

The Phoenix Newsletter 24-December-2014

Merry Christmas, Teloceans,

You were probably wondering if you would ever see another newsletter, it has been so long. I was wondering too, suffering a bit of writer's block. Then I heard on the radio an author talking about how she had dealt with her writer's block. She decided to write about her difficulty in dealing with it. An interesting way forward I thought.

So, I decided to start again and see where I went. Hence the reference (in the subject line) to the phoenix, the mythical bird that gained new life arising from the ashes of its predecessor. It is a story worth reading as you can see [here](#).
Now, what can I tell you?

1. Gough Whitlam

Firstly, another catalyst to getting started again was reading [this Canberra Times article](#) when Gough Whitlam died (also published in the SMH). Click on the link and you will see a photo of Gough speaking at the school in 1973. Down in the bottom right hand corner you can see Mr McPherson. Is that Mr Price beside Gough? I recognise the fellow on the other side of the lady but I can't remember her name. Can you name any of the others, too?

2. Canberra - best place to live in the world.

Since the last newsletter on June 7 we Canberrans have been congratulating ourselves on Canberra being named by the OECD "the best place to live in the world" for the second time in a row. Read the Canberra Times' report [here](#), the comments are fun too. The [Herald Sun](#) was less kind, and again the comments are fun. Apparently, even the New York Times gave this a run although I haven't encountered a lot of New Yorkers as a result.

Jack Waterford, a Canberra curmudgeon who wrote the story above about Gough, has written a [follow up](#) warning Canberra's citizens that we "should stop to contemplate how little we deserve the title, what little use we are making of their circumstances and how easily it could all be taken away". More comments, some quite heated.

The [Property Council of Australia](#) rated Canberra the most liveable city earlier in the year. I'm not sure whether Christine Harris in Italy caught up with this news, I know that Ian Barnes in London certainly did. Is this is the reason both intend to be in Canberra soon(ish). Christine might get here in January and Ian is planning to be here next March. Let me (or them) know if you would like to catch up if we can organise a get together.

3. "Ten reasons to see the new capital of cool".

That's right - Canberra, the capital of cool. If you need more reasons to visit then read [this](#).

4. Sad news.

Sadly, another one of our group has passed away. [Colin O'Brien](#) died on 9 July. Colin had been living in Captains Flat. Although I never met Colin I notice that he and I shared exactly the same birthday.

We have also lost another teacher. [John Rooney](#) died on 11 August. John and his wife Annie enjoyed our reunion way back in 2011. For a man who had been through a lot of

suffering (he was in a wheelchair because his legs had both been recently amputated) he was remarkably cheerful. I have tried (but failed) to phone and email Annie. If anyone has any contact details please share them with me.

5. Maureen Dee (Tindale today) and the National Zoo and Aquarium

[This article](#) in Canberra tells of Maureen and her husband Richard's latest endeavours. They are doing a great job there near the Scrivener Dam.

6. Kiva.

Some of you might know about this wonderful organisation. It is a microfinance institution which provides loans to people without access to traditional banking systems. I know Sara Brown (York) knows because the Kiva logo appears at the bottom of her emails. Jenny and I have been part of Kiva since Andrew Wright's son Kalem got married in 2011. In lieu of wedding gifts Julia and Kalem invited wedding guests to make a loan. We've made many, and when they have been repaid we have reloaned the money. So, I've now set up a [Teloepa 68 account](#). Mention jennifer13817338 if you join and Jenny will get a bonus \$25 to lend on Teloepa's account. Have a look

7. George Chorik.

There are many rewards in doing this reunion stuff. One is when I get a pleasant surprise like this request (see below) from Nev Ratcliff. Can anyone help?

Nev's email address is nevrat53@gmail.com

Subject: George E Chorik

Hi, I am trying to track down an old friend of mine, an American school teacher, George E. Chorik. I found a pic of him on your page.... <http://www.teloepa68.org/Staff.html>

I was about 11 when my older brother who was just enlisted in the regulars, brought him home to meet our family. George and I became penpals for many years in which time he moved to Port Moresby to teach. It was some time after that we lost contact. Any information would be greatly appreciated. Regards...Nev Ratcliff

8. Valda Krastins.

Valda is one of the lovely people who regularly contact me with news. She recently shared [this attached story](#) from the Canberra Yacht Club newsletter (page 10) with me.

9. Mick March.

Mr March's name has appeared twice in the Canberra Times lately. [Here](#) "the 85-year-old appears with his old mark book in hand" at a 50th year reunion of Narrabundah High School. Also in the photo is Moira's brother Roland. In true "don't believe everything you read in the newspapers" style you know the story is wrong when it says that Mick was at Narrabundah in 1964. Our [scanned copies](#) of the 1963 and 1964 yearbooks list Mick as Master of the Maths department at TPHS. He still has his marks books from Teloepa - if you ask him nicely he might let you see your marks when you were in his class.

His name also appears when a letter he wrote to the editor on the subject of euthanasia was published. His views coincide with mine. I know that doesn't tell you what those views are.

10. Cycling

John Walsh and I are still regularly riding around the lake and we welcome others to join us. We can cater for most fitness levels and the coffee at Kingston is excellent. Contact me (or John) if you want to know more.

11. Mini reunions

Jenny and I recently had dinner with Michael Cassin, and then with John Pumpurs and his wife Meredith on visits they made to Canberra. I probably get more of this than you do but I hope others are getting together. Please let me know and share photos, and do let me know if you plan to come to Canberra. We might be able to organise a meal or a coffee.

12. Another reunion.

It is hard to believe that it is over three years since we had our reunion in October 2011. In the next newsletter I will put in something to gauge how much interest there is in a big getting together again. I would be thinking of around October 2016, a gap of five years since the last one and we will all be about 65 (the original date was based on turning 60).

Next October 2015 has me singing with the Beatles "will you still need me, will you still feed me, when I'm 64" but that's a bit silly (and I don't really like that song). Please contact me with any news to make the next newsletter more interesting.

So, another year gone. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas with family and friends and that next year is full of what you want.

Brett

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