarily since the Fund's inception in 2008. Peter will continue as a Director and as a mentor to Jordan, shifting his focus to strategic matters while Jordan takes on the operational leadership of the Scholarship Fund.

As Executive Officer, Jordan will oversee the administration of the Fund and work closely with the Sphinx Foundation Board, the Perth Modern School executive and staff, and key philanthropic partners such as the Malka Foundation, BLOOM, and the Fogarty Foundation. Since commencing in the role, she has met the PMS staff involved in scholarships, and several of the Fund's major collaborators by participating in meetings with partners that include Fortescue Ltd, BLOOM, and the Malka Foundation.

Jordan's appointment represents an exciting new chapter for the Sphinx Scholarship Fund as it continues to expand its impact and strengthen its support for current Perth Modern School students, who will one day also become Modernians.

YOUR SAY

**Readers, do you too have something to say?
Please address your comments to Robyn White (robynwhite5@hotmail.com).**





MUSEUM MATTERS

WA Community Heritage Grant Success

It was with enormous trepidation that the museum volunteers waited for the WA Heritage Council and Minister McGurk to announce the successful applicants for a WA Community Heritage grant for 2026. Our application, to provide a QR coded school Heritage Trail, was submitted in early August - so that by the end of October we had sadly accepted lack of success. However, an email from the Department alerted us that the announcement was yet to come. There was great relief when the Minister's letter arrived proclaiming our success (funding us to the extent of \$9,780), preceding the official documentation from the Department.

The project that the Heritage Commission is jointly funding with the Museum Association and school is to establish a digital Heritage Trail. This Trail was primarily identified and researched by **Sallie Davies**, and generally a museum volunteer or school student (trained by **Thalia Cole**) would guide visitors throughout the trail. Visitors will be able to look up all of the points of interest and access comprehensive and accurate information about each site. In enabling the digital process we will be working with Rosemary Lynch from Millstream - who has already supported Iona College in establishing their QR coded walk.

The Heritage grant funds 50% of the cost of the project, which is required to be completed within twelve months. Consequently, in early February as we commenced the new year in the museum, volunteers have been especially excited.

2026 Visitors and Social Media

The first weeks of 2026 in the museum have been particularly interesting as we've welcomed visitors. **Norman (Norm) Chosid** (student 1949-1953) from Sydney arrived as we did on our first day (2nd February) - with some wonderful stories, Sphinx magazines, photos and other items to donate (please see the article on page 6). The following week it was **Peta Edwards** with photos and a blazer pocket of her great aunt **Dora Rotenberg** (married - Cameron, student 1915-1919, staff member 1923-28). Dora was awarded a General Exhibition and Distinctions for Biology and Maths in 1919. Dora also gained a scholarship to Cambridge University. Peta was very happy to find information about two more of her great aunts, Eva (married - Finkelstein, student 1921-24) and Raina (student 1925-28) who also attended the school. For volunteers, visitors consistently enliven our understanding of the lives of earlier students.



Wendy McCallum and Jill Lucas



Sharon Williams and Norm Chosid



Bob Johnson and Loren White



Barbara Culpeper Mallett

A fantastic project for students to learn some local history of such significance. Well done Museum committee and all the best with the project!

1w **Love** Reply Hide



Kali Caramia

I was a music scholarship student from 1971 - 1975, and remember the gym, but my heart was with the 'old' building as we had our form rooms there, our lockers, our music classes (with John Christmass) our early morning music lessons (mine with John Embleton), our Saturday morning concert band rehearsals and our concerts. So many wonderful memories ❤️

It is also lovely to hear and exchange news online via the Museum's Facebook page. Comments on gaining the Heritage grant included:



Kali is also a member of the Perth Modernian Society and was part of the group that contributed in 2019 to the creation of the John Christmass Choral Music scholarship.



Bùi Khôi

I was a music scholarship student in the mid-late 80s...the bottom photo brings back a lot of memories. During my time the concert hall was renovated and had the new seating arrangements that is still there now.

For those not on social media the bottom photo on our Facebook post was of the 1961 Gymnasium. Did you know in the late 1950s the 1922 Science Block was demolished to make way for the building of a new gymnasium? In 1962 the newly completed Gymnasium was used for training purposes by visiting teams during the British Empire and Commonwealth Games which came to Perth in that year.



Irene Froyland

Well done PMS Museum. I am so proud of you all

This month a number of Modernians and others also reached out via Facebook Messenger. One example is **Paul Prickett** (student 1970-1972). Some of our volunteers have now been involved in information exchanges, which are rewarding and also vital for adding valuable information into our archives/databases. Sadly, Paul's brother Chris (student 1962-1963) passed away in September 2025 (see Vale section on page 8).

2025 End of Year Morning Tea

The museum volunteers celebrated the conclusion of the 2025 school year with a morning tea in the museum. We were happily joined by several of the school staff as well as welcoming **Sharon Williams** back to WA after an extended stay in Bendigo supporting her parents. It was terrific to see **Frank Hedges**, whose volunteering has been a little curtailed in 2025. This was our opportunity to thank **Robyn Verboon** for her support for the museum throughout the year, as Robyn commenced her new role in mentoring school leaders across the state in February 2026. We do look forward to her return in two years' time!



R to L: Thalia Cole (staff and also Museum Board member), Loren White, Deborah Beresford, Sharon Williams, Gay Albillos, Bob Johnson, Trish Bebek (staff), Frank Hedges, Dr Robyn White and Ian Hunt.



Two Robyns!
Verboon and White



Deputy Principal Philippa Roy with volunteers

NORMAN (NORM) CHOSID

Turning 90 on 21st February 2026, Norm reflected on his life at Mod and after Mod in an interview with Sharon Williams at the PMS Museum

In 1949 Norm gained a place at Perth Modern School along with 18 other children from his year at North Perth Senior State School. Norm represented Mod in hockey and football and remembers playing 'footy' with future WAFL stars **Tom Guthrie** (East Freo) and **Ken Armstrong** (Perth). He recalls many of his teachers especially **'Effie' Mills** (music/art). The highlight of the school year was always Sports Day. A close friend at Mod, **Lyle Bowden** (dec), introduced him to cool jazz and the two formed a small group of teenage 'musos'.





1952 Sports Day Norm



1952 Sports Day - Owen Isbel, Len Pavy, Roger Woolfitt, Ray Purdy

Norm's love for Perth Modern School tradition was demonstrated in 2017 when he called and asked **Bob Hawke** (1942-46) "to do something" about the the McGowan Government's contentious plan to move the Gifted and Talented cohort from Mod into a high rise building in Northbridge. Thankfully, the efforts of many helped to Save Perth Mod on 13 June 2017 with the Premier's announcement of a new inner city high school at Kitchener Park. In the 90s, Norm remembers a big night out in Sydney sponsored by Vasse Felix that ended with Norm and another high profile Modernian, who also has a passion for the arts, belting out a stirring rendition of "*Moderna Scola Te Amamus*" on a table top.

Norm left Uni in 1955 to join his father's printing business (Alpha Print) and manage a graphic arts subsidiary. He worked as a bookmakers' clerk on Saturdays introducing him to a lifelong interest in racing. He completed his National Service obligations with the WA University Regiment.

In 1957, Norm joined the Papua and New Guinea Administration and worked in Port Moresby, Madang and Rabaul. While in PNG, Norm played baseball and rugby league and was also an NCO in the PNG Voluntary Rifles. He returned to the family business in Perth in 1960.

In the mid 60s, Norm re-invented himself as a rigger and worked on the US Low Frequency Installation Network set up in Exmouth, North West Cape. He next worked for Stellar Mining, set up to explore for diamonds in the Kimberley region of WA during the '67 mining boom (some years before the big Ashton diamond find). Stellar switched operations to buy sapphire leases in NSW. Norm stayed with the company in a number of different roles as it re-set up as a sapphire miner.

In 1973, Norm married Elizabeth (Liz) in Sydney. They have two sons, Benjamin, a corporate superannuation consultant and Jonathan, a music teacher with his own music studio in Sydney. Benjamin's wife Suzi is headmistress of a large Sydney suburban primary school. Norm and Liz have three grandchildren, Emma, Felix and Daniel, all teenagers (in 2026) attending high schools. Norm and Liz still live in their home in Greenwich which they purchased in 1975.

Norm next joined The Frank Whiddon Masonic Homes, a non-profit aged care organisation, as CEO. Under his watch in the late 70s and early 80s, the organisation extended its reach, building independent retirement villages and aged care facilities throughout NSW.

In 1983, Norm joined North's, a large private client stockbroker in NSW. Norm lists, as his many highlights, being invited by the Securities Institute to go to Sri Lanka to help establish a stock exchange in Colombo, the long lunches after Friday trading, the purchase of North's by the Bank of NZ, his new role acquiring stockbroking firms in Melbourne and Sydney, the frenetic trading during the stock market crash of 1987 and having to complete a crash course in Exchange Traded Options in order to trade on the Options floor. BNZ closed down their stockbroking arm in 1989.

Norm's next (and last) employment was with the AMA (NSW) as Director of Finance and Commercial Services. He built an imposing member services portfolio offering multi-layered benefits to the medical profession over fifteen years. He mostly enjoyed travelling to and organising medical conferences around the world and golfing weekends for AMA members in Australia.

At age 70, Norm retired and turned to his many interests: racing, art, music, bridge and golf. He managed a syndicate that won the Perth Cup in 2007 with "Respect NZ" a son of the famous sire Zabeel.

Norm and Liz enjoy their classical music with Norm listing Beethoven as his favourite composer. Norm's artwork dominates their home in Greenwich. Working in oil on an eclectic range of subjects, Norm leans toward vivid colour for his more recent pieces. He nominates Tim Winton, Garry Disher and Trent Dalton as his favourite Australian authors. Norm still plays golf three times a week at Monash, a top 100 golf course.





Sergei Rachmaninov by Norm Chosid



Norm & Liz- 25th Wedding Anniversary

In a visit to the Museum on 2 February 2026, Norm donated many items including his football pocket, Sphinx Magazines, PMS football team photo from 1952, PMS 40 year reunion booklet and 50 year reunion attendees.



*North Perth Senior State School - students selected to attend Mod from 1949
Back Row (L-R) Geoff Davis, John Turner, Owen Isbel, Lorraine Godfrey, Don Fletcher,
Norman Chosid, Bernie Tuppin Middle Row (L-R) Pam Webster, John Cohen, Colin Long,
Max Kamien, Peter Russell, Eddie Gunzburg, Flo Laming Front Row (L-R) Gail Krinks,
Norma ?, Ernie Smith (Teacher), Mr Moore (Principal), Val James, Margaret Peacock
Insert - Deidre Zusman*



Norm pictured with Bob researching his father who served

If have your story to share or any donations, the Museum is open on Mondays during school terms. Alternatively, our Biographical Form is available online for Modernians to share information about their years at Mod and their lives:

www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au/wp-admin/admin-ajax.php?action=frm_forms_preview&form=bio-entry

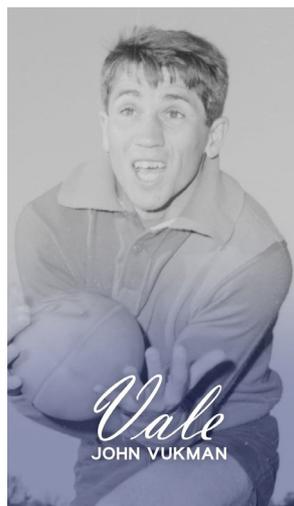
VALE

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

Name	Year at PMS	Position	Deceased
(Madeleine) Dawn Butterworth (née Beros)	1954-58	Student	21 November 2025
John Vukman	1956-57	Student	8 January 2026
Neville Hoffman	1955-59	Student	18 January 2026
Margurite Angela Henshaw (née Beeton)	1969-73	Staff	29 December 2025
Norma Clare Keys (née Finney)	1937-41	Student	20 January 2026
Rayma Richter (née Pervan)	1952-56	Student	23 January 2026
Ian Baker	1946-50	Student	30 January 2026
Len Pavy	1952-53	Student	31 January 2026
Chris Prickett	1962-63	Student	14 September 2025



JOHN VUKMAN
PMS Student 1956-57



At the age of 84, one of Western Australia's multi-talented sportsmen passed away in January. John Vukman was educated at Mt Hawthorn and then Perth Boys High School and Perth Modern School. A successful student while at school, John was primarily recognised for his outstanding sporting ability. As a cricketer, John was Vice-Captain to future Australian test fast bowling legend Graham McKenzie in the state-schoolboys and was a better than average opening batsman in A-Grade District Pennant cricket with North Perth.

After completing school and University, John's career commenced as a primary school and then high school Physical Education teacher. In this capacity he taught at Mt Lawley Senior High School and Hollywood Senior High School where he was highly respected as a knowledgeable, kind and patient teacher. Meanwhile, John commenced his WAFL career in 1959 with West Perth thirds at Leederville Oval and the League team in 1961. John was a flamboyant character with a great sense of humour on and off the field and largely responsible for the West Perth Football Club theme song. John was a life member of the West Perth Football Club and represented the Cardinals in 136 games (83 goals) between 1961-68 as well as for Footscray in the VFL in 1966.

Following his playing career, John's dulcet tones and insightful special comments were a highlight of football commentary on 6PR, 6KY, Channel Nine and the ABC.

While providing valued commentary on football games, John was also developing his business career. For many years an AMP man, he then successfully established JVA Financial Services.

In recent years John was a regular at Bill Walker's Odin Tavern where a group of former WAFL stars suffering from the insidious Parkinson's disease often gathered to catch up at their "Movers and Shakers" lunch. Here they were able to support each other during their illness, learn how each other were coping with the disease and listen to guest speakers and experts.

(MADELEINE) DAWN BUTTERWORTH AO (NÉE BEROS)
PMS Student 1954-55



Dawn Butterworth (nee Beros) lived an incredible lifetime commitment to early childhood education.

A student at Perth Girls High School who then went on to Perth Modern School, Dawn achieved her bachelor, honours and doctoral degrees in the areas of Education, the Arts and Special Needs. She was a lifelong champion for women, young children and education, working for the betterment of all for over sixty years and a truly inspiring model for others.

Further to her position as Head of Early Childhood Studies at Edith Cowan University, Dawn fulfilled teaching fellowships in China, Malaysia, Korea and Thailand.

When Dr Butterworth retired from lecturing, she received the Edith Cowan Memorial Award in recognition of her leadership and outstanding contributions to the profession of child education.

Dawn was a highly respected and passionate leader and advocate for children, families and high-quality early childhood education and care. Her dedication, generosity and tireless commitment to the work of Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Prescolaire (World Organisation for early Childhood Education) left a lasting impact on that organisation and its work. "I think that it's terribly important that we give back to others who are less fortunate than we are and in my case, my big interest is in children," she said. For twelve years, Dr Butterworth used her annual holidays to work on a project in Malaysia involved in the training of early childhood teachers.

Dawn's most recent work included helping to set up a pre-school in a remote area of Papua New Guinea.

In 2013 Dawn was named WA Volunteer of the Year and in 2014 she was inducted to the WA Women's Hall of Fame. In 2016 she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for "distinguished service to early childhood education, to learning programs for indigenous youth and as an advocate for the health and well-being of children and to women."

A busy life well lived who gave back and made a difference.



RAYMA RICHTER (NÉE PERVAN)
PMS STUDENT 1952-1956



Rayma, who grew up in South Perth, entered Perth Modern School in 1952. She studied the arts course (which included French and biology), and became a prefect in her final year, 1956. Her studies continued at UWA with a BA, and a teaching qualification from Claremont Teachers College. In 1996, in her contribution to her cohort's 40th anniversary booklet, Rayma looked back on her brief high school teaching career, describing it as 'disillusionment and trauma'. She reflected more positively on her subsequent employment as an editor and research assistant, and in administration, careers which she said provided 'satisfying levels of independence, autonomy and appreciation'.

Rayma married fellow UWA student Ralph Pervan. The couple lived in the US for six years at a time remembered by Rayma as socially and politically momentous. Later they lived in Armidale, NSW ('country peaceful'), for two years before coming home to Perth. The marriage, which produced two children, ended in divorce. Rayma returned to studies and completed a B.Sc. Her marriage c. 1995 to Bryan Rank was very happy. After Bryan's death in 2020, Rayma reconnected with her friends from Modern School. She was warmly welcomed by them at several coffee mornings at the Dome, Mt Pleasant, and Laurie Terrill/Best and Ruth McWhinney/Barrett saw her on other occasions. Wendy Becher/McCallum and Gay Rodda/ Albillos, schoolmates of Rayma's late sister Marilyn (of the 1954-58 PMS cohort), included Rayma in their regular Mod Girls lunches.

In recent times, Rayma was in care at Trinity, Duncraig. Her health was not good, but she maintained her gentle demeanour and quiet dignity. On 21 January her son Robert contacted some of her old school friends with the sad news that she was not expected to live much longer. Wendy and Gay visited her on 23 January, and on the 24th, as Laurie and Ruth were sitting by her bedside chatting quietly with Robert, Rayma peacefully passed away.

- Ruth Barrett

LEN PAVY
PMS STUDENT 1952-53



The recent passing of Len Pavy immediately elicited an article in the POST newspaper of the Western suburbs.

"No Western Australian has played Sheffield Shield cricket at a younger age than Len Pavy, who was 17 years old when he made his debut in 1954.

He was captain of the State Schoolboys football team a couple of years earlier when his team-mates included Jhon Todd, Barry Shepherd and Les Mumme.

Pavey, who owned one of the widest smiles in WA sport, died last week at 89.

His WA career ended at 19 when he was struck in the head by a Pat Crawford bumper, though he recovered well enough to play in a University A Grade premiership five years later.

He had a truncated playing career but was without peer in his professional life as a sporting educator and architect of junior development.

A State selector and WA director of coaching, he had influential roles at Edith Cowan University, Nedlands Teachers' College, Kent Street High School and a host of organisations that benefited from his broad and generous contribution to WA sport."

- John Townsend, POST, January 7 2026

Len Pavy attended Perth Modern School from 1952-53, having completed his Junior Certificate education at Perth Boys High School.

In his two years at Mod, Len's sporting prowess was immediately evident. In 1953 he captained the School first eleven cricket team and the School's first eighteen football team. He jointly won the Ambrose Cummins best all-rounder award at the end of 1953 and was a school prefect.

Following his school education, Len studied at UWA and Teachers' College, qualifying as a Physical Education and Health educator. Len taught at John Curtin Senior High School in 1958 while also representing WA in Sheffield Shield cricket (1954-56). By 1969 (until 1976) Len was lecturing at Teachers' College whilst also holding a Head of Department positions. From 1977 until 1987 Len was Superintendent of Physical and Health Education for the Department of Education - a significant whole of Western Australia educational leadership role.

As stated by John Townsend, Len continued to contribute to community and school sports in many roles throughout his retirement from the Education Department.



CHRIS PRICKETT PMS STUDENT 1962-63



Lt Colonel Chris: wedding photo, on leave from UN service in Iran

Portsea graduate and Vietnam veteran Christopher Richard Prickett passed away on 14 September last year aged 77. Chris was one of two Prickett boys who went to Mod and one of three who graduated from Officer Cadet School Portsea and went to places where people were shooting at them. Chris was born in Hull in England on 13 December 1947 and commenced at Mod in second year on 12 February 1962. His previous school was Southern Grammar in Portsmouth, UK. He passed his Junior in eight subjects in 1963 and left at the end of that year.

Chris enlisted in the Army in 1965, graduated from Portsea in December 1967 as a Second Lieutenant and was appointed to the Armoured Corps. He served in Vietnam for a year from March 1970 to March 1971. Chris's older brother, Malcolm, enlisted in 1963.

He graduated from Portsea on the same day as Chris and also joined the Tankies. He served in Vietnam from January 1970 to January 1971, overlapping with Chris for 10 months. It was the third time they had served together. In the photo on the right, Chris, 22, is a tank troop commander with "A" Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment and Mal (or Mac), 24, is Intelligence Officer with B Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment in Phuoc Tuy Province in 1970.

Both Chris and Mal retired as full Colonels. Mal died in December 2023, nearly two years before Chris. Their younger brother, Paul, went to Mod from 1970 to 1972, enlisted as an Army Apprentice in 1973, graduated from Portsea in 1977, was posted to the Engineers and in 1981 transferred to the infantry. He served in East Timor and Afghanistan and retired around 2015 with the rank of Major. He was awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal in 2018. Their father, Reg, served in the British Army in France in World War 1.



2nd Lieutenants Chris (left) and Malcolm 1970

IAN BAKER PMS STUDENT 1946-50

Ian Baker enjoyed being a student at Perth Modern School, performing well in both football and cricket as well as outstanding academic success. In enrolling at Mod, he was following in his father's footsteps whose family had pioneered in the wheatbelt town of Katanning. In his Leaving Certificate examinations, Ian attained subject exhibitions in both Chemistry and Physics.

Ian studied for an Honours degree (Bachelor of Science) at UWA, and in 1954 was immediately employed by British Petroleum (BP) at its Kwinana site.

For thirty-six years Ian worked for BP in a variety of positions in Australia (mainly Melbourne), United Kingdom and Canada. During his career with BP Ian worked on the supply side of the oil business and was involved in BP's chemicals, coal and mineral activities. His departure from British Petroleum was from the Melbourne office.

Upon leaving BP, Ian moved back to Perth with retirement in mind. At this time, he had remarried and had two primary school-age sons, taking the total number of Baker boys to five. Once in Perth however, he was discovered by the oil industry and soon had offers to return to places such as Houston.

The offer to head the WA Government Energy Implementation Group committee proved too interesting. As Chair of the EIG in 1994, Ian was responsible to follow up on the Carnegie Report that had recommended sweeping changes to the WA energy scene including the creation of a more competitive energy industry and the division of the SEC into separate gas and electricity units. Having initially learnt about the existing NW Shelf contracts and coal contracts, Ian then worked through the "disaggregation" or breaking up of the State's complex gas contracts and the splitting of the SEC. At this time, determining the charges for new entrants in the power industry and the rules for new gas producers wanting access to the main pipeline systems were critical decisions to be made. Ian played a leading role in renegotiating the major gas supply contract with Woodside Petroleum for the North-West shelf joint venture.

Ian became the non-executive Chair of AlintaGas from 1995 until 2000. He also chaired a small gold explorer.

Sources: Australian Financial Review June 1994, Museum records



NORMA CLARE KEYS (NÉE FINNEY) **PMS STUDENT 1937-1941**

We regret to notify you of the death of our mother, Norma Clare KEYS, (nee FINNEY), who was a student at Perth Modern School from 1937 to 1941. Norma died on 20th January 2026, having just turned 102 years old.

Norma attended Perth Modern School from 1937 to 1941. Following the completion of her school education, Norma trained as a teacher for primary school students and as a teacher librarian. She thoroughly enjoyed her time as a school librarian and remembered her one year exchange to Victoria as particularly exciting and professionally rewarding. Norma married a Victorian and her offspring included two sets of twins.

The school was an extremely important part of her life. She often mentioned many happy memories and, even though residing in Victoria, was very interested in the school as an alumni member and enjoyed receiving the Perth Modernian Society magazine/eNewsletter. She really enjoyed the special mention of her in the eNewsletter when she turned 100.

- Tony Keys, on behalf of Norma's family.

MARGO HENSHAW (NÉE BEETON) **PMS STAFF 1969-1973**

Marguerite Angela Henshaw (née Beeton) emigrated to Australia from the UK with her husband Anthony in the 1960s. With a background of teaching biology and physical education, Mrs Henshaw made a most welcome addition to the staff of Perth Modern School where she taught gymnastics and various sports from 1969 to 1973. As a gymnast and dancer, she featured PMS students in dance events at the WA Art Gallery, the WA Pageant in Kings Park and the royal visit of Princess Margaret and Tony Snowdon to Perth in 1972.

Margo is fondly remembered as an outstanding hockey coach and mentor, who kept in touch with former PMS students and colleagues and attended and enjoyed many happy alumni reunions well into her retirement.



Photo from The Sphinx, 1970

FREDERICK (FRED) GEORGE JAMES **PMS STUDENT 1928-1932**



Fred in Detroit 1946

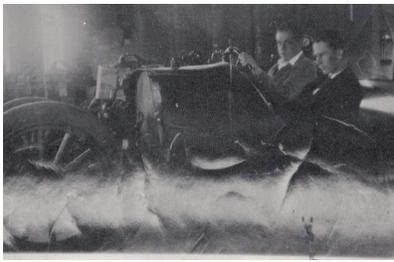
Fred, an only child, was born in Perth in 1915, and completed his secondary education at Perth Modern School in 1932. He completed an Honours degree in Engineering at the University of Western Australia in 1938. That year he sailed to England and worked at Vauxhall Motors before returning to Australia in 1941 and commencing work with General Motors Holden (GMH) in Melbourne. He married Monica Carroll in 1944, and in 1946 spent the year in Detroit working on the first Holden car, the 48-215. His two sons were born in 1948 and 1952.

Fred was promoted to Engine Engineer at GMH in 1963, and was responsible for the development of GMH's Australian-designed and built V8 engine in the late 1960s. He retired in 1977, and died in 2007.

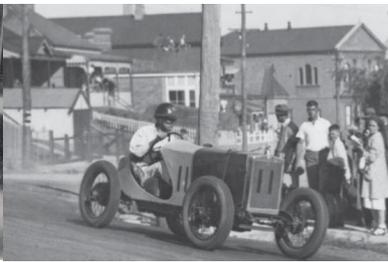
Fred built his first car - a 3 wheeler - while still a school boy at Mod, and he raced his heavily modified 1931 Morris Minor in the Albany Grand Prix in 1938 (coming 8th). He was also a keen sailor and skier.

- Steve James (son)





Fred's three-wheeler built with Doug Paterson while at Perth Modern School, early 1930s



Albany Grand Prix, 1938



Mount Hotham, Victoria, late 1940s

MODERNIANS WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

Number 30 in a special series of articles researched and prepared for publication by Robert Johnson, PMS student 1961-65 and Museum Volunteer

JOHN EARDLEY KENNY PMS STUDENT 1935-37

Soon after 9:45pm on 14 December 1943, Flight Sergeant John Kenny and his crew lifted off in their Beaufort light bomber from Vivigani airfield on Goodenough Island. They were ninth in the 10-aircraft mission and were tasked with bombing the dispersal area of Vunakanau airfield just west of Rabaul on Japanese-occupied New Britain. It was six hundred kilometres flight each way and the weather was terrible. Four aircraft could not reach the target and aborted the mission, three aircraft bombed the target with unknown results, two aircraft diverted and bombed alternative targets, Gasmata and York Islandi. One aircraft failed to return.

Early Years

John Kenny was born in Victoria Park on 22 January 1922 to parents Patrick and Beatrice, nee Walker. Patrick was born in Ireland and worked in the Tramways department. Beatrice was born in Perth. John had two younger sisters, Ray Mary who was born in 1924 and an unidentified sister. He attended East Victoria Park Primary School from 1928 to 1934 and then commenced at Perth Modern School on 5 February 1935. He countered his teachers concerns in third year of "Not enough work done to keep up" by passing his Junior exams in nine subjects.

John left Modern School at the end of 1937 and obtained employment as a junior clerk with the Public Works Department. He studied book-keeping in 1938 but discontinued it when he enlisted in the Militia in January 1939.

War Years

John joined the Militia in January 1939 and served in the Royal Australian Engineers for three years, attaining the rank of Sergeant. He applied for a discharge from the Militia so he could enlist in the RAAF, which he did in Perth on Sunday 7 December 1941, reverting back in rank to Aircraftman Class 2, the equivalent of Private in the Army. Several hours after John enlisted, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, triggering the war in the Pacific and determining John's destiny.

During 1942 John was sent to training schools at Pearce, Cunderdin and Geraldton in WA. He was promoted to Sergeant in December 1942 and sent for further training to Cressy and Nhill in Victoria. He was promoted to Flight Sergeant in June 1943 and posted for squadron training to two Operational Training Units in Victoria for five months, completing his training in late November.

On 30 November 1943 John was posted to No. 100 Squadron on Goodenough Island, part of the D'Entrecasteaux Group, off the coast of Papua. The squadron was raised in early 1942 from the remnants of a British unit that had been destroyed in Malaya and named in its honour. John's first flight was on 6 December 1943 and consisted of a five-hour daylight reconnaissance around the area.



The crew of 100 Squadron Beaufort A9.211 from left: pilot Flight Sergeant John Eardley Kenny (WA), navigator Flight Sergeant Arthur John Davies (WA) and wireless operator/gunners Flight Sergeants Thomas Burrowes (Vic) and Murray Fairbairn (Vic). Photo: Danielle Davies.



John's second operational flight was undertaken a week later on 14 December 1943 as described in the opening paragraph. The crew were not heard from again.

Map Showing Flight Path Vivigani to Vunakanau, and Baining Mountains



A 100 Squadron Beaufort Bomber over New Britain, March 1944 (AWM 016639)



After the War

After the war, hundreds of Australian flyers were still missing in the South West Pacific Area. Extensive searches were undertaken by RAAF searcher units led by the legendary Squadron Leader Keith Rundle. These searches were unsuccessful in locating A9.211 and the crew members were classified as deceased.

In 2021, aircraft wreckage was found in the Baining mountains south of Rabaul. In October 2025 an RAAF investigation team travelled to the site and identified the wreckage as being that of Beaufort A9.211. Group Captain Grant Kelly, the team leader, reported that, "The wreckage was dispersed over more than 200 square metres, in thick vegetation and on a steep slope near the top of a mountain range." The families of the crew members were notified of the discovery and informed that no human remains were identified.

Flight Sergeant John Kenny was 21 when he died.

Family

Patrick was a tram driver. Around 11am in William Street, on 28 November 1945, eighty-two-year-old Samuel Hoare walked into the side of a tram being driven by Patrick. Samuel died three days later. The coroner found that Patrick was blameless. Patrick died in 1961 aged 74.

Beatrice died in 1972 aged 78, 29 years after her son.

John's younger sister, Ray, was working as a stenographer when she enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) in March 1944. She served for over two years as a clerk, a Gunner in Coastal Defences in Fremantle and on Rottneest, and on the staff at Hollywood Repatriation Hospital. She married John Ramsay, a stoker in the RAN during the war, and died in 2011 aged 86.

LEST WE FORGET

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



¹ Fellow students Arthur Nicolay and Bill Cass were shot down on a bombing mission to Gasmata on 3 March 1942. See www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Perth-Modernian-Newsletter-August-2024.pdf, page 15.

² Keith Rundle and his team successfully investigated the wreckage of Arthur Nicolay's and Bill Cass's aircraft in late 1945.

