



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 55 February 2023 (Vol 3 No 5)

Hi

WELCOME to your *Perth Modernian e-Newsletter*, Issue 55, February 2023, Vol 3 No 5 offering two-way communication with all interested members, volunteers, families and friends. We bring you news, event details and articles from the Perth Modernian Society, its members and Perth Modern School. We hope you find the newsletter 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

ANUAL GENERAL MEETING

5:15 for 5:45pm Monday 29th May 2023

REUNIONS

2023 ANNUAL REUNION

Saturday 2 Sept 2023

CLASS/YEAR GROUPS

for further information visit

www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

50 YEARS

Class of 1973

early stages of organising a 50-year reunion on Saturday Afternoon 6th May

60 YEARS

Class of 1963

Saturday October 7
(See further details in this newsletter)

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 2023

20th May for 31st May

20th August for 31st August

20th November for 30th Nov



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY CONGRATULATIONS!

Class of 2022 at Mod achieves record number of top ATARs



Jessica Doan, Hoachin Cui, Joshua Soon, Shen-Kit Hia, Principal Mr Mitchell Mackay, Raghav Ganapathy, Gabriel Raharjo, and Fiara Augustin all achieved the highest possible ATAR result of 99.95.

Perth Modern School has achieved its highest number of 7 perfect ATARs scores of 99.95, as well as a further 70 students achieving an ATAR of 99 or higher. These results are a State record. 17 students were awarded a General Exhibition, and four students won five Subjects exhibitions.

Read more on

www.perthmodern.wa.edu.au

Mitch Mackay, Principal of Perth Modern School said he was very proud of the incredible hard work our students had put in through their high school years. *"With the support of their amazing teachers and families our students not only have fantastic results, but they also leave us as accomplished adults who care about others and are ready to make a huge contribution to the future of Western Australia,"* he said.



2022 Beasley Medal

Jessica Doan, was awarded the Beasley Medal: WACE. Jessica plans to go on to university to study medicine. Her older siblings Nicholas and Claire graduated from PMS in 2018 and 2020 respectively.

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VALE
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OF THEIR COUNTRY

Contributors

Thank you to all letter writers
and contributors:

Barrie Baker
Ruth Barrett
Deb Beresford
Thalia Cole
Peter Farr
Robert Johnson
Barbara Mallett
Dr Robyn White
Benedict Widjaja
Alison Woodman

Coordinator/Editor

Sallie Davies

Layout

Peter Farr, Stuart Gould



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

May 2023

2022 COUNCIL

info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

Robyn White, Vice President/Museum
Kate Lewis, Vice President/ Webmaster
Deborah Beresford, Honorary Secretary
Barrie Baker, Membership/Sphinx Fdtn
Ruth Barrett, Honour Awards
Eve Broadley, Honorary Treasurer
Peter Farr, Past President
Evan Kennea, Member
Ed Lazarus, Communications
Salena Loasby, Member
Barbara Mallett, Reunions Coordinator
Ex-Officio, PMS Principal

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

\$40 per annum now due

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP

New members/Contributing Member
renewals since 20 November 2022

Barrie Baker
Zoe Baker
Dorothy Bennie
Trish Bevan
John Blackburn
Peter Blaxell
John Gaynor
Geoffrey Grewar
Christine Ilias
Philip Jennings
Josette Jones
Catherine Lewis
Jennifer McComb
Malcolm McCusker



Beazley Medal winner Jessica Doan:
Granddaughter of Vietnamese refugees
awarded WA's top high school prize - Bethany
Hiatt, The West Australian



Jessica is seen surrounded by proud family members being
congratulated by the Governor His Excellency, the Honourable
Chris Dawson at Government House

Australia Day Awards

Chris Dawson, PMS student 1971-75

His Excellency, the Honourable Chris Dawson APM (see photo above), was created Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) awarded for the achievement of the highest degree of in service to Australia or humanity to public administration through law enforcement roles, to reconciliation, and as the appointed 34th Governor in Western Australia.

107 Years of Age

Gordon Ewers, PMS student 1929-33



Gordon recently celebrated his 107th birthday with family and friends. He is pictured left with Marian, one of his two daughters, Shirley and Marian. He married **Elma Elliott, PMS student 1929-33**. He became Senior Assistant Collector of Customs in WA and was an active member of Churches of Christ and held several offices. As a member of Gilbert and Sullivan Society (now a Life member) he took part in over

30 stage productions of Savoy operas. He has travelled extensively in the UK, Europe, USA, China, Japan, Egypt, India, NZ, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Palestine, wrote a book (church history) and four operettas (Gilbert and Sullivan Society). See story in this issue: **Modernians, 90 years apart, connected through a national intergenerational arts initiative.**

Perth Modernian Society Honorary Member

History Centre Volunteer **Sharon Williams** (pictured) is Treasurer of the Museum Association. Her enthusiastic work as a parent for and on behalf of the School, is well known in the PMS community. She has continued to support the wider PMS community needs whenever she can. Council was delighted to recognise Sharon's years of dedicated service with the award of Honorary Member of the Perth Modernian Society. This Award recognises the special work of volunteers who are not eligible to be members of the Society but who have made a considerable contribution to benefit the education of Perth Modern School students over many years through the Perth Modernian Society.



In November 2022, Sharon was co-opted onto the PMS Board as a Community Representative for two years.



Norma Metcalf
Jeffrey Needham
Pat Quiggin
Lee Ranford
Jenny Shalders
Malcolm Shalders
Jonathon Seth
Peter Wearne
Raymond Wells
Edna Youngman

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.

2022-2023 BOARD
[sphinxfoundation@perthmodernian
society.org.au](mailto:sphinxfoundation@perthmodernian
society.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*

DONORS

Sphinx Scholarship Fund
from Nov. 2022
Stuart Gould
Douglas Gould
MALKA Foundation



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED

2021-2022 BOARD
museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au
Dr Robyn White, *Chair*
Sharon Williams, *Treasurer*
Alistair Paterson, *Board Member*
Jeffrey Lai, *Board Member*
Monica Brierley-Hay, *Secretary*
Nicola Reilly, *Deputy Principal, ex-officio*
2 vacancies

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



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE COUNCIL

Your Membership is important...

Volunteers cannot maintain the organisation without Contributing Memberships which are now due for 2023 (\$40 per annum). These are the lifeblood for the ongoing support of the Perth Modernian Society Council activities. They are essential to the well-being of your organisation to cover basic operational (mainly IT) costs for Council governance and essential communication with members. Please become or stay involved and pay now. **Link to Annual Payment Form:**
<https://www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au/index.php/society/membership/>

The Hon Daryl Williams was welcomed to the final Council meeting for 2022, with a view to taking up a vacancy left by the retirement of the President, the **Hon Julian Grill**. Daryl holds a special place in the Society, being one of those responsible in 1995 for its emergence in its present form, and also the **Sphinx Foundation (Inc)**. Vice-presidents, **Dr Robyn White** and **Kate Lewis** are jointly 'holding the fort' until the next Society AGM to be held on 29th May.

Councillors **Kate Lewis** and **Ed Lazarus** have flagged their intention to retire from the Council at the 2023 AGM because of other pressing commitments. Both have expressed their willingness to assist in the handing-over process as others take on their roles. Ed, who has been on the Council for a number of years, has been a tower of strength in all matters to do with the Society's computers, data abases and networking, since the long illness and death in 2022 of **Ian Jarvis**. Kate taught as a music specialist teacher at Perth Mod from 1984-1987. Kate was invited to join the Perth Modernian Society Council in 2020 and has since played a notable part in revitalising the Society's communications with members. She has brought energy and new ideas, and in particular, has connected the Council much more closely with 'the music group'. The sincere thanks and best wishes of Council members go to Julian, Ed, and Kate. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur

MEMBERSHIP AND NETWORKING

The Council is always seeking ways to maintain contact as students graduate from Mod. Privacy regulations are an issue with regard to access to names of all potential eligible members, but connections can be made via Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media. Council is planning to hold a 'Year 13' event towards the end of 2023. This will be an opportunity for 2022 Leavers to meet up to swap notes and renew friendships after their first year out of school.

Maintenance of the Perth Modernian Society Website

Council is looking to younger, newer computer literate members for help. For example, **Stuart Gould, student 2007-11**, provides much appreciated assistance with the website, newsletter and other IT maintenance needs.

REUNIONS

Barbara Mallett does a sterling job with information about, and encouragement for reunions for particular year groups, and there have been quite a few of those in the past year. Anniversaries of starting at Mod, or leaving, and years of milestone birthdays have been celebrated with food, refreshments and good humour. Barbara is always ready to liaise with ex-students, the school and with the Museum and History Centre to help create a memorable event.



Roger Stubbs
Loren White
Robyn White
Sharon Williams
Alison Woodman

DONORS

PMS Museum Fund

*Thank you for your
generous support*

Laurie Best
Dr June Stephenson (dec.)

MODERNIAN HONOURS

Awards@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

Modernian Fellow

2014

Sallie Davies
Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC
Donald Tyler

2016

Barrie Baker
Ian Jarvis (dec.)

2017

Peter Farr

2020

Dr Kenneth Michael AC Cit WA

Moderna Scola Award

2016

Deborah Beresford
Alan Porter

2017

Evelyn Broadley

2018

Rosemary Pratt
Dr June Stephenson (dec.)

2019

Robert Johnson

2020

Anne Celia Christmass
Neil Anthony Coy
Roger Stubbs AM

Honorary Members

2016

Alison Woodman

2017

Tonya McCusker AM

2019

Nigel Hunt
Brendon Dawson

2022

Sharon Williams



PERTH MODERN SCHOOL

Exceptional schooling. Exceptional students.
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL

For PMS School Board information, see:
www.perthmodern.wa.edu.au/school-board/
Peter Farr represents the Society on the Board.

Class of 1963 is having a 60th reunion at the school on Saturday, October 7 from 3pm to 7pm. There will be a tour of the school and refreshments afterwards in the Andrews Building. For more details and to register your attendance, please contact **Mary-Jane Whitehead (nee Jolley)**, email wongadale@iinet.net.au and mobile 0429 858 016. Mary-Jane is also eager to receive any news from past students or their relatives, so please make contact even if you are unable to attend the reunion.

Class of 2012

On the afternoon of Sunday 18 Dec. 2022, the **Museum** was opened for the 2012 reunion to celebrate 10 years since their final year - organised by **Anish Badgeri**. It was a lovely afternoon despite the heat. 60-70 young adults congregated in the Sir Paul Hasluck Foyer of the Cyril Tyler Auditorium for nibbles and soft drinks in sight of the museum. It didn't take long for alumni to drop in and have a fantastic time catching up with each other.

A very appreciative group of people. Loads of alumni thanked our museum volunteers for taking the trouble to provide both general displays as well as the specific 2012 displays - they loved the Year 8 photos and then the Year 12 photos and comments about what they would do in 10 years' time!! Lots of laughter and friendship.

An interesting and diverse group of people. Many engineers and lawyers, a few doctors (including one back from Oxford for 2 weeks) and then a number with roles that "give back" directly via charitable organisations, youth training etc.



"Not many photos were taken because everyone was reminiscing about the old photos on display ..."

SPHINX FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP



SPHINX FOUNDATION INC.

The **Sphinx Foundation** is an avenue by which current Perth Mod students from families that are struggling financially or for other reasons, can be helped, and also, many sponsored awards are made to completing Year 10 students who have done exceptionally well in a particular subject area - the money perhaps enabling books or other resources to be bought, or a conference or foreign languages tour to be attended. Teachers and admin staff have been involved in letting students know what assistance is available.

Sphinx Scholarship Fund Awards – Dec. 2022

On 13th December 2022 a special assembly was held in the School's very beautiful Beasley auditorium during which the **Sphinx Foundation** Board members **Nigel Hunt** and **Peter Farr**, together with **Jan Stewart** representing the Malka Foundation and School Principal **Mitch Mackay** presented scholarships and bursaries totalling \$38,000 and worth on average \$925 to 41 Perth Modern School Year 10 students. Also in attendance were the School's Year 8 students, and Associate Principal **Fiona Tholet**.



The awards covered multiple learning areas: Arts & Technology; English; HASS (Economics-Accounting, Social Sciences, Psychology, Politics and Law); Innovations; Mathematics; Music; Physical Education; Science and Debating, as well as equity/needs based scholarships. Each awardee received a special certificate along with a Citation that honours the particular donor(s) who have made the award possible.



The 2022 Upper School Scholarship and Bursary awardees with Sphinx Foundation Board members Rob Gray, Nigel Hunt, Vivian Wang, Barrie Baker and Peter Farr



Jan Stewart representing the Malka Foundation, presented a Malka Scholarship to Year 10 student Hayley Mills. Hayley also received The Perth Modernian Society Visual & Performing Arts Bursary for 2022.

With 18 Sphinx scholarships awarded in November 2022 for needy students who start Year 7 in 2023, plus another 34 students getting their awards renewed from previous years, the total for 2023 comes to 93 awards worth \$98,000, plus \$2,000 in Principal's Discretionary Bursaries.

New awards made possible in 2022 by donation were The Malcolm Evans Debating Scholarship, The Ross and Fran Ledger Scholarship, two additional Malka Foundation Year 7 Equity Scholarships, and one additional Perth Modernian Society Year 7 Equity Scholarship. The School Principal Mitch Mackay several times in 2022 and early 2023 has mentioned in glowing terms the uniqueness of the Sphinx scholarships and bursaries. The awards are very much appreciated by the students and their parents, as illustrated by these sample of thankyou notes:

Dear Mr Nigel Hunt and the Sphinx Foundation Board,
I would like to thank you so much for awarding me the Perth Modernian Society Scholarship for Mathematics for 2023. It will help a great deal with expenses related to the training schools for the International Maths Olympiad (AMT School of Excellence) which I attended this year in December, and will lighten the financial burden for my parents and allow me to keep pursuing mathematics competitions and training. I will be sure to use the award wisely for expenses such as travel for training or competitions in the near future.
Thank you. Kind regards <Student name> 15 Dec. 2022

Dear Mr Nigel Hunt,
I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation in being a recipient of the Perth Modernian Society Mathematics Bursary for 2023. I am honoured and gracious to have been selected as the recipient of this bursary and hope to use the funds provided in the following years to further my academic success. I am very grateful for the support given by the Sphinx Foundation, Perth Modernian Society, their Board Members and benefactors. I am once again extremely appreciative of this valuable award. Warm regards. <Student name> 13 Dec. 2022

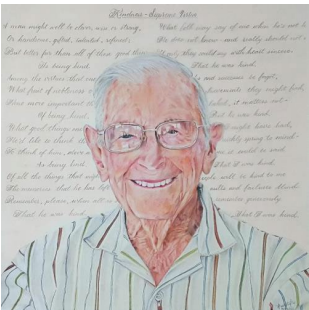
Since its inception in 2009 the Sphinx Scholarship Fund has enabled the award of a remarkable total of **460** scholarships and bursaries.

MODERNIANS, 90 YEARS APART

connected through a national intergenerational arts initiative



Benedict Widjaja and Gordon Ewers



Portrait of Gordon Ewers at 106.

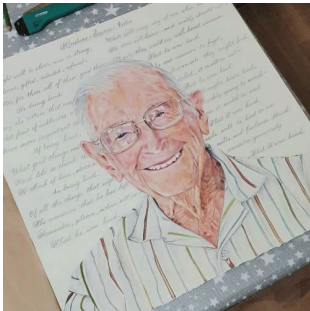
Benedict Widjaja in Year 12 was selected to participate in Western Australia's rendition of the Centenarian Portrait Project by Teenagers, an intergenerational arts initiative by embraced.inc which saw teenage artists creating portraits of Western Australia's centenarians, culminating in a state exhibition held at Wilkinson Gallery, Claremont Showgrounds, in December 2022.

Benedict was paired with Modernian Gordon Ewers, who attended the school from 1929-1933, graduating 90 years ago.

At 107-years-old, he is the oldest man in Western Australia, and 3rd oldest man in Australia. As part of the project, spanning over a few months, Benedict made visits to Gordon at his home in Brightwater Madeley, as well as Joondalup hospital when he was in rehabilitation.

"Getting to know each other was easy, due to our shared Modernian identity, and many other shared interests such as, music, literature, travel and Christianity."

Upon their first meeting, they were already making music together, with Benedict on the piano, and Gordon with his voice!



After the first few meetings, and a few practice sketches, Benedict got to work on his portrait, utilising the skills and techniques he had learnt as a Year 11 ATAR Visual Arts student.

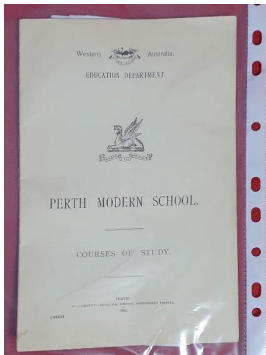
In his artist statement, Benedict said: *"I, and many others, find Gordon to be so special, as he never fails to make whoever he meets smile, whether that be me, the cameraman, or the nurses at the hospital he briefly stayed at. "You can never make me look pretty, but you can make me look happy", is what he jokingly told me, and these are the words that have stayed in my mind as I've created this portrait, depicting him smiling, with some of the poetry he's written, adorned in hand-lettering in the background.*

Post exhibition, Benedict gifted his portrait to Gordon, just in time for his 107th birthday, which was documented on 9 News.



Gordon Ewers (front left) a player in the PMS First Eleven in 1933 edition of 'The Sphinx'.

At the exhibition, Gordon gifted Benedict a 1921 copy of the courses at Perth Modern (shown):



First reveal of the finished portrait



First meeting



Meeting at Joondalup hospital.

A PARABLE OF POSSIBILITY

Dr June Stephenson (nee McLeod), student 1948-52

Whatever Dr June Stephenson set her heart on became possible, and she has always admired the following lines from the Australian poet, Adam Lindsay Gordon's *Ye Wearie Wayfarer*:

*Question not, but live and labour
Till yon goal be won,
Helping every feeble neighbor,
Seeking help from none;*

*Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone,
KINDNESS in another's trouble,
COURAGE in your own.*

The school motto, Savoir C'est Pouvoir, also had a personal significance for June. June's translation of it was *"to know – it is to be able"*, that is, to be able to choose to do it well.





Perth Modern School Girls' Tennis Team 1952 (June McLeod 2nd from right)

After leaving Modern School, June completed a Bachelor's degree at the University of Western Australia and became a secondary school teacher specialising in English in the senior school and mathematics in the middle school. Until the late 1970s women employed in Government schools earned three-quarters of the male wage, and the regulations were such that women could not become principals in secondary schools. June had been promoted to a deputy principal position at Busselton Senior High School, which she enjoyed for several years. Realising, however, that further promotion was not possible and, in her own words, *'I knew there was more in life than what I was doing, so in 1973 I decided to resign and take my skills with me.'*

June returned to UWA where she completed a Masters of Education degree over four years, sometimes full-time, sometimes part-time, depending on her employment in the university sector. At various times she was engaged to do research for Education lecturers at the recently established Western Australian College of Advanced Education in Nedlands (now School of Architecture and the Graduate College of Education UWA Nedlands Campus); also to teach *'special education'* to undergraduates, that is, methods for teaching students with a disability; and to work in the counselling service to assist mature age students with their academic requirements.

"I felt that I was 'parking' while I decided what I was going to do with the rest of my life. I knew I wanted to continue studying – I had promised myself a Doctorate – but felt that it was inadvisable to do all my study at the one university. I wanted to experience other ways of doing things and to share ideas with different people."

An opportunity to study for a Doctorate in Education on a 'studentship' – a working scholarship – at West Virginia University in Morgantown in the United States presented itself, and from August 1979 to February 1982 June experienced *"the best two-and-a-half years of my life! It reminded me of Modern School. There were 35 of us in the group working for our Doctorates and my fellow students were very sociable and welcoming. We worked hard. Our teachers were well-prepared and had high expectations, there was a strong sense of camaraderie, a great deal of hospitality, and a robust exchange of ideas, and the people who wrote the texts were there! In the first semester I did 19 tests and 22 assignments: you really worked! Our teachers were available to us from 7 o'clock in the morning until 10 at night. They were so generous and helpful. My specialisation was research methods and statistical analysis, and reading and the language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening). The teachers let me do it the way I wanted, the assumption being that I would be good at it. It taught me to be confident in myself."*

"All students at that time were poor. We just had to live within our means. My studentship meant that I had to teach students in the Masters program. The campus where I taught was close to Harper's Ferry, about 160 miles from Morgantown where I lived. I had to drive over the Appalachian Mountains, deliver lectures and tutorials from 4 o'clock until 7, and from 7 to 10 at night, then return to the university for work the next day."

"It was an interesting time to be in the United States. Jimmy Carter was President and I took a great interest in American life and politics, and there was the disaster of Mount St Helens in Washington State erupting with considerable loss of life and damage to property. During vacations I travelled to the great cities, which I loved – New York, San Francisco, Detroit. I graduated on 26 December 1981 and early in the new year, made my way home over six weeks via England and Manila. It never occurred to me that I wouldn't have a job. At first I was employed part time in the Education Faculty at the Western Australian Institute of Technology (later Curtin University) to mark the work of external students and there was more part time work there in special education, until, in October 1982 I saw an advertisement for Director of the Education Centre in Whyalla, South Australia, the 'steel city' founded and run by BHP. Education Centres were Commonwealth-funded institutions for the engagement, support and professional development of teachers in the regions."

June won the position and held it for 18 years until she retired.

"There were around 2500 teachers in that part of South Australia, north of Whyalla to the border with the Northern Territory and west to the border with WA. The Education Centre was collocated with a campus of the University of South Australia and I was also appointed as an adjunct senior lecturer for the university. Working in the United States had taught me how to work with politicians. I remained on the Council of the University of South Australia for four years, appointed by both Labor and Liberal Governments. It has also proved to be a useful skill in my retirement. I enjoy a challenge."

"The Centre had a fully serviced professional library and, as well as running or supporting conferences and tutorials for teachers in the region, in both State and private schools, resources were loaned to all schools and teachers throughout the region. My Doctorate gave me the confidence to set a direction, and the teachers and administrators in our region, who were usually at the beginning of their careers at that level, gained a reputation for the excellence of their growth in the profession."

June retired in 2000 and became a resident at the Hollywood Aged Care Village in Nedlands. When the village was purchased by new owners who wanted to redevelop the site, June was instrumental in the successful campaign and court case to prevent 'the memorial' being removed from the title deed. The memorial guaranteed residents financial security in the event of the owners becoming insolvent. Again, in 2017, June was prominent in the Save Perth Modern School Campaign. She raised the significant petition which was presented to the WA Parliament Legislative Assembly by the Hon Bill Marmion. June also donated generously to the fighting fund and held conversations about campaign tactics with parents in the Save PMS Parents Action Group. The Sphinx Scholarship Fund and the PMS Museum Association are also beneficiaries of June's philanthropy. For her support over many years the Perth Modernian Society bestowed on her the honour of Moderna Scola in 2018.



June began losing her sight, owing to macular degeneration, soon after she retired. Undaunted, she not only modified her life to retain her independence, but also, from her experience, wrote a book, *Picking Up Sunshine, a motivational manual of handy hints for those with macular degeneration or other sight difficulties and for their relatives and friends* (June Stephenson & Elizabeth Mansutti, 2007). It is full of wit and good sense, and her philosophy of what she calls 'slogans' for keeping the glass half full is applicable to any circumstance: *turn anger to application; turn disability to discovery; turn 'couldn't care less' to curiosity; turn regret to resolution; turn grief to grace; turn horror to hope; turn frustration to full steam ahead!* They resonate well with the words of Adam Lindsay Gordon and with June's translation of *Savoir C'est Pouvoir*.

June Stephenson receives the Moderna Scola Award 2018 from Perth Modernian Society (then) President Peter Farr

YOUR SAY

November Newsletter

From: Irene Froyland, student 1955-59

What a GREAT newsletter. Thank you. Irene

From: Cris Brindley, nee Cornish, student 1954-58

Thank you. I do appreciate being able to read news of former fellow students and events. Cris Brindley

From: Jeanette McQueen, student 1957-61

I very much enjoyed reading the latest newsletter and have sent it on to those I am in contact with. I was sorry to have missed attending a few of the events and occasions organised by the Society, having just spent two months in hospital. Hopefully I won't have to do anything like that again for a long while. I just thought I would let you know that as a result of our 60th reunion in 2021 (held as part of the overall reunion) the "girls" have been meeting every three months for lunch at the Zamia Café in Kings Park. We usually have between fifteen and twenty of us each time in spite of the wariness with COVID and its possible effects on family. There is always plenty of conversation and memories exchanged over an extended lunch. Best wishes, Jeanette

From: Bill Burdett, student 1952-1956

Bill has lived in Melbourne for the past 52 years was back in Perth with his wife Sally in December. He has sent a message of thanks to the team responsible for producing the e-Newsletter:

"The magazine is really important in keeping alive the links to Mod and the good friends we made there. Please keep it going, especially for the sake of folks who live a long way away."

Peter Farr (pictured right with Bill) reported that Bill spoke with feeling about the loss of his old classmate Geoffrey Robert (Bob) Appleyard who passed away in July 2022. Bill recounted that Victorian Modernians held a commemorative event for Bob and in preparing his eulogy he found out that eight members of the Appleyard family had attended Mod, surely a record?



Seeking Former School Friends

From: Colin Sagar, Class of 1972

Colin would like classmates to contact him, particularly **Barry Moore**, **David Brown** and **Chris** and **Godfrey Harmer**. His email is sagarcolin@yahoo.com.au and telephone (02) 6493 5073.

From: Louise Meyrick, nee Chinnery, student 1969-70

I completed years 11 and 12 at Perth Modern High School in 1969 and 1970. I would like to reconnect with one of my classmates, **Anya Hohol**, whose image I have seen in a photo taken at a reunion held, I think, in 2020. I left Perth in 1984 and lost touch with Anya but would love to share some memories of those years at school. Unfortunately, I have no other means of locating her, especially as her surname may have changed. Would it be possible for you to let her know that I would like to contact her? My maiden name was **Louise Chinnery** and we lived in the same street, Milton St Mt Hawthorn. Regards Louise Meyrick



From: Tony Wegener, PMS student 1953-57

My name is Anthony Allan (Tony) Wegener. I attended Perth Modern School from 1953-1957...went on the Perth Technical College...became an architect...then had a wonderful career as an architect in the USA...retiring in 2016.

I'm writing about the unique Perth Modern School experience, which seemed to include some interesting British traditions. I would appreciate a little research help. As a first year student I was designated as a "Fag". My "Fag Master" was Tom Lang. He would have been at Perth Modern School from 1949-1953

Some people might consider the British Fagging system institutionalized bullying, but not I...**Tom Lang** was my hero...a genuine big brother. I attempted to locate Tom a few times while at PTC...just to thank him for his positive influence on a young man in 1953...but I failed. It seemed that he had just disappeared. Then I left for the USA and stayed. Even so, at age 82, the desire to find Tom Lang, or his descendants, has never left ...I'm wondering if it is permitted for you to provide any contact information, for Tom Lang, or, identify his parents from his school records. Thanks in advance, Tony Wegener

Ed: Tom's son has recently advised "... that Dad wrote a lovely response to Tony (which I transcribed into electronic format for emailing!) so we await his reply. Thank you for facilitating this. Dad was very excited and pleased to have heard from Tony after so many years. It was lovely to see..."



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED

Melville da Cruz 1975-1979

Melville was Dux in 1979. He studied medicine and by 1995 had qualified as a surgeon specializing in otolaryngology. He received a surgical fellowship at Addenbrooke's Hospital and a research fellowship at King's College at the University of Cambridge. Melville describes this experience as 'a wonderful time surrounded by music and medicine'. He has a special interest in cochlear implants, acoustic neuroma, and general disorders of the ear, nose and throat. He operates at both the Westmead public and private hospitals in Sydney. Melville is also Associate Professor of Otolaryngology at the University of Sydney.

Melville was a member of the music program and writes that, *'I remember my school days fondly. I was in my element and loved every moment of my time there.'* Notwithstanding the demands of his professional responsibilities Melville's love of music continued.



He was a foundation member of the New South Wales Doctors Orchestra which was formed in 2004 with the aim of performing a few concerts each year and fund raising for a medical charity. He led the orchestra for four years. At this time a grateful patient Julia Sittout painted his portrait (right). Melville features in the forthcoming publication Music at Mod due for release in mid-2023.

VALE

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

NAME:	YEAR at PMS	Status	Deceased
Barbra Ann Hopkins (nee Bell)	1951-55	School Prefect	09/07/2022
Ian Douglas Tweedie	1944-48	Student	03/12/2022
Beryl Barblett	1980s	School Nurse	21/12/2022
John Gordon Lewis	1938-41 (Yrs1-4)	Student	06/01/2013
Allan Lockwood	1970s	Staff	08/ 01/2023
Dr June Adeline Stephenson (nee McLeod)	1948-52	School Prefect	08/02/2023

June Stephenson

"A proud Perth Modernian who lived her life on her own terms. June was a determined and effective educator, forthright in her commentary on people and events and a wonderful friend. She is already missed. Robyn, Loren and Perth Modernian Society Museum volunteers."

- Published in The West Australian, Saturday February 11, 2023

From Museum Records:

June (pictured right) was a proud member of the **HINDE FAMILY** John Natal Hinde and Betsy Hinde whose family home was 70 Mary Street, Fremantle with their four daughters. Dorothea was born in 1898, attended PMS in 1913 (first year only) and Winnie Hinde (Rose Winstanley) born 11 April 1900 (d.1988), attended PMS 1913-16 and UWA 1917. The youngest daughter Beryl was born in 1905 and attended PMS 1918-22. June's mother Adeline Hinde (m.McLeod) didn't attend Mod, but June attended PMS 1948-52.

Barbara Hopkins (nee Bell)

Barbara Bell trained at Graylands Teachers College and Melbourne Kindergarten Teachers College. She married teacher Alastair Hopkins and they settled in Melbourne and were parents of five beautiful daughters.

She considered the highlight of her 25 year teaching career was the privilege of watching and playing a part in the development of so many young children.



Ian Tweedie

"Farewell Ian, a long time respected, successful and leading Librarian in the WA Library community. From your esteemed Library Colleagues"

- Published in The West Australian, Saturday, 10 December 2022

John Gordon Lewis BEng DIC MSc(Lond)

John left Perth Modern School in 2nd term 1941 after a difference of opinion with Sammy on merits of religious instruction. Working as a messenger, then cadet draughtsman with PWD he studied for matriculation at night school as well as studying engineering at University of WA 1945-47 and played first grade cricket and football. Completed a Bachelor of Engineering with 1st class honours and became a consulting engineer in private practice.

John won a Gledden Fellowship in 1951 and did post-graduate engineering at Imperial College, London, specialising in earth and rockfill dams. He returned to Perth in 1954 and became Engineer for Planning, Design and Investigation in the Public Works Department.

Sent to India and Pakistan in 1960 to study flood control and irrigation. In 1961 he went to Italy, France and USSR as an Australian Representative at International Conferences on Large Dams and Irrigation. He wrote a pioneering paper on Tidal Power Resources in the Kimberley in 1961. During 16 years as an engineer with the PWD, John led design teams on four large earth dams and three major concrete dams and set up an engineering research station.

He resigned from the PWD in 1964 and joined an engineering consulting practice concerned with water supply, railway and port structures for the developing mining industry. After 1974 he also took a direct interest in property development. Since 1988 he was mainly concerned with conception and development of mineral resources and processing.

The main focus of attention throughout his career was development of northern Australia; from the design and construct of stage of the Ord River Dam and irrigation area to the construction of a resort hotel in Darwin. The revival of the tidal power concept of 1961 by a select Parliamentary Committee and his inclusion on an overseas fact finding tour in 1990 suggests that an earlier dream may be realised and that a modest full scale demonstration plant should be built.

THE VALUE OF TROVE

From: Associate Professor Bobbie Oliver, Director, Centre for WA History,

Subject: Petition to save Trove

Dear Friends,

Over the years, many of you will have accessed Trove for research or other information. The prospect of Trove disappearing is an alarming one.

You may not be aware that the archive is under threat. The National Library faces severe budget cuts and funding for Trove ends this year. You can read more here:

<https://www.smh.com.au/culture/art-and-design/national-library-s-treasure-trove-under-threat-from-budget-cuts-20221212-p5c5m6.html>

Please consider signing the petition to save Trove, which you can access here: <https://chng.it/DbN4NWypw5>

Flight Lieutenant Ron Offord (PMS 1951-52) died when the engine of his Sabre jet cut out as he was taking off from the RAAF's base at Butterworth in Malaya on 11/9/62, **Sapper Alan Duncuff (1961-63)** was killed while attempting to clear an explosive device in Saigon on 25/10/69, **Private Edward Hards (1960-61)** died of illness in Repatriation General Hospital in Hollywood on 2/8/69 soon after returning from Vietnam, **Flight Lieutenant Robert Hayes (1947-48)** died at Pearce RAAF base on 17/7/69 from an accident after returning from Vietnam and **Second Lieutenant Brian Jones (1963-65)** was killed in South Vietnam on 10/4/71 when searching for an enemy bunker system (see [newsletter article of May 2019](#))



This Honour Board was paid for by donations received

MODERNIANS WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

Number 18 in a special series of articles researched and prepared for publication by Robert Johnson, PMS student 1961-65 and Museum Volunteer

STEWART DAVIES, PERTH MODERN SCHOOL STUDENT 1930-32



Stewart Maitland George Davies was born in Guildford to Percival and Florence Davies on 21 December 1916. He completed his early schooling at Maylands Primary School in 1929 and commenced at Modern School on 11 February 1930. At that time, the family home was in Welshpool. Although not particularly interested in school, he achieved his Junior Certificate in seven subjects at the end of 1932.

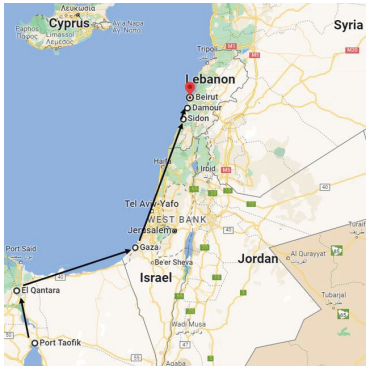
On 3 March 1939 while working at Wagin Meat Supply as a butcher's assistant, Stewart joined the 25th Light Horse (Machine Gun) Regiment, a Militia unit, and was appointed to "B" Squadron. He was 22 at the time and 5'6" (167cms) tall.

Trooper Davies was promoted to Lance Corporal on 20 October 1939 and then Corporal in mid-1940. Around this time, he married Eva Margaret Griffiths, a Wagin woman, in Maylands.

The German invasion of France in May 1940 triggered a surge of enlistments in the Australian Imperial Force, the voluntary expeditionary force of the Australian Army. Stewart obtained a discharge from the Militia to enable him to enlist in the AIF which he did at Northam on 14 June 1940. He was appointed to "D" Company of the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. The 2/3rd was formed in June 1940 under the command of the legendary Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Blackburn, VC. Although the Battalion was raised in South Australia, D Company came from Western Australia.

After a period of training in Western Australia and then South Australia, D Company returned by train to WA for pre-embarkation leave in March 1941. Newly-promoted Lance Corporal Davies went on leave from 25 March to 6 April 1941. The Battalion less D Company embarked in Sydney on the SS Ile de France which called into Fremantle to embark D Company, and sailed from Fremantle for the Middle East on 16 April 1941 as part of a large convoy of troopships. This was the last time Stewart saw Eva and his family.

The convoy reached Colombo in late April and shore leave was given. Departing again on 6 May, they arrived at Port Tewfik (now Port Taofik) at the southern end of the Suez Canal and disembarked on 14 May. They were taken by train north to Kantara (El Quantara) where they crossed to the east side of the canal in barges and travelled by train to a camp at Hill 95, approximately 16 kilometres north of Gaza in Palestine.



On 7 June 1941 the British invaded Vichy France-controlled Syria and Lebanon to prevent Nazi Germany from using bases there for attacks on Egypt. Australian troops made up more than half the invasion force of 34,000 men. The 2/3rd was assigned to the 21st Brigade of the 7th Australian Division just before the Division was sent to Lebanon.

Stewart's first encounter with the enemy was on 10 June when the 21st Brigade attacked the coastal town of Sidon. D Company was called on to support fellow West Australians of the 2/16th Battalion in its part of the attack. After a hard fight over five days Sidon fell to the Australians on 15 June.

Stewart's Middle East Journey: Port Taofik - El-Quantara - Gaza - Sidon - Damour River
Source: Google Maps




The next major engagement by D Company was during the Battle of Damour. Andrew Faulkner in Arthur Blackburn, V.C. takes up the story:

"Blackburn's D Company had supported the infantry along the coast since 15 June. They had been split up among the various infantry battalions – the 2/14th, 2/16th, 2/25th, 2/33rd, 2/31st and the South Australians of the 2/27th and, like their sister companies, had played important roles in various frenzied little battles. They were about to be thrown into the biggest fight of the campaign.

"At midnight on 5/6 July, the Australian attackers clambered down a steep ravine to the edge of the Damour River, where they sat themselves down and waited. At 12:35am [on 6 July], when 60 field guns and howitzers shattered the silence, the diggers went off across the river and up the other side, which was just as steep. Bitter firefights erupted across five kilometres of front.

"Blackburn's 13 Platoon was with the 2/27th Battalion, which was set the tough task of filing down a goat track into the ravine then climbing up and seizing the village of El Boum on a ridge almost 300 metres above sea level. When the supporting barrage opened, the Vichy artillery replied and the din bounced off the cliffs, making spoken communication impossible. Shells exploded among the Australian's ranks, killing two 2/3rd men – Lance Corporal Stewart Davies, a 24-year-old butcher from Wagin in Western Australia, and Private Anthony Graham, 24, of Perth."

Map showing the attack on El Boum by the 2/27th Infantry Battalion supported by D Company of the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. The blue cross  shows where Stewart was killed in the Damour River valley.



Stewart was initially buried in the small village of El Labiye on 7 July 1941. He was reburied in the Beirut War Cemetery on 2 October 1941.

The 21st Brigade's attack was successful and Damour was captured on 9 July, leaving Beirut indefensible. The Vichy French commander, General Dentz, sued for peace on 11 July and the Australian 7th Division entered Beirut on 12 July, ending the campaign.

The five-week Syria-Lebanon Campaign is undoubtedly the forgotten campaign of World War 2, yet 416 Australians lie in cemeteries there. One of them is **Stewart Davies**. Another two are former Modern School students **Tom Harper** and **Harry Stapledon** who fought with the 2/16th Infantry Battalion and who were struck down in the same battle and on the same day as Stewart. Their stories will be told in the next edition. Stewart Davies was 24 when he died. His wife, Eva, remarried and died in 1965 aged 45.

LEST WE FORGET

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