



# PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Issue 58, November 2023, Vol 3 No 8

Hi

**WELCOME** to your *Perth Modernian e-Newsletter, Issue 58, November 2023, Vol 3 No 8* 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](http://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au)

[info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto:info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)

All messages received either by phone or email are promptly forwarded electronically for further action.

## DIARY DATES

**Perth Modernian Society  
2023 ANNUAL ORATION  
Monday 27 November  
Eric McCrum OAM**

## BOOK LAUNCH

*Music at Mod*  
Friday 1 December at 6pm

## REUNIONS

**2024 ANNUAL REUNION  
TBA**

## CLASS/YEAR GROUPS

### Class of 1954-1958

will hold a reunion in 2024 to celebrate 70 years since their first year at Mod

**Date TBA**

Contact: Peter Farr

E: [farr.peter@farr.com.au](mailto:farr.peter@farr.com.au)

**Are you planning a Reunion?  
We can help**

for further information visit  
[www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au](http://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](mailto:newsletter@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)

## NEXT ISSUES

**Copy deadlines for**

**Issue 59, February 2024, Vol 4 No 1**

**20 February** copy deadline for circulation  
by **1 March 2024**

**YOU'RE INVITED**  
to the launch of our new book  
*'Music at Mod'*

Friday 1 December 2023 at 6pm

Beasley Hall  
Perth Modern School

Please RSVP for free at  
[perthmoderniansociety.org.au/music-at-mod](http://perthmoderniansociety.org.au/music-at-mod)

PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY  
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED

## CONGRATULATIONS

### PERTH MODERN SCHOOL

#### Prefects for 2024

Congratulations to the newly elected Head Prefects for 2024 - **Jessica Bruining** and **Chudy Isidienu**. They are part of the talented team of Year 11 Prefects including **Kele Readhead**, **Henry Bird**, **Swara Mali** and **Kezia Namdin** who will help lead our school into the future. As the current Year 12 Prefect Group begin their final journey towards their external ATAR examinations, they will hand over to Year 11 Prefects for the remainder of Term 4, 2023.

### ELLIE MALONZO

#### Young MSO Young Artist for 2023

The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra's young artist for 2023 **Ellie Malonzo**, PMS student, joined conductor **Sara Duhig, nee Herriman**, student 2000-04, in concert on September 17. Violinist and composer Ellie (13) showcased her virtuosity in Christian Sinding's suite *Im alten stil* (In the old style). She then joined world-renowned violinist Ronald Thomas in performing her original composition for two violins and orchestra.  
<https://www.metsoperth.org/ellie-malonzo>



### MAHEK ARIBENCHI

#### Rotary Club of Subiaco Rotary 4 Way Test Speaking Competition

Perth Modern School student **Mahek Aribenchi** was recently crowned the winner of the Rotary 4 Way Speech Competition. This is the first time since 2008 that a Perth Modern School student has won this prestigious and highly competitive speaking contest.

**Issue 60, May 2024, Vol 4 No 2**  
20 May copy deadline for circulation by  
1 June 2024

**Issue 61, August 2024, Vol 4 No 3**  
20 August copy deadline for circulation by  
1 September 2024

**Issue 62, November 2024, Vol 4 No 4**  
20 November copy deadline for circulation  
by 1 December 2024

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**REUNION NEWS**

- Class of 1970
- Class of 1972
- Class of 1957

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- From the author
- Launch and Sales of 'Music at Mod'

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- Tributes

**TRAILBLAZERS OF YESTERYEAR**

- Geoff (Ted) Penny
- Vinh Lê

**MODERNIANS WHO DIED IN  
SERVING COUNTRY**

- Series Number 21. Ed Guthrie

**Contributors**

Thank you to all letter writers  
and contributors:

Thalia Cole  
Peter Farr  
Robert Johnson  
Barbara Mallett  
Perth Modern School  
Roger Stubbs  
Wendy Watts  
Robyn White

**Coordinator/Editor**

Sallie Davies

**Layout**

Stuart Gould  
ShoreDigital



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY  
[www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au](http://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au)

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Held on 29 May 2023  
TBA for 2024

**2023 COUNCIL**

[info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto:info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)

Ruth Barrett, *Honour Awards*  
Barrie Baker, *Membership*  
Deborah Beresford, *Hon Secretary*  
Eve Broadley, *Hon Treasurer*  
Robyn White, *Vice President, Museum Rep*  
Peter Farr, *Sphinx Foundation*  
Ian Hunt, *IT/Communication, Technology*  
Evan Kennea, *President*  
Salena Loasby, *Communication Marketing*  
Barbara Mallett, *Reunions*  
Daryl Williams, *Vice President*  
Mitchell Mackay, *Ex-Officio, PMS Principal*

Mahek won a cash prize and three trophies; one for herself, one for Perth Modern School and one for the Rotary Club of Subiaco which sponsored her.

After a gruelling three rounds of competition, on the day of the final which was September 4, Mahek used a series of public speaking techniques to craft and present a six-minute speech on the topic 'Down Syndrome Discrimination' while integrating and analysing the values of the Rotary 4 Way Test. Mahek asked the audience:

*"Firstly, is it the truth? Put your hand up if you have a child or a younger sibling. Imagine, they tell you, tears rolling out their eyes, that no one wanted to play with them at lunch time, how would you feel? The pain we share is indescribable, unbearable, but think about those that face it every single day. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, over 74 per cent of children with down syndrome experience bullying regularly."*

*"I am sick of being put in a box. Just because I attend an academically selective school doesn't mean book-smart defines me! Similarly... people with Down Syndrome are not defined by incapable and flawed. Each one has unique talents that we must embrace but also acknowledge that their difficulties are no barrier to success. Motivating examples like Ellie Goldstein; a world class model, Tazia Fawley; an artistic treasure, and Steven Brandon; an accomplished actor, prove this fact. As a society, it is something we must encourage to dispel past prejudices, and inspire others with Down Syndrome to dream big, therefore cultivating goodwill in our community."*

Principal of Perth Modern School Mitchell Mackay said he was thrilled for Mahek as she had worked really hard and displayed level of maturity beyond her years in how she approached the topic. *"Mahek really threw herself into this competition, seeking advice, striving to be her best and giving it her all,"* Mr Mackay said. *"Perth Modern is very proud of her."*

Year 11 and 12 PMS students are involved in Rotary's junior group, Interact, and participate in several community projects during the year.

**SHIRLEY RANDELL (nee IZETT)  
PMS student 1953-57**

In a recent email to family and friends Shirley wrote:

*I was delighted to visit Kigali in **Rwanda** again, following my participation in the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference in 2022. This time I was a participant and speaker at the Sixth Women Deliver conference, the world's largest conference on gender equality and the health, rights, and wellbeing of girls and women in the 21st century. It was wonderful to meet old friends, like Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Chair of Women Deliver and former United Nations Under-Secretary General. 6,000 thousand decision-makers from diverse fields in over 165 countries, including civil society, government, the private sector, and international agencies, alongside women's rights organizations and movements, youth-led and LGBTQIA+ organizations, and advocates representing the intersectional identities of girls, women, and underrepresented populations in low- and middle-income countries met.*



*The aim was to identify solutions and drive progress for gender equality. In addition, more than 200,000 people joined around the world through satellite events and the virtual program. Rwanda was selected as the venue because the Global Gender Gap Index ranks Rwanda the second most gender equal country in Africa and seventh in the world, with a score of 80.5 percent. The Victorian Government, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, was the Pacific Regional Convening Partner for Women Deliver 2023 and I was pleased to attend the regional meeting in Melbourne with 380 delegates before travelling overseas to Rwanda.*

*The Pacific and Melbourne convening events provided an opportunity for regional gender equality priorities to be identified, and to build momentum towards and prepare to represent those priorities on the global stage in Rwanda. I was one of 65 delegates from the Oceanic Pacific region attending Women Deliver 2023, led by the Minister for Women in Victoria.*



### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

\$40 per annum now due

### NEW MEMBERS

Joseph Coleman  
Avril Hughes

Annual Contributing Member  
renewals since 20 August 2023  
Robyn Bryant  
Patrick Murphy  
Helen Dilkes  
Katherine Morley  
Irene Froyland

### MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Incomplete due to earlier  
publication deadline

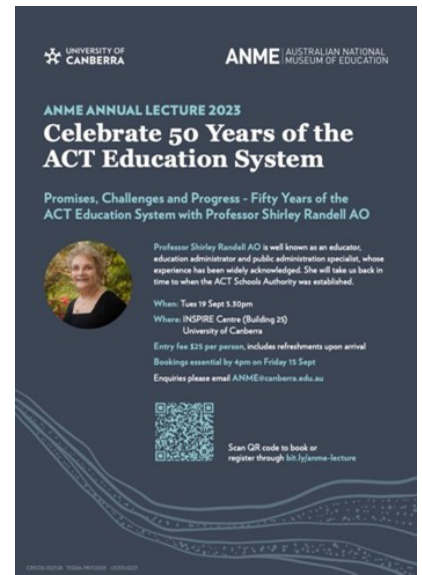
Have YOU completed or updated your  
**MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION  
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION  
and/or CHANGE OF DETAILS  
Forms** are available on the website  
[www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au](http://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au)  
further information  
[info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto:info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)

*This was the largest delegation from our region,  
many of whom spoke at the plenary and in other  
forums, representing the diversity of our locations,  
identities, and sectors. On this occasion I was  
representing older women and spoke with  
representatives of HelpAge International at their side  
event.*

*I returned to Canberra, to prepare for the Australian  
National Museum of Education's annual lecture,  
"Celebrating 50 years of the ACT Education  
System: Promises, Challenges and Prospects."  
I was a Director Programs of the ACT Schools  
Authority from 1984-88, but it has been quite a  
challenge to review half a century when I was  
involved in education in Canberra for only about 10  
percent of that period."*

Further information in  
Newsletter of  
**AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL  
MUSEUM OF EDUCATION**

*ANME News*  
<http://www.anme.org.au>  
No. 46 Spring 2023



SPHINX FOUNDATION INC.

### 2023 BOARD

[sphinxfoundation@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto:sphinxfoundation@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)  
Nigel Hunt, *Chairman*  
Barrie Baker, *Director*  
Peter Farr, *Director*  
Vivian Wang, *Hon Treasurer*  
Robert Gray, *Director*  
Danielle Jeyes, *Director*  
Fiona Tholet, *Associate Principal*



## PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY COUNCIL NEWS

### 2023 ANNUAL ORATION

#### My Fortunate Life as a Teacher and Naturalist in Western Australia

**Eric McCrum, PMS student 1950-51 and School Prefect 1951**, has accepted Council's invitation to deliver the 2023 Annual Oration to PMS senior students on 27 November 2023.

Distinguished Modernian **Eric McCrum OAM** grew up in Bassendean, where he spent much of his childhood exploring the wildlife around the Swan River. Eric was educated at Bassendean Primary School, Midland High School, Perth Modern School, and Claremont Teachers College.

Eric's passion for nature has led him to work as a teacher, headmaster, and nature educator, passing on his knowledge of nature to many students over the years. Indeed, for over seventy years. He has devoted himself to understanding the natural world, and spreading his enthusiasm and knowledge to children and adults alike. For ten years Eric taught at the Perth Zoo Education Centre, and then for fourteen years at the Gould League Wildlife Centre at Herdsman Lake, inspiring over seven thousand visiting children a year.

Eric McCrum, naturalist, teacher and keen photographer, is known to many as 'The Birdman' on ABC radio, and is capable of imitating the call of almost any bird found in the Australian bush. He is also knowledgeable about the Noongar history of West Australian land, as well as Aboriginal language, such as relating to the place names of WA towns.

Eric received the Order of Australia Medal OAM and the also the Michael Chin Humanitarian Award for his services in environmental education, conservation, and natural history.

Since retirement, Eric continues to give talks and works to foster the care for, and protection of, the natural world through education.

### DONORS

**Sphinx Scholarship Fund**  
from 20 August 2023  
list n/a due to earlier  
publication deadline



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY  
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED

### 2023 BOARD

[museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto:museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)  
Dr Robyn White, *Chair*  
Sharon Williams, *Treasurer*  
Jeffrey Lai, *Board Member*  
Ashleigh Blechynden, *Board Member*  
Monica Brierley-Hay, *Secretary*  
**Lois Joll, Leave of Absence**  
Mitch Mackay, *Principal, ex-officio*  
**1 vacancy**  
Ex officio:  
President Modernian Society

### MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS [History Centre and Archives]

Gay Albillos  
Deborah Beresford, *Hon Archivist*  
Jim Davies  
Sallie Davies  
Peter Dillon  
Rebecca Guy  
Frank Hedges  
Ian Hunt





Robert (Bob) Johnson  
Bill MacPherson  
Jill Lucas  
Wendy McCallum  
Deirdre Owen  
Roger Stubbs  
Loren White  
Robyn White  
Sharon Williams  
Alison Woodman

**2023 DONORS**  
**PMS Museum Fund**

*Thank you for your generous support  
list n/a due to earlier  
publication deadline*

**MUSEUM SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES**

[facebook.com/perthmodernschoolmuseum](https://facebook.com/perthmodernschoolmuseum)  
[instagram.com/pmsmamuseum](https://instagram.com/pmsmamuseum)

**MODERNIAN HONOURS**

[Awards@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto: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

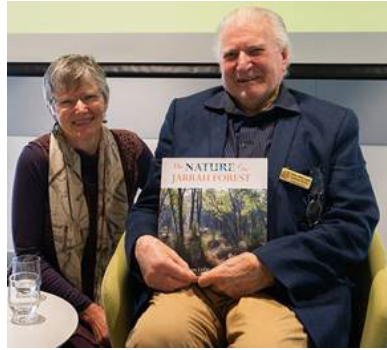
**Moderna Scola Award**

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

**Honorary Membership**

Alison Woodman  
Tonya McCusker AM  
Nigel Hunt  
Brendon Dawson  
Sharon Williams

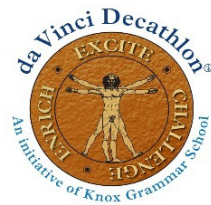
He does numerous talks to a variety of groups and presents regularly on a radio. He has an incredible memory and knowledge of all things nature. He has also authored a book called *"The Nature of the Jarrah Forest"* with his daughter, Janine McCrum (see photo below), launched in August 2023.



*Eric McCrum, aged just 19, in his first year of teaching in 1954, with all the students at the Reid school (Nullarbor, WA).*

## SPHINX FOUNDATION

### Sponsors Mod's DaVinci Decathlon Year 10 winning team



This good news story started in July 2023 when the Sphinx Foundation received a letter with this request: *My name is **Anoushka Gupta**, I am 14 years old, and as a current Year 10 student at Perth Modern School, I am writing to ask if your organisation would consider assisting with sponsorship and donations for my team to represent Western Australia in the national DaVinci Decathlon competition.*

*The DaVinci Decathlon is an international competition involving teams of eight students in each year group. In our school's first year of participation, our talented team of Year 10 Perth Modern Students won the State competition on the 10th of May, hence qualifying for the National competition in Sydney this September, which we are now diligently training for.*

*In this, we will be competing in two days of demanding academic challenges across 10 disciplines, comprising Mathematics, Science, Engineering, Art and Poetry, English, Cartography, Ideation (innovative ideas), Creative Production, Code Breaking and General Knowledge. We are a diverse team of hard-working and motivated thinkers, who are keen to enhance our abilities and tackle challenges. From participating in this challenge, we aim to equip ourselves as leaders of the future by thinking creatively, addressing a multitude of difficult "real-world" problems, and effectively collaborating in a dedicated team. We also strive to inspire younger students to widen their academic knowledge, stretch their abilities to their full potential and work effectively in teams.*

*As you can imagine, this is quite an exorbitant affair, and we are therefore pursuing multiple fundraising schemes to achieve our goal. However, we require some extra help to raise the money required for travel, accommodation, transportation, and incidental costs. In order for us to proudly represent Perth Modern School and the state of Western Australia in this prestigious competition, it would be greatly appreciated if you could consider providing us with a donation to help us achieve this goal. A sponsorship, or whatever can be donated, would be of great assistance.*

In response, the Board of the Sphinx Foundation, with the valuable assistance of another donor, was very pleased to provide \$6,000 towards the team's travel costs to Sydney in September. The students raised a substantial amount themselves. **Ms Helen Lydon**, Perth Mod's Innovative Learning and Teaching Coordinator, said at the time:

*"The students are so very excited about the Sphinx Foundation's generous support of the DaVinci tour. Two of the students yesterday expressed to me their special thankfulness, as they have to fund the tour entirely themselves, without parental support, and these donations will make a significant difference to them. Your enthusiastic support in giving our students these wonderful opportunities is very much appreciated. With many thanks, Warm regards. Helen Lydon"*

And the result? **The DaVinci Decathlon Year 10 team** really distinguished themselves by winning the National Year 10 title.

 **PERTH MODERN SCHOOL**  
Exceptional schooling. Exceptional students.  
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL  
[www.perthmodern.wa.edu.au](http://www.perthmodern.wa.edu.au)  
for School Board information



Overall	
Rank	School
1	Perth Modern School, WA
2	Anglican Church Grammar School, QLD
3	Knox Grammar School, NSW
4	Camberwell Grammar School, VIC
5	The Friends' School, TAS

The article below was publicised in the Suburban Post on 4 Nov. 2023:

### Perth Mod kids outbrain the brainiest

A team of eight Year 10 Perth Modern School students have outbrained the brainiest of their Australian peers winning the national final of the DaVinci Decathlon in their year group.

Teacher Helen Lydon accompanied the students to Sydney to compete in the demanding DaVinci Decathlon competition, going up against some of the brightest students from private and public schools around Australia.

Fresh from winning the state trials at their first participation, the team of Kshithi Chandrashekar, Sumedha Ghosh, Anoushka Gupta, Ethan Kelly, Abby Li, Qiuqi Li, Alice Tanner and Sonia Yeo completed months of training to ready themselves for the national competition.

"We'd been practising and planning for months and being able to apply our research in context was very satisfying," Sonia, 15, said.

"Facing this challenge as a team was an amazing experience as we bonded and become very good friends."

After competing in three days of gruelling trials in mathematics, science, art and poetry, cartography, English, engineering, drama, ideation, general knowledge and code-breaking, the Mod team were elated to be named national champions for Year 10.

"Proving to myself that I can do hard stuff was a highlight," said Alice, 16.

"I got the chance to develop my abilities, form new friendships and challenge myself," said Anoushka, 15.

Perth Mod principal Mitchell Mackay said: "These students are such hard workers, alongside being smart and capable, and have put an extraordinary amount of effort into bringing this trophy home to WA."



*Perth Modern School students have won the national final of the DaVinci Decathlon in their year group. Photo: Paul McGovern*

## REUNIONS

### PMS Class of 1970, 70th birthday

On Saturday 28th October, 25 students from the **PMS Class of 1970** gathered at the Marmion Angling and Aquatic Club at noon to celebrate a joint 70th birthday.



There was **Martin** from the UK (whom we had only seen via zoom at the 50th reunion) and **Louise** whom we hadn't seen for 53 years but whom we recognised straight away!

When all were there, **Jim** made a speech to thank our hosts (**Paul** and **Christine**) who had made it possible that we could meet in this beautiful venue many times. Then Jim surprised Barbara with a monstrous floral arrangement, which needed a strong man to carry to the car!

The day was spent chatting and catching up on life's memories. We had lunch and then blew out the candles on the birthday cake. There were balloons to mark the spot and cookies with the school crest to take home.



The photo and memento album (that attends every reunion) was viewed, and laughed over by many, and there were also a few Sphinx magazines being circulated. By 6pm the circle had dwindled, and it was time to depart for home.



### Class of 1972

These are photos of a group that visited the History Centre on October 28. They were mostly music students and class of 1968-1972.



**Re: Class of 1957, Mini Mod Reunion**  
**From: Wendy Watts, nee Snow , student 1953-57**

**Tony Wegener (Class of 1957)** has been visiting Perth with some of his family. We had a wonderful gathering on Oct 26th with 23 - some flying in especially from the eastern states. Would you be interested in a couple of photos ? one group were his classmates from West Leederville Primary School with their legendary teacher **Miss Molly Larney** (16 scholarships in our year!) Those who flew in were **Bevan Campain (Qld)**, **Tony Thomas** and **Judy Pollock (Brealey)** from **Vic.**, **Brian Savvas (SA)**. Tony Wegener came with two daughters, son, daughter in law, two grand children from Utah and Minnesota. Roy Penberthy also hosted a function at RPYC on Oct 24. Classmates were the **Millward twins**, **Bev Pettersen (Hartz)**, **Judy Pollock (Brealey)**, **Bevan Campain**.

Best wishes, Wendy



## YOUR SAY

### About the newsletter

**From: Irene Froyland, student 1955-59**  
A GREAT NEWSLETTER. THANK YOU ALL [August 2023 Issue]. Irene

**From: Hugh Davies, student 1948-52, School Captain 1952**  
**Re: Thank you**  
Thank you for the excellent newsletter of 27 August 2023. And welcome **Mr Mitchell McKay** as CEO. With best wishes Hugh L Davies



**From: Brandon Boccola, student 2012-16**

**Re: Update**

Could I please update my email address from for the newsletter? I think I may have unsubscribed when I was trying to find a link to update it. Sorry if so - my name is Brandon Boccola and I was in the class of 2016. Thanks in advance for your help. Brandon

**Ed:** *Your email address has been returned to the Newsletter mailing list.*

**From: Christopher Cornish, student 1956-60**

**Re: New subscriber**

My name is Christopher Albert Cornish and I graduated from Modern School in 1960.

Please include me on the subscription list for the newsletter.

Thank you. Regards, Christopher Cornish

**Ed:** *Your email address has been entered into JED The Perth Modernian Society Museum Association JED db for future email contact. Please check out the details for Contributing Membership of the Perth Modernian Society at [www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au](http://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au)*

**From: Denis Wylks, student 1954-58**

**A "RIVAL" SCHOOL?**

I have a suggestion for an article in a future newsletter. Having lived in Canberra since 1972, I am a bit out of touch with the latest events at the school, although I have attended a few Class of 58 reunions, up to 2018. I would like to find out what is going on with the new school that has appeared in the corner of the site. It appears to be a Modernian copy, named after a well known former student of Mod! Is it intended to replace our school and does its emergence have anything to do with the recent issue regarding the Principal's replacement? I am sure that there must be others amongst us who are wondering about these matters! That leads me to another question - I was interested to hear about a possible reunion event to be held in Melbourne for "eastern states" Modernians. Can I get my name on the mailing list? Denis

**Ed:** *Always happy to consider new ideas for articles and bring back old memories. This email was forwarded to Dr Robyn White, Chair of the Perth Modernian Society Museum Association Board, who replied to Denis in the following terms:*

### The "rival" school?

*You may remember that just before Mark McGowan was elected (in March 2017), The then Opposition Education Shadow Minister Hon. Sue Ellery outlined Labor's election policy to relocate the Gifted and Talented specialist school to 'Education Central' on the top six floors of a 22 storey building Northbridge. Presumably she assumed that returning the Roberts Road buildings to a comprehensive local high school would counter the extreme overcrowding at Churchlands SHS, and be appreciated by the Mt Hawthorn/North Perth population who had felt most marginalised by the change of Perth Mod back in 2007 to a fully selective school for academic students.*



*The local, alumni and parent population around Perth was appalled - the many problems in locating a school amongst businesses etc sharing the building, lack of recreation space, lack of access (no parking area) plus the loss of the natural historic location with heritage buildings on the site persuaded the government not to create its 'inner city' school at Mod.*

*However, the issue for the government, was its perceived concern for education facilities for a city population (still stood at about 200 secondary school aged children) and the issue of Mt Hawthorn and its locality. There were then three great sites in the city that might have converted to a city school on its own secure site (the old Perth Girls High School, the old orphanage on St Georges Tce, and the under-utilised TAFE site on Royal St).*

*The government eventually (June 2017) bowed to public pressure and decided on a new comprehensive school to be built on Kitchener Park alongside Subiaco Oval (as the outdoor space and limited other space for two three-storied buildings). It's a great looking school. But it is on very limited space and will have up to 30 storeys apartment blocks alongside Hayden Bunton Drive in the next few years. It also requires about five buses to bring students from Mt Hawthorn etc to the school (a city site would have had direct access). Bob Hawke College opened in February 2020 and is the first high density public secondary college in Western Australia. It will eventually house about 2,000 students.*

*As far as Mod goes, the school admin has good relations with their colleagues - but there's not a lot of need for sharing etc - the school is well resourced. Hope this helps explain the new school.*

### Class of 1973

*I'll check with the coordinator of the 1973 reunion to find contacts with the Melbourne group of students - not given to us yet - but we'll do our best to find the contact and let you know. Best wishes, Robyn White, Chair, Perth Modernian Society Museum Association Inc.*





**From: Dorothea Bennie (nee James), student 1949-52**

**Re: Modern School's newsletter.**

My name is **Dorothea Bennie**, but the newsletter always refers to me as Dot Bennie. I was Dorothea James when I was at Mod. I have suddenly noticed that I have not received a couple of newsletters from 2023. IINET, my internet provider made some changes to its business and as a result I have had a few problems for a little while. However everything seems to be working OK again now and I wish to confirm that my email address has not changed. I really enjoy getting the newsletter and reading about the School and its activities

NOW : I want to pass on to your VALE records the death of **VALERIE JAMES** who was a student at Mod in 1949, 1950 and 1951. Valerie passed away on October 14th. Valerie and I were in the same classroom in 1949 because of our surnames.

I'm sorry I can't tell you anything else about Valerie but by all means include my comments. Anything related to MOD immediately attracts my attention. Just a question of great memories of a very special place that I was lucky enough to be part of years ago. My best wishes to all those who keep the Newsletter running. Regards, Dorothea.

**Ed:** *Thank you for your email. I am pleased to hear that you are back on line and will check that you are on the mailing list for the November issue. You will find all the recent Perth Modernian newsletters are available on the website [www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au](http://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au). With your permission I will include your kind comments about the newsletter in YOUR SAY in this issue. I will also include Valerie's name in the VALE list in this issue If you follow the prompts you will also find a link to the most recent Perth Modern School Newsletter*

**From: Tony Keys**

**Re: 100th Birthday acknowledgment**

I am writing on behalf of the family of Norma Clare Keys ( Finney) who will be turning 100 on the 17th January 2024. Norma, (as Norma Finney), was a student at Perth Modern School from 1937 to 1941. The school was an extremely important part of her life. She has many happy memories which she often mentions and remains very interested in the school as an alumni member. Kind regards, Tony Keys

**Ed:** *We wish Norma a wonderful 100th birthday on 17th January 2024. We look forward to further contact with Tony in time for our next issue.*



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY  
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED

## FROM THE AUTHOR

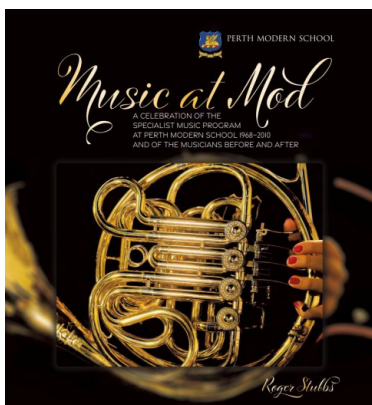
It's finished! **Music at Mod** with its 331 pages, 150 glorious photos and a stunning design is now soon to be launched. My memories of some remarkable students were my motivation to write. I was privileged to hear **Leilah Fox** and **Reigan Derry** sing and **Aiden Boase** play piano. **Brody Linke**, **Alex Tempone** and **Maeve Lander** impressed with the trumpet. I watched with admiration how **Sarah Herriman** and **Hannah Cowie** led the Senior Orchestra. And so many, many more.

I will never forget how **Neil Coy** and **Lawrie Jacks** inspired the orchestra, and how **Celia Christmass** was able to command so many voices to excel. I remember the day **Elysia Murphy** enthralled her students with an impromptu performance of skat singing. Teachers of the like I had never before seen.

As I researched, so many other stories of remarkable young people and remarkable teachers emerged. It was a very special journey, one that I hope many others will share and enjoy. Many thanks to **Alison Woodman** for her careful curation of the photographs.

Roger Stubbs.

## LAUNCH AND SALES OF *Music at Mod* PUBLICATION





For readers of the Perth Modernian Society Newsletter, the Museum Association's commitment to creating a book that records the fascinating story of the Specialist Music Program at Perth Modern School, has been a lengthy narrative! Over the past weeks, our volunteers at the Museum have been excited to see the first proofs of this beautiful book. Three years of research, much online, (thank you Covid), in the museum and at Battye Library as well as via thoughtful and enthusiastic alumni has culminated in **Roger Stubbs** writing an impressive publication mapping the progress of this programme. Roger, **Alison Woodman**, **Peter Dillon** and interested **volunteers** have collected stories, programs and photographs that our designers at Stylus Design have organised into a high quality publication. Over 300 pages feature over 150 photographs, noting more than 1600 individuals who contributed to the programme.

The book tells of the success enjoyed at international and national level by so many of the School's graduates which include **Victor Sangiorgio**, **Emma Matthews**, **Anne Horton**, **Patrick Murphy**, **Faith Maydwell**, **Sam Anning**, **Andrew Joy** and **Georgia Browne** and so many others. Amongst graduates who have enjoyed stellar careers in business, academia and medicine are **Elizabeth Gaines**, **Professor John Bertram** and **Dr Melville da Souza** – and there are more. The programme aspired to provide students with the skills and understanding to become professional musicians or alternatively to become a well informed audience member who might or might not continue with musicianship in an amateur capacity.

For members of the Perth Modernian Society Museum Association Board and volunteers, the development of the *Music at Mod* book has been a focus for some time. More recently, questions about the number of books to be printed (initially 300) and an appropriate sale price for the book has occupied our minds. The Board determined that the cost of the book will be subsidised to keep it accessible. For a charitable organisation, this was a difficult decision. However, the Board recognises this as a historic document and hopes that it will be widely read and appreciated.

With the book currently being printed, the date for the launch of the book has been set as:

**Friday 1st December at 6pm in the Beasley Hall at Perth Modern School.**

You are invited - attendance is free but please register online at

<https://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au/music-at-mod> for purposes of catering.

The Association has released the Purchase Form for people wishing to purchase the book

– also found at <https://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au/music-at-mod>

## PURCHASE THE BOOK!



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY  
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION  
INCORPORATED

### ORDER FORM

Item	Price	Qty	Total \$
Music at Mod Book	\$69.95	.....	.....
Postage per book within Australia	\$15.00	.....	.....
I wish to donate	.....	.....	.....
Total	.....	.....	.....

Purchases can be picked up from school reception:  
90 Roberts Road, Subiaco WA 6008 (at no charge).  
Monday–Friday, 8.00 am–3.45pm.

### CONTACT DETAILS

Name: .....  
Email: .....  
Telephone: .....

### DELIVERY METHOD

Post to this address (\$15 postage per book within Australia)

Will collect from School Reception

### PAYMENT DETAILS

#### Electronic Funds Transfer details:

Perth Modernian Society Museum Association Inc.  
BSB: 302 162 Account: 126455 6  
Please put your surname and initials in the description line.

#### Credit Card

Mastercard Visa Card

Credit Card No. ....

Expiry Date: ...../.....

Cardholder's Name: .....

Cardholder's signature: .....

#### Cheque

Please make payable to "Perth Modernian Society Museum Association Inc"

Please send the completed form  
(and cheque if applicable) to:  
email: [museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au](mailto:museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au)  
post: Perth Modernian Society Museum  
Association Inc., 90 Roberts Road,  
Subiaco WA 6008

ABN: 73 761 561 543



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

NAME:	YEAR at PMS	Status	Deceased
Ross Owen Kirkham	1949-53	Student	Decade ago
Dr David Sydney Teakle, Qld	1945-47 (Yrs 1-3)	Student	01/06/2022
Laurie Bedford	1964-68	Phys Ed Teacher	20/08/2023
Bette Koppe (nee Meehan)	1950-51 (Yrs 4-5)	Student	25/08/2023
Valerie Ann Crosby (nee James)	1949-51 (Yrs 1-3)	Student	14/10/2023
Frank Edward Lambert	1949-53	Student	23/10/2023
Chris Tollis	1951-53 (Yrs 1-3)	Student	25/10/2023

### LAURIE BEDFORD PMS teacher 1964-68

Hockey Australia is saddened to learn former Kookaburra **Laurie Bedford** has passed away at the age of 81. Laurie was the 194th player capped for Australia's Men's Hockey Team, one of 13 players to make their international debut on 13 August 1967 in the first match of a 3-test series in New Zealand. A legend of Cricketers Hockey Club in Perth, Laurie started playing at the club in 1960, firstly at left wing and then at fullback. He was also a talented penalty corner taker. Laurie enjoyed great success at Cricketers HC during his 13 years at the club. Over that period, he represented Western Australia at Colts (U18 level) and Seniors before being selected for Australia. After competing in the 1967 Trans-Tasman series, according to Hockey Australis records Laurie also played in an international tournament in Lahore against East Germany, France and Kenya in 1969. Source: *Hockey Australia*

### DR DAVID SYDNEY TEAKLE PMS student 1945-47

David died in June 2022, Indooroopilly, Queensland, age 90. His memories of Perth Modern School were fondly of a very formative time in his life. I know he appreciated hearing about the school in the newsletters. Many thanks, Kathryn Teakle, David's widow. Dr Teakle's career as a plant pathologist and plant virologist, included a Fullbright Travel grantee in 1959; Fellow of the Miller Institute for Basic Research, 1962; Humboldt Foundation, 1972; Member, Australian Society Microbiology, American Phytopathological Society, Australasian Plant Pathology Society.

### CHRIS TOLLIS PMS student 1951-53

Chris was a qualified accountant who working in Accounts and Audit Branch of Westrail for 15 years, was employed by Aquila Steel Company Limited for 18 years. He played pennant squash for 15 years until serious back problems intervened in 1977. After recovery he took up running and successfully completed 26 mile marathons in 1980 and 1981. He was a member of the WA Marathon Club and Perth Football Club for leisure, and the Australian Society of Accountants and WA Institute of Management for business. His hobbies and interests included films, theatre, music, football, running and travel, taking a trip around the world in 1966, other trips to South East Asia and Japan. He married in 1967 and was father to one son and twin daughters.

### FRANK EDWARD LAMBERT

**Frank Lambert** was at Mod at the same time as me, 1949-53. He was from Koorda where his father was the headmaster. He boarded with his grandmother in North Perth and we often rode to school together. I only met him once more and I understand he had a cattle property at Kalgan River where he lived when he retired. I'm sorry no more information than that. Regards , Colin Ross

## TRAILBLAZERS OF YESTERYEAR

### GEOFF (Ted) PENNY PMS Student 1955-56

Geoffrey (Ted) Penny was the first Aboriginal student known to attend Perth Modern School and the first in WA to matriculate. Ted was a School Prefect and Athletics Champion in 1956. He became a primary School teacher, a principal and advocate and advisor in Aboriginal education. He was one of the inaugural Aboriginal alumni from Edith Cowan University where he is recognized as a "trailblazer in Aboriginal education". Belmont City College where he worked confirmed his sudden death in September 2014.

**Source:** *Past, Present & Future, celebrating 100 years of exceptional education at Perth Modern School, published by Perth Modern School P&C Association 2011*





**Source:** *Canberra Times*, 1997

The following extracts on this page are from an interview with Ted Penny conducted by Sue Taffe on 27 May 1997:

Ted was the first Western Australian qualified indigenous teacher and the Western Australian state secretary of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement in 1964. He went to Sydney for the launch of the national petition for a referendum in 1962 and was active in the West in support of a Yes vote. Here he compares conditions for Aboriginal people across the states in the 1960s.

WA and Queensland were perhaps a little worse than the others. It's hard to say. The people in Sydney and Melbourne have always been much more active, and so you hear more and it would sound as if it's worse because people are having a lot more to say. But I think in the beginning, people were much quieter in WA. That changes and there are a lot of people who are more vocal about it afterwards. But I suspect WA perhaps would have been as bad as any.

Ted helped people to understand what it meant to be an Aboriginal Western Australian in the early 1960s when he told people what happened when he decided to get married, *'I told Mum, but I asked the Commissioner (of Native Welfare).'* He also pointed out that in his journey from Port Hedland to Canberra his status changed from being Aboriginal to not being Aboriginal and then back again as he crossed state borders.

One of the big things too was the definition of *'Aboriginal'*, and it was different in each state. So you could become an Aboriginal or a non-Aboriginal as you moved from state to state. And when I came through, we stopped in Melbourne. I came with a fellow and we went into a hotel, had our lunch down there, and it was legal for me to go in. And I went on to Canberra and I became an Aboriginal again, under the law, but I was never anything *but* an Aboriginal! And then later on, they brought in a legal definition, that I think has always applied to most people anyway; that if you know you're Aboriginal, you're Aboriginal, and that's all there is to it.

And that's always been of concern to me in the way that that's been put across as, you know *'How Aboriginal are you?'* No-one says to you: *'How Australian are you?'* And the further back you can trace the generations of Australians, then the more Australian they are going to say you are. Now, the Aboriginal history goes back, back, back but the further you come away from there, they say you're less Aboriginal. It works in the reverse. Okay, so your grandparents were Aboriginal, but you've got a no-one said anything about the mixture of what you are in Australian.

Sue: *Has that got better, do you think? Do you think people are still as ignorant or has it improved a bit?*

Ted: Well, you see it depends. The people that you mix with don't normally say those things whenever it comes up. But a lot of people will still say: *'What part Aboriginal are you?'* *'Well now, I think, my finger is'*, you know. I often say to them: *'Well, what part Australian are you?'* *'Oh I'm a third generation Australian.'* *'Well, what were your parents?'* *'Well, one came from Germany...'* *'So you're half German?'* *'No, no, no, no'.*

In 1998 Ted received the Barry Hayward Award for Outstanding Achievement for his work as Coordinator of Aboriginal Education in the Pilbara.



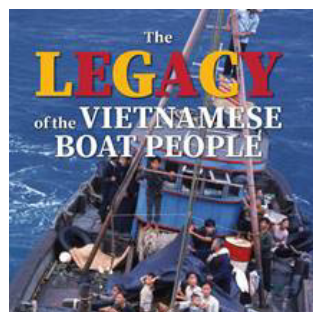
## **LÊ QUANG VINH LÊ QUANG VINH (VINH LÊ)**

**PMS teacher**

### **Author of THE LEGACY OF THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE**

The Commonwealth Government recently marked the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War with a nationally broadcast service in Canberra. It wasn't just soldiers who lost their lives in the war that started in 1955 but also civilians as the Viet Cong tried to unify the entire country under a single communist regime similar to that in China and the Soviet Union.

**Vinh (Vinh Lê)** is a Vietnamese refugee who arrived in Perth, Western Australia, in 1978. The Catholic Centrecare office sent him to Geraldton (419 kilometres north of Perth) to work as gardener at one of the Church's local colleges where he enrolled in night school to study English. After three months in Geraldton, Vinh returned to Perth where he worked as a teacher's aide at a State primary school. He studied for a Diploma in Teaching at Claremont Teachers' College and completed his Bachelor of Education in Major Social Studies. After graduating, he taught at Perth Modern School and Girrawheen Senior High School. Lê Quang Vinh lives with his partner in Perth, Western Australia, and now lectures part-time in Vietnamese studies at a local college of technical and further education.



### **About Lê Quang Vinh, 76, Perth**

From a recent published August 17, 2023 interview by Christopher Tan, for *PerthNow* – Stirling we learned that despite all the atrocities, Mr Le still remembers his *“peaceful and beautiful little town”* where he grew up in the south of Vietnam, about 70km from Saigon. *It wasn't long after he went to Saigon when the communist group attacked the city. I was asked to go to military academy school where they actually treated us really well,”* he said. *“Most of the officers had training in the US; some of them had been fighting for a long time and had a lot of experience.”*





Le Quang Vinh (left) pictured at a Rangers Course in Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1973.  
Credit: Le Quang Vinh/Supplied

The now 76-year-old, who finished up as a first lieutenant and commander in charge of an infantry regiment, said his troops fought until the very end. But unfortunately he was wounded and was hospitalised for two weeks.

*"I was fighting on the front lines and then I saw dust approaching about 200m away. I thought that was really strange because during the battle there haven't been any cars, buses or other vehicles driving along," Mr Le said. "So I used my binoculars to observe, then ran back to my commander in charge and asked for a rocket to shoot as maybe the communists are located there? Then I heard the communist drop a rocket back behind me, so the fragments of that explosion were inflicted on me, including my left shoulder, and I was in very sharp pain."* Mr Le was jailed by the Viet Cong and sent to the border near Cambodia. *"And in there they ask us to dig wells every single day, to a specific length and depth,"* he said. *"They told us that the government wanted to kill us, but not immediately. So instead, we needed to do some work for them."*

When Mr Le was released from jail he could see the nation was in complete chaos, how poor the citizens were and how few jobs were available, so he decided to escape with his wife and two little children to Malaysia.

*"About 1am in the morning, about 50km into our journey, we encountered a hurricane. This was a very big wave that threw our petrol tank out of the boat and into the ocean,"* he said. *"So we didn't have enough petrol to continue our journey. And I actually prayed that we would arrive somewhere like an island because we nearly died."*

And luckily they managed to make it back on shore, where a local fisherman helped organise the young family back into the waters. They ended up in Geraldton then Perth later on, where Mr Le eventually became a teacher.

*"Life has been so much better since we got to Perth; it truly is one of the paradises in this world,"* he said. *"If we had continued staying in Vietnam, I think we would've already died due to the poor situation and the terrible conditions of the communists reign."*

<https://www.perthnow.com.au/local-news/perthnow-stirling/thank-you-aussies-vietnam-war-veterans-recall-difficult-past-on-eve-of-50-years-since-oz-ended-involvement-c-11546971>



## MODERNIANS WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

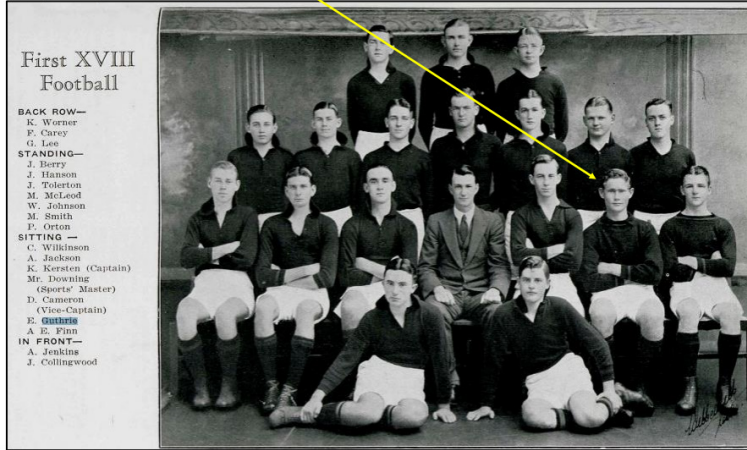
*Number 21 in a special series of articles researched and prepared for publication by Robert Johnson, PMS student 1961-65 and Museum Volunteer*

### **Robert Edmund (Ed) Guthrie** **PMS Student 1928-29**

Three Guthrie brothers served their country in World War Two. One came home, one rests in Germany and another lies in New Guinea. Their parents received two heart-breaking telegrams that every parent dreaded getting, one in 1942 and the other in 1943.

**Ed Guthrie** was born on 28 February 1913 to parents James Alexander Long Guthrie and Mary Elizabeth Guthrie (nee Smyth) of Claremont. He had an older brother, William James, a younger brother, Hugh Kitchener, and a younger sister. Ed attended Graylands Primary School, Claremont High School from 1925 to 1927 and Perth Modern School in 1928 and 1929. He played full-back in the school's First 18 Football Team in 1929 and passed his Leaving examinations at the end of that year.





First XVIII Football

- BACK ROW—  
K. Werner  
P. Carey  
G. Lee  
STANDING—  
J. Berry  
J. Hanson  
J. Tolerton  
M. McLeod  
W. Johnson  
M. Smith  
D. Orton  
SITTING —  
C. Wilkinson  
A. Jackson  
K. Kersten (Captain)  
Mr. Downing (Sports' Master)  
D. Cameron (Vice-Captain)  
E. Guthrie  
A. E. Finn  
IN FRONT—  
A. Jenkins  
J. Collingwood

Ed graduated from Claremont Teachers College in 1930 and worked as a teacher at Yuna South, Bo-Allia and Richmond schools before being appointed to the Central School in Claremont in 1940. Ed played eight matches for Claremont Football Club in 1936 and 1937 and married Irene Victoria Flegg, aged 25, in 1938. At some point during this time, he enrolled at UWA as an external student and was awarded BA posthumously.

Ed enlisted in the RAAF on 3 March 1941, having been granted leave by the Education Department. In 1941 he underwent pilot training at Pearce, Cunderdin and Geraldton. He passed his courses and was commissioned as a Pilot Officer on 20 October 1941.

After further training he was promoted to Flying Officer on 20 April 1942 and posted to No. 14 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Cottesmore at Rutland, near Leicester, on 5 May 1942.

Ed's last flight took place on Saturday 1 August 1942 when he and his three fellow crew members took off in Hampton bomber P5322 at one minute past midnight on a bombing mission to Dusseldorf in Germany. It was a "maximum effort" raid involving 630 aircraft, many of which were supplied by OTU's. This resulted in a high casualty rate due to the crews only being partly trained and having no experience in night bombing.



The OTU's lost 16 aircraft during the night, one of which was Ed's Hampton, shot down by the 7th Flak Division. The aircraft crashed in Cologne, 400 metres west of Cologne Cathedral. Ed and two other crew members, Sgt Charles McMullen, RAFVR, and Flight Sergeant Elwin Hunking, RCAF, were killed. Warrant Officer John Morrison, RCAF, survived. Ed is buried in Rheinberg War Cemetery, 45 kilometres north of Dusseldorf. He was 29 when he died.

Ed's younger brother, Hugh, an outstanding footballer, played 69 matches for Claremont between 1937 and 1941. He played in the successful premierships team in 1940 and won the Club's fairest and best award in 1941. He enlisted on 25 February 1942, served in the 2/28th Battalion and was killed in action at Scarlet Beach near Finschhafen in New Guinea on 20 October 1943 during the Salamaua-Lae Campaign. Ed's older brother, William, served in the RAAF and survived the war, passing away in 1999 at the age of 87. Ed's widow, Irene, moved to NSW during the war and later remarried. She died in 2012 aged 99.

LEST WE FORGET

*The Councillors of the*



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

*thank all our members, volunteers, donors and supporters for your interest and involvement during 2023.*

*We wish you, your family and your friends a safe and enjoyable holiday season and a resourceful, pleasurable and peaceful new year.*