



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 50, November 2021 (Vol 2 No 25)

WELCOME

eVent Notice

Hi

WELCOME to your Perth Modernian e-Newsletter offering two-way communication with all members and potential members. We bring to 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.perthmode.society.org.au

info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

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

*Welcome to all new Contributing Members
and thank you to all our readers for your
encouragement and support during 2021.
We wish you all a happy and memorable
holiday season as we move forward into the
challenges of 2022.*

BOMBHELL UPSETS THE PERTH MODERN SCHOOL COMMUNITY

DIARY DATES

REUNIONS

See news item for details
for further information visit
www.perthmoderniansociety.org.au

e-NEWSLETTER

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

Next Issues

Copy deadlines for 2022

20 February
for circulation by 1 March

IN THIS ISSUE:

Thank you to all letter writers,
and contributors including:

Ruth Barrett
Jennifer Bardsley
Deb Beresford
Peter Farr
Robert Johnson
Barbara Mallett
Graeme Nyberg
Philip Roberts
Robyn White

Coordinator/Editor

Sallie Davies

In late November, Perth Modern School was aired in the Western Australian media in a very sensational way. The many Perth Modernian Society members who are not residents in WA will no doubt be most surprised to learn that on 22nd November Lisa Rodgers the Director General of Education set in train an unprecedented course of action. Quoting from the West Australian newspaper (23 Nov.):

Staff at Perth Modern School were informed yesterday morning that Principal Lois Joll and Associate Principal Val Furphy had been asked not to attend the school that day. Education Department Director General Lisa Rodgers said in a statement "I recently commissioned a review into workplace culture at PMS prompted by concerns brought to my attention. It had become apparent that changes are required at the school".

On 22nd Nov. the Director General had written to the parents of Perth Modern School students and to the School Board in the following terms:

"I am writing to update you on an ongoing review of Perth Modern School commissioned by the Department of Education. I have temporarily appointed Mr Mike Morgan, the highly-experienced Principal of Shenton College, as the interim Principal of Perth Modern School. Mr Morgan together with Chris Hill, the Associate Principal of Shenton College will commence at Perth Modern School on Tuesday, 23 November 2021. Mr Morgan and Mr Hill will act for the remainder of Term 4 to ensure there is no disruption to the high-quality education and support provided to the students of Perth Modern School. Please be assured the Department will always act with the best interests of staff and students in mind."

Rather pointedly, the letter does not directly refer to Lois and Val, or why such a drastic action was taken with only four weeks until end of the 2021 school year.

**Subscription received
CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP
Welcome to New Contributors**

Paul Biggs
Anika Hird
Robert Johnson
Dhaarsinna Murithi Krishnan
Dorothy Molyneux
Jonathan Seth

Thank you for Renewals received

Petrice Judge
John Silbert
Susan Taylor
Raymond Thurloe

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

Coincidentally, the Perth Modernian Society Council held a scheduled Council meeting on the afternoon of 22nd November, and the Director and Assistant Director of the North Metro Education Region (NMER) asked to attend the meeting to explain further what was going on at Mod. Unfortunately, scant information was obtained other than that several enquiries had been conducted in the past 12 months, and the Director NMER also gave undertakings of a "fair and transparent process".

It is on the public record that outstanding academic results have been achieved under Lois Joll's stewardship of Perth Mod, and the Cyril Tyler Auditorium (opened in September) most definitely would not exist were it not for Lois driving that momentous project. Lois and Val have also been impeccable supporters of the alumni in all our activities for the benefit of students, including the Sphinx Scholarships Fund, the Museum and the Annual Perth Modernian Society Oration. For our part, the Council strongly supports Lois and Val as outstanding educators with long and remarkable track records – in the case of Lois for example, 49 years in the education profession. Your Council has expressed its strong concerns in a letter to the Director General. When more information becomes available, I will ensure you know about it direct.

The Honourable Julian Grill, LLB, JP
President, Perth Modernian Society
30 November 2021



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY

2020 - 21 COUNCIL

info@perthmoderniansociety.org.au
The Hon Julian Grill, *President*
Dr Robyn White, *Museum and Vice President*
Kate Lewis, *Webmaster and Vice President*
Ruth Barrett, *Honour Awards*
Barrie Baker, *Sphinx Foundation and Membership*
Deborah Beresford, *Honorary Secretary*
Eve Broadley, *Honorary Treasurer*
Peter Farr, *Past President and Sphinx Foundation*
Ed Lazarus, *Communications*
Barbara Mallett, *Reunions Coordinator*
Lois Joll, *ex-officio. PMS Principal*

MODERNIAN HONOURS

Awards@perthmoderniansociety.org.au
Modernian Fellow

2014

Sallie Davies
Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC
Donald Tyler

2016

Barrie Baker
Ian Jarvis

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

2019

Robert Johnson

PERTH MODERN SCHOOL
Exceptional schooling. Exceptional students.
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL

NEWS
OCT 2021

CYRIL TYLER AUDITORIUM

Opening Concert and Celebrations

The Cyril Tyler Auditorium opened to much excitement and fanfare on Saturday, 11 September. The concert featured the Symphony Orchestra, Wind Orchestra and Combined Choirs as well as a special dance performance inspired by *Alice in Wonderland*. Circus skills students performed for guests as they arrived.

Principal Lois Joll and Board Chair Dr Ken Michael gave speeches thanking donors and supporters of the Raise the Roof campaign, followed by Patron Malcolm McCusker who declared the auditorium open.

In the audience were Raise the Roof donors, representatives of the builder and architect, members of the School Board and P&C executive committee, Perth Modern Staff, Education Department special guest and Modernians.

More photos and information on pages 4-7.

Lois Joll speaks at the opening of the auditorium.

Sonja Braund dances a ballet solo in *Adventures in Wonderland*.

Circus skills students enjoyed performing for the arriving guests.

In this issue

PAGES 8-9
Community Service Corner

PAGES 20-21
Sampson wins House Athletics Carnival

PAGE 20
NAIDOC Week



2020

Anne Celia Christmass
Neil Anthony Coy
Roger Stubbs AM

Honorary Member

2016

Alison Woodman

2017

Tonya McCusker AM

2019

Nigel Hunt
Brendon Dawson



SPHINX FOUNDATION INC.

2020-21 BOARD

sphinxfoundation@perthmodernian.society.org.au

Nigel Hunt, *Chairman*
Barrie Baker, *Member*
Peter Farr, *Hon Treasurer*
Vivian Wang, *Member*
Val Furphy, *Associate Principal*

DONORS

Sphinx Scholarship Fund

22 May -22 November 2021

Anonymous (1958)
Anonymous (1958)
Roger Atkinson
Jennifer Bardsley
Peter Farr
Elaine Davies
Amelia Olga Dixon-Pugh
Adrian Fini OAM
J Golding
Stuart Gould
Douglas Gould
Joyce Hardy
Terry Hoffman
Janet Holmes à Court AC
Rodney House
Emeritus Prof. Philip Jennings AM
Dr Shane Langsford
Malcolm Lee QC
Wendy McCallum
Dr Mary Marshall
Dr Annette Mercer
Prof Con Michael AO
James (Jim) Mondy
Marilyn Muir
Lee Alison O'Dwyer
Hon. Kevin Parker AC RFD QC
Neil Patterson
Prof Geoffrey Playford
Prof Shirley K Randell AO
Margaret Roberts
Lesley Russell (nee Mitchell)
Dr Barry Saker MRACP
Judyth Stephens
Raymond Thurloe
Walter Turnbull
Daryl Williams AM QC
Dr Christopher Kent Williams
Karen Wood



PERTH MODERNIAN SOCIETY
MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED

2020-21 BOARD

museum@perthmoderniansociety.org.au

Dr Robyn White, *Hon Chair*
Sharon Williams, *Hon Treasurer*
Sallie Davies, *Minute Secretary*
Alistair Paterson, *Board Member*
Jeffrey Lai, *Board Member*
Monica Brierley-Hay, *Board Member*
Lois Joll, *Board Member*



Many alumni attended the opening concert of the Cyril Tyler Performing Arts Auditorium, 2021 Annual Reunion, Class Reunions and Cocktail Party on Saturday 11th September. The concert was dazzling and we understand that the class re-unions were a great success. Quite a number visited the History Centre to view the specially curated music display.

"What a wonderful evening reminiscing about our school years. I just loved it, catching up with a couple of gorgeous school buddies and being back there and seeing the concert band and the music and all the many familiar faces from your year.....just amazing. Thanks for a brilliant event."



Many thanks to all who were involved in making this happen. It is a first step in creating a pathway for alumni to re-connect with the school. Thank you for your wonderful organization

There were many positive comments both on the day and via Facebook from those attending about how much they enjoyed coming back to the school as well witnessing how far Mod has come and continues to shine. Museum Volunteers did a magnificent job with the museum.

"Had a wonderful time catching up with school mates at the opening of our alma mater's new auditorium (Perth Modern School). Visited the school museum too."



"Was a great afternoon/evening. Looking forward to a reunion next year."



MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

[History Centre and Archives]

Gay Albillos
Deborah Beresford, Hon Archivist
Jim Davies
Sallie Davies
Peter Dillon
Frank Hedges
Robert (Bob) Johnson
Bill MacPherson
Jill Lucas
Wendy McCallum
Deirdre Owen
Roger Stubbs
Loren White
Robyn White
Sharon Williams
Emma Withers
Alison Woodman

DONORS

PMS Museum Fund

From 21 May 2021
Eric & Judy Alcock
Mr Barrie Baker
Mrs Laurie Best
Ms Marjorie Frances Bowen
Dr Frank & Mrs J Bruining
Mr & Mrs J Bruining
Beryl R Dancer
Mr James H Davies
Malcolm Evans
Dr Irene Froyland
Mr John L Fry OAM
Mr Geoff Grewar (2)
Mr Julian Grill
Mrs Claire Grose
Mr Richard Jahn (2)
Mrs Josette Jones
Dr Christine Lawson-Smith
Mrs Wendy McCallum
Mr Peter Merralls
Dr Lindsay R Mullings
Brenda Newbey
Mrs Margaret Puzey
Mrs E M Roberts
Mr Robin Silsbury
Dr June Stephenson
Mr John Stone (2)
Dr Robyn White
Mr Andre Winarto
Hon Daryl Williams AM QC
Sharon Williams
Mrs S J Wyburn

2021 - Class of 1970, "Get Together" Saturday 6 November 2021



After such an emotional and successful 50th reunion last year, class of 1970 wanted to "do it again". So, we "did it again" at the Marmion Angling Club and 29 members (even some partners chanced it this time) caught up from 12 noon until the evening. This time the Head Boy, John Karasinski, attended for the first time in 51 years. Apparently we're "doing it again" every year now, by popular demand.



2021 - Class of 1956, 65th Anniversary Reunion

On Friday, September 10 2021, 25 of us from the years 1952-56 got together at the Dome in Mt Pleasant for our 65th Reunion. It was planned to be a relaxed gathering starting with morning tea at about 10.15am, with people free to come and go as they pleased.

In what was a perfect early spring morning, as we had hoped it would be, with most arriving in time for morning tea, we were able to sit outdoors at the picnic tables, which had been reserved for us. Dome had kindly reserved indoor seating for us also, should the weather not have cooperated. Most of us stayed through lunch and on till mid-afternoon finally leaving just as the light rain started, having enjoyed catching up with classmates some of us had

not seen for years. With quite a few of our classmates being over east and so unable to come west this year, we had spoken about having another reunion for our class in conjunction with the 2022 Mod Reunion.

As people were leaving, however, it was suggested that we may not want to wait a whole year before getting together again, so watch the Newsletter and your email for any announcements, should one be planned for late summer, early autumn.

Who was there? Laurie Best (Terrill), Sian Bailey (Thomas), Ruth Barrett (McWhinney), Tony and Diana Beck, Keith Cooke, Audrey Dawson (Miller), Carol Day (Quarry), Brian de Garis, John Ffarrington, Olga Garden (de Julia), Rhys Gray, Jenny Carrick (Green), Mignonne Gubbay (Wineberg), Deanna Humphries (Shaw), Kent Logie, Jill Lucas (Stuart), Richard and Kaye Lugg, Kevin Moore, Arthur Porter, Joan Saleeba (Eimer), Jeanette Smith (Cousins) and Charmienne Vagg (Feakes)



PERTH MODERN SCHOOL

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www.perthmodern.wa.edu.au
for School Board information.





Class of 1958, '80th Birthdays Reunion' on 11th Sept.



PMS 1958 class reunion - taken 11Sept. 2021



Cutting the Cake

Front row:

John Silbert, Bruce McCallum, Wendy McCallum (Becher), Jan Beissel (Peters), Daisy Harries (Spencer), Judy Candy (Telson), Marylee Masarei (Broadbent)

Second row:

Allan Green, Peter McKerracher, Mary Marshall (McWhinney), Stephanie Jenkin (Mark), Helen Davidson (Henry), Deirdre Owen (Abrahamson), Anne Ballard-Woolf (Patterson), Gay Albillos (Rodda), Ronda Beck (Neaves), Maxine Croot (Prosser), Maureen Young (Pavlinovich), Janice Dixon (Chamberlain), Glenice Munro (Brown)

Back row:

Peter Farr, Max Walsh, Philip Jennings, Graeme Pougault, Barrie Baker, Malcolm Lee, Ian McMullan, Kenneth Robinson, Ian Jarvis

Cutting the Cake:

Anne Ballard-Woolfe (from S.A.) and Ian McMullan (from Narrogin) cutting 80th birthdays cake with naval ceremonial sword





MUSIC@MOD PROJECT

The research for the forthcoming history of music at Mod is well advanced, despite the relative paucity of resources. Some fascinating stories have emerged about people whose achievements have not been previously well documented.

BATGCIION (Betsy) SPIGL (from PMS records)

PMS Student 1917-18

Batzion Spigl, better known as Betsy, attended the school between 1917 and 1918. She was the older sister of the much better known Hyman who became the Government Astronomer. With three younger siblings and a mother who was estranged from her husband, the imperative for Betsy was to earn her living.

She was a remarkable pianist and became an Associate of Trinity College London at a young age. Not for Betsy the concert platform. Instead she became a pianist for Ethel Philp another Modernian, who had established a very successful dance studio in the YAL Hall. She taught people to dance, and organized many cabarets, balls and dances where they could apply their skills. At a time when motion pictures were in their infancy, wireless was not yet available and phonograph recordings very primitive, such entertainment was very popular. Betsy was an important member of the team and established a jazz orchestra which she led. Between the wars Betsy and Ethel were household names.

In 1922 Betsy led what was now described in the press as 'her now famous orchestra of five musicians' By 1924 Betsy had established her own music school and dance studio. Her orchestra expanded and contracted in size as the occasion demanded. Throughout the twenties and thirties the newspapers carried details of the many and frequent prominent social events at which her orchestra played. She often travelled to the regions to play at hospital, agricultural and freemason's balls.

In the 1930s she was chosen to provide the permanent orchestra for the revitalized Embassy Ballroom, famous for its discrete logues, and its suspended ball of faceted mirrors which reflected starry light across the floor. In 1939 she married accountant William Bryant and relocated to Victoria where sadly she died in 1950 at the young age of 48 years.

JAMES (Jim) VICTOR JUBILEE KENNEDY

PMS student 1912-15

An insight was provided into the enthusiasm for Empire enjoyed by Australians before WWI when the life of James Victor Jubilee Kennedy was researched. James was a very accomplished violinist who was a member of the first orchestra established at the school in 1915.

Percy Grainger heard James play in 1935 and declared him to be 'one of the best I have heard in my life and place him amongst the first three or four violinists in the world'. James worked as a musician and music teacher but at times had to take other employment. In the Depression he relocated to Kalgoorlie before moving to Victoria in the late thirties. But what of his unusual third given name 'Jubilee'? The mystery was solved by a quick look at his record card. His date of birth, the 23rd of June coincided with the date of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. His patriotic parents ensured that it was a date James would never forget.

In 1916 Jim was mobilised for Naval Service and his name appears on the recently installed supplementary Honour Board recording PMS staff and students who served in the Great War 1914-18.

Extract from The West Australian (Perth, WA;1879-1954) Saturday 27 November 1915, Page 7

National Library of Australia

Extract from PERTH MODERN SCHOOL CONCERT

"The Instrumental soloist was Master James Kennedy, a youth with an astonishing mastery over the violin, who contributed Viutemps' "Reverie" and later on a selection for "Tannhauser" in a style that would have done credit to a finished performer double his age. In both instances he was obliged to submit to an encore. He was also responsible for the arrangement of one of the orchestral selections."



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
Jocelyn Jennifer Davis (nee Mony de Kerloy)	1935-39	Student	2020
Dallas E Ellis (nee Symes) (Victoria)	1954-55	Student	25/04/2021
Lorraine Bindloss Clifton (nee Thomas)	1951-53	Student	29/05/2021
Dr Sam Birman	1953-54	Student	07/07/2021
Elsa Elizabeth Todd (nee Chambers)	1953-54	Student	04/08/2021
Barbara Lynn Buchler (nee Halnan) NSW	1954-58	Student	20/08/2021
Neil Baxter Watson	1953-54	Student	20/08/2021
Gerald (Gerry) Hargrave Cohen	1949-53	Student	26/08/2021
John Desmond Galatis	1957-61	Student	10/05/2021
Clarke Anthony Browne	1954-58	Student	01/09/2021
Graham (Crockie) Crockford	1955-59	Student	11/09/2021
Delphi Kent (nee Carmichael)	1948-49 (Yrs 1,2)	Student	19/09/2021
Rodney David Phillips	1948-52	Student	23/09/2021
Margaret Joan Gratte (nee Harris)	1947-51	Student	28/09/2021

PERSONAL TRIBUTES

Rodney David Phillips

PMS student 1948-52

Rod Phillips and I grew up in Wembley together. I lived in Nanson Street and Rod in Alexander Street. We were in different years through primary school as I was too young to go for a scholarship until at Perth Boys High School. We came together at Perth Modern School when I won a scholarship and repeated first year high school to get back into my right age group. There were several others who did this including Ken Watson.

Rod and I did a lot of things together. We joined forces to make money working on the old 'Bob a Job' system introduced by the Boy Scouts. It was not a great way of earning money as most of our clients paid only a 'bob' for what sometimes took us hours so we gave it away. We used to catch tadpoles together in Mongers Lake and grow them into frogs. This may have been how Rod got the nickname of "Frog".

There was a small group of us - Ken Watson, Ray Stapleton, Rod and myself - who on a few occasions went camping near Darlington on the Helena River. It was in the May and August school holidays. We loaded up with camping gear and some tinned food and porridge and rode our bikes to the bottom of Greenmount and then waited for a slow truck to tow us up the hill to the Darlington turnoff. It would be too dangerous these days and you would never get away with it but things were different then. We supplemented our food stocks by 'borrowing' fruit from the neighbouring orchards. One time we had our German teacher "Zipper" Zines accompany us and camp with us. I recall we made him sleep at the tents open end - closed at night of course.

We advanced to camping at Rottnest. This time it was with no tent and just hammocks between two trees. We had a variety of camping mates join us at different times including Ken Watson [again] and Des O'Dwyer.

Through our working lives we went our own ways. Rod became a teacher and I an engineer. My career took me all around Australia and even to South Africa and Laos and Thailand. At various times we would run into each other accidentally or at Modern School reunions of our year. He was a great guy and it is sad that he is no longer with us.

- Ray Purdy.

CLARKE ANTHONY BROWNE

PMS student 1954-58

Clarke Anthony Brown graduated from PMS with an Exhibition in Physics in 1958. He then attended UWA graduating in Arts. He became a secondary school English teacher appointed to Morawa Junior High School. He later moved into Technical Education, becoming Senior Lecturer in English at Mount Lawley Technical College.

Whilst still a student at UWA, he worked as a part time radio announcer, and in his retirement continued this interest. There is a photograph of Clarke in the first 1959 Sphinx magazine.

SAM BIRMAN

PMS Student 1953-54

We recently received an invitation for my father, Dr Sam Birman, to attend the 2021 Perth Modernian Society Annual Reunion. I am sorry to inform you that my father passed away on July 7, 2021.



Perth Modern School was such an important place to him. As an immigrant from Poland who didn't speak English when he arrived in Australia, he found great teachers and companions at the school. The community encouraged and supported him, so much so that he was able to go on to study medicine and enjoyed a wonderful and fulfilling career as a general practitioner, only retiring last year. Though he moved to Melbourne in the sixties, he always enjoyed his Perth connections, including attending reunions and reading about his classmates when he wasn't able to attend in person.

On behalf of my family, I want to thank you for providing such a warm welcome to a young boy so many years ago.
Sincerely, Lisa Birman

DALLAS SYMES m.ELLIS and JOHN ROBERT (Jack) ELLIS
PMS student 1954-55 PMS student 1951-55

Dal and Jack Ellis both went to Graylands Training College, and went teaching after two years. Dal taught Junior Primary at a school in the northern suburbs of Perth, and Jack went to Tammin. They married after a couple of years - I was one of three bridesmaids. I think the ceremony was at Scarborough Methodist Church, and the reception at the Palace Hotel. They went to Tammin, and after a few weeks Dal was given a job in the Junior Primary in a neighbouring town.

They came back to the city, and Michael was born in November 1962. At this stage Jack took a job at Christchurch, and studied Classics at Uni WA. Dal looked for a job but by the time the Scarborough Kindergarten wanted her, she was pregnant again. This time they had a daughter, Jenny. They were living in a small apartment on the family block in Scarborough.

When Jack graduated, with second class honours, he won a job at the University of Melbourne, and they moved. Dal had various teaching jobs, and when we saw her, was in a Teachers' Resource Centre.

They did spend some time overseas - one study leave they spent in Athens, Jack doing research in the city, while the family lived in a caravan park. Dal said it took some getting used to. Another time when Jack went to Greece to do research, Dal opted not to go, but had a third child, a girl, Miranda.

Then Jack left Dal to become Dean at one of the residential colleges, and Dal was left with the house and children. Some years later, I was in Melbourne doing cataloguing at the University of Melbourne library for a project about South Asia, when Dal contacted me and we had lunch together. By that time she was suffering from some genetic condition that made it difficult for her to walk. She used a walking stick. By this time Dal had met a lovely man, Bob Rothols, and lived with him close to the city centre until he died. They were very interested in music, and took groups to Europe, hiring a passenger van, and attending musical concerts. They did this for several years. They came to Adelaide and stayed with us one Festival, and enjoyed concerts, talks and plays. Dal especially enjoyed swimming at our local beach. When Bob died and Dal couldn't manage on her own, she moved into an aged care home in Melbourne. Eventually Dal moved to a lovely aged care home on the Mornington Peninsular, close to Michael and his family. Michael has a business in the Alternative Medicine field. By this time of course, Jenny had married, and was living in Queensland. Miranda became an Interior Architect, and among her achievements was designing the interior of Perth Airport, I think. She is also married, with children.

We went to Melbourne three years ago, to see Dal. By this time she was finding it hard to speak. I had taken photos of my 21st, as something to talk about, but there were many people we couldn't put names to any longer. It was obvious that Dal had many friends there, and was the centre of attention when she went to the mid morning exercise class. I sent Christmas and birthday cards, and was thinking of doing so this year, for her birthday at the end of May, when Lance took a call from Michael while I was out, to say that Dal had died a month short of her 83rd birthday. We were rather surprised to hear from Jack about five or six years ago. He was in Adelaide, and we met for dinner one evening. He was with I think his third wife, an American whom he had met at a conference in the States. She is a marvellous person. Jack had had a stroke.
- Anne (nee Halnan) and Lance Brennan

MODERNIANS WHO DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

Number 13 in a special series of articles prepared for publication by
Robert Johnson, PMS student 1961-65 and Museum Volunteer

LESLIE GEORGE STUDMAN
PMS student 1935-1938

At 10:05am on Wednesday 29 September 1943, Sunderland flying boat 461-P lifted off Milford Haven Waterway in South Wales to undertake an anti-submarine patrol over the Bay of Biscay. The aircraft never returned. Flight Sergeant Les Studman, wireless operator and air gunner, was a member of the crew.

Leslie George Studman was born on 30 September 1922. He attended North Perth Primary School and then commenced at PMS on 5 February 1935 after being awarded a scholarship. At that time the family lived at 46 London Street in North Perth. He was hospitalised with burns to his left leg and left wrist in late July 1935 and did not return to school until 1936, causing him to repeat First Year. His interests included cricket, tennis and football.



Leslie completed his Junior Exam in December 1938 with passes in English, French, History, Geography, Maths A, Maths B, Physics, Chemistry and Drawing A (Art). He left school at the end of 1938 and obtained work as a clerk with H L Brisbane and Wunderlich Ltd in Subiaco. He had passed several subjects in a Diploma in Accountancy at Perth Technical School by the end of 1941. At this time, he was living at 52 Essex Street in Wembley which was close to where he worked.

Leslie enlisted in the RAAF in Perth on 31 January 1942, aged 19, as an Aircraftman 2nd Class (AC2). During 1942 he attended No. 4 Initial Training School in Mt Breckan, Victor Harbour, South Australia, No. 1 Wireless Air Gunner School in Ballarat, Victoria, and No. 3 Bombing and Gunnery School in West Sale, Victoria. By this time, he had been promoted to Sergeant.

On 16 October 1942 he was given two weeks' pre-embarkation leave and then on 15 January 1943 he departed for the UK, arriving at No. 11 Personnel Despatch and Receiving Centre in Bournemouth, England, on 18 March 1943. On 25 May 1943, newly promoted Flight Sergeant Studman was posted as a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner to No. 461 Squadron, RAAF, an anti-submarine flying boat squadron based at Pembroke Dock, a small town in South Wales. Convoys from North America carried vital supplies to the UK and German U-boats were sinking an alarming number of merchant ships. The task of the anti-submarine squadrons was to destroy the U-boats.

Leslie was initially assigned to Sunderland 461-P (callsign "Peter") which had a crew of between 9 and 13 men depending on the mission. The Germans provided air cover to their U-boats with several squadrons of long range, twin-engined, heavily armed Junkers Ju88C-6 fighters. Their job was to destroy the Allied anti-submarine aircraft.



Sunderland Mark III

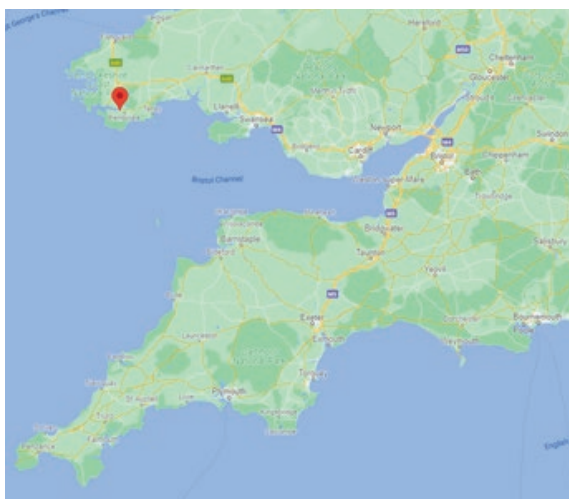


Junkers Ju88C-6

Leslie completed 25 patrols with 461 Squadron, logging 277 hours of flying time, an average of 11 hours per patrol. Although most patrols were uneventful, Leslie's 6th patrol, undertaken on 2 August 1943 in Sunderland 461-M, resulted in the destruction of U-106, one of the most successful U-boats of World War 2. It was running on the surface north-west of Cape Ortegal, Spain, when it was spotted at 8:05pm. 461-M attacked in the face of accurate anti-aircraft fire and straddled the U-boat with seven depth charges. The anti-aircraft fire was silenced by the front gunner spraying the U-boat's gun crews and several bodies were seen to fall into the water.



Leslie Studman at Enlistment



Location of Pembroke Dock, South Wales

A Sunderland from 228 Squadron, RAF, also based at Pembroke Dock, attacked with depth charges and then 461-M dropped the remainder of its depth charges on the U-boat. Oil was seen welling out of the U-boat and it partially blew up a short time later. Twenty-two German sailors died and 26 were rescued by the Royal Navy's 40th Escort Group

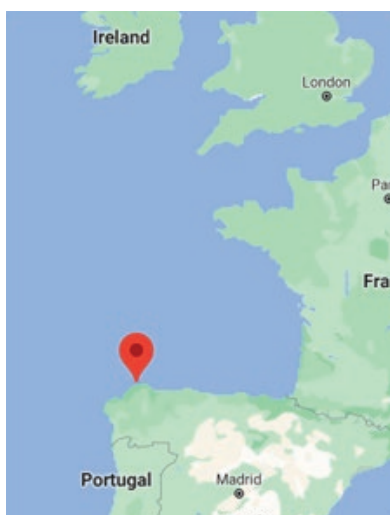




U-106 Under Attack (Imperial War Museum)

Leslie's 26th and last patrol departed from Pembroke Dock at 10:05am on 29 September 1943 and headed for the Bay of Biscay. A message "O-A", meaning "under attack", was received at Pembroke Dock at 2:10pm. Nothing further was heard from the crew and no survivors were found despite an extensive search.

German Air Force records reveal that several JU-88C's from Kampfgeschwader 40 (KG40 or Airwing 40) based in Bordeaux, France, attacked the aircraft and shot it down north-west of Cape Ortegal at 2:10pm. Four JU-88 captains were credited with the victory: Unteroffizier Franz Frank, Leutnant Knud Gmelin, Unteroffizier Heinz Hommel, and Oberleutnant Hermann Horstmann. Only Hommel survived the war.



Location of Cape Ortegal



Kings Park Memorial Plaque

Leslie was entitled to the 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic Star and the War Medal 1939-45. He was 21 when he died.

Sources

- PMS enrolment record
- <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5528912>, P34
- PMS enrolment record
- <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5528912>, P35
- Ibid, P30
- Ibid, P34
- Ibid, P20
- Ibid, P6
- No. 461 was one of two RAAF Sunderland squadrons tasked with hunting U-boats, mainly in the Bay of Biscay and the North Atlantic Ocean. It sank six U-boats during World War 2, losing 20 Sunderlands and 86 squadron members including 64 Australians. In one of the war's many strange coincidences, on 30 August 1943, Sunderland 461-U sank U-461.
- <http://www.adf-serials.com.au/sunderland.htm>
- <https://www.britmodeller.com/forums/index.php?/topic/235015361-ju88c-6-of-kg40/>
- <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1359213&S=11&R=0>, P359.
- <https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/648837>
- <https://uboat.net/boats/u106.htm>
- <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1359213&S=11&R=0>, P358.
- [https://www.wikiwand.com/en/German_submarine_U-106_\(1940\)](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/German_submarine_U-106_(1940))
- <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1359213&S=358&R=0>, P458.
- Goss, Chris: Bloody Biscay, The History of V Gruppe/Kampfgeschwader 40, 2nd ed, Crécy, 2013, P239.
- <https://www.bgpa.wa.gov.au/honour-avenues-plaques/1327-fsgt-leslie-studman>
- <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5528912>, P6.

