**Bowled Over**

We had a very successful day even though the numbers were down on what we expected. It was good to welcome members from far away, including Ian Vagg (1960), Lorna Virgo (Dixon, 1952), Keith Wood (1959), Stan (1957) and Kay Thompson (1998), and Neville Marks (1959).

A special thank you is due to a number of people who turned the idea of the bowls day into reality: to Robyn Gray (Harkness) and her husband Chris who was her shadow when required; to my wife Marg for assistance with food preparation; to Luke Barnes Secretary Manager of the Mullumbimby Ex-Services Club who made a valued contribution through our successful application for a grant through the Club’s Community Development Support Expenditure Scheme along with the use of their Bowling Club; and last but not least to member John McKay, President of the Bowling Club who deserves a special mention for his much appreciated assistance both before and on the day. He was there to advise us on how to organise things in advance, as well as during the day and eased the nerves of novice bowlers. He then helped us return the club facilities back to normal. Thanks John.

Keith Wood deserves special mention on two counts, first for arranging his group of bowling friends “Saints and Sinners” to come. They made a very welcome contribution to the success of the day. Secondly, Keith’s donation of his wood craft as prizes for the raffle helped to make it a great success.

The prizes were excellent, and valued at well over $300. Thanks to Robyn and Chris Gray, Keith and Jan Wood, Cicely Reid, and the Ex-Services Club for the prizes. We had an additional surprise when the Bowling Club donated a fruit and vegetable platter to raffle.

Principal Ian Graham joined us for lunch and thanked the Association for their support of the School. He was very pleased when we informed him that with the success of the bowls day we were in a position to purchase nearly all of the sound equipment being held by Nic Van Horton (we are about $400 short). The lectern was not available to present to Ian as it was to have the badge screened on the front panel. However, we had a look at a couple of the panels brought by Nic who will assemble the many pieces for a presentation in due course.

Nic and Ian took a closer look at the Auditorium to ascertain what is needed for the next step (once we pay for it) in installing the sound equipment. It is essential that the equipment is placed to take full advantage of its high performance. Nic has offered special tuition to those who will be operating it.

Some more people have made direct donations to the fund and we would like to acknowledge and thank them for their support. Generous sums from Judy Hill (Mackney), Joan Swinbourne (Mitchell) and Mrs Russ Cummings added considerably to the total which is now just under our target. Many thanks.

With my visit to the School I was very pleased to see the progress being made in improving the School’s standard of dress. Congratulations to Principal Ian and all those involved in raising awareness of the importance of the image of the School.

Again, many thanks to all the members and their friends who contributed to the tremendous effort towards achieving our goal to purchase the lectern and sound equipment.

_Neville Marks - President_
The lectern we saw at the bowls day was intriguing. True, we didn’t see much of it because there are many, many bits and pieces that make the whole, and Nic had brought only a sample. Each clear acrylic piece is backed by rough cut brown paper, so in that form, it has a very unpromising appearance. It is very thick and very heavy - when delivered in its packing it weighed about 40 kg. It comes with a supply of acrylic glue and Nic has been educating himself on the technique of its proper application. Amongst the lectern’s advantages is that young people or adults of small stature will not disappear behind it. We are all looking forward to seeing it complete, with the screened school badge. It will then become part of the new sound system for the auditorium.

The shopping list we showed in the last newsletter included microphones, sound mixer, amplifier, and speakers which, put together, will give the hall a high quality facility. But there are some challenges to be overcome in the installation which Nic has offered to manage. One of these is that the hall has multiple uses. It can be used by the public for meetings, fetes, craft shows or concerts. It is used by the school for concerts, assemblies, special gatherings and presentations, as well as soccer, and other sporting fixtures. Installation of the numerous speakers needs to be carefully considered. They must be strategically placed and will need some protective screens designed not to impede the delivery of high quality sound.

Acquiring all of this equipment has been a gratifying project that shows how the knowledge of one ex-student, added to the effort and good will of others in raising the money, can result in arriving at a very worthwhile goal. And we have done it in a very short space of time. Thanks to everyone who has made it possible, especially Nic.

The president said he wanted to make a dent in the fund raising, and we did. But with the cost of some items on the shopping list still not firm, we need $400 to make sure we cover all angles. If you have been thinking of adding to the fund, do it now. We need eight members with $50 - or something like that. DD the Mullum branch of the Commonwealth Bank, BSB 2578 A/N 1022 4915, or send a cheque to the secretary.
THE FACEBOOK EXCURSION

In recent newsletters we have flagged the plan to enter the web world by setting up a group site for the Association. In preparing for this, we discovered that there are many entries for the Mullumbimby High School. Our Membership Co-ordinator, Judy Hill looked closely at how Facebook works and decided that the best way was to call the group by it’s name - Mullumbimby High School Ex-Students Association.

If you have never been to Facebook, you can get there by using your favourite search engine to look for “Facebook”, or simply click on www.facebook.com/. From there you search the name of the Association and you should find all the news about the sound equipment upgrade, the bowls day, and whatever else Judy and others have posted there. To the right of this panel, Judy explains the ideas behind the plan, so have a look and tell us what you think.

Have you seen it?

- The Ex-Students Association now has a Facebook site: visit Mullumbimby High School Ex-Students Association.
- We will use this technology to support our regular newsletter and encourage ex-students and staff to stay in touch with each other. We want younger ex-students to tune into and influence the activities of the Association as we work in co-operation with the School and raise funds for specific school projects. On the Facebook site you can already see an example of this from Nic Van Horton giving us an update on the sound and equipment upgrade.
- All content is public. We hope that through this open approach, Facebook users will be able to find old classmates, share information about coming events and provide successful ideas we can adopt for raising funds for the School. This means that we expect that all content posted will contribute positively to achieving the Association’s goals.
- Facebook will not replace the newsletter which can be found each month on the school’s web site. Anyone wishing to join the Association will still need to contact the Secretary at mh.exassn@bigpond.com.

Judy Hill (Mackney) – Membership Co-ordinator
If you would like to make a donation to the sound system fund, make a DD to the Mullumbimby branch of the Commonwealth Bank, BS 2578 A/N 1022 4915

Vale Reg Byrnes

Reg Byrnes died at 2.20 p.m. on Monday 24 May. Reg and his wife Betty (Bassman) were Associates who signed on soon after the formation of the Association. He was born at Mullumbimby Creek in 1926 at the home of his Mother’s family, the Argues and he was known to his oldest friends as Hookey.

Reg’s death breaks a link with the pioneering past of Mullumbimby that is unique. It was his grandfather, Robert Argue, who surveyed the Brunswick section of the route for the railway line from Lismore to Murwillumbah in the early 1880s. When the survey work was done, Robert came back, took up land at Mullumbimby Creek in 1889 and raised his family there.

Reg’s life was shaped by the death of his father when Reg was 14 and not quite ready to finish school. But finish it he did and began work on the family farm on the Murwillumbah Road. He worked the farm with his mother until 1960 when he took on the first of a number of jobs in various local enterprises.

One of his most enduring interests was the Brunswick Heads Surf Club and he was a significant contributor, holding the office of secretary for 20 years and honoured with Life Membership. He got his Bronze Medallion by teaching himself to swim the river in the town pool at the end of Dalley Street in December 1945. Amongst his club friends he informally trialled long before others did, a new method of resuscitation that was to come years later. He was involved in the Brunswick Heads wood chopping carnivals since they began in 1961. He was also a great supporter of the campaign to build town baths so that children would not drown in the river as two of them did in September 1950.

Reg was a great chronicler. He created what is probably the only photographic record of the building of a 20th century town in the Byron Shire. His pictures of how Ocean Shores emerged from farmland show how this development, the largest of its kind in Australia in the 1960s, came to pass.

He also wrote three books, the first of which was about the annual January wood chop and fishing carnival at Brunswick Heads. “Axemen, on Your Blocks” describes the evolution of one of the biggest Australian wood chopping competitions outside metropolitan areas.

His second book was “Fish n Chips n Trivia in the Brunswick Valley”. This is a tribute to all those volunteers and competitors (whose names are all recorded) who made the wood chops what they have become. It was published in 2002 and reprinted in 2009.

The third book was called “Mullumbimby Happenings, 50 years of fun” (2003 and 2010 revised but unpublished). This details the work behind the building of the Mullumbimby baths, the participation of the Surf Club, service clubs, tradesmen and others who made this unlikely project in such a small town, possible. It leads on to detail the Chincogan Fiesta featuring the race up Mount Chincogan and the community projects supported by the fund raising attached to the Fiesta program for over 30 years.

These books show more than the detail of community events planned and run by volunteers. They show how self reliant communities used to be.

Reg Byrnes was not a scholar, but his old school can be proud of all this ex-student achieved in his life and the things he has left behind for us all.

Robyn Gray.