

# CBERS NETWORK

Formerly the CBERS Express Newsletter

## A NEW BEGINNING

Hello to readers of the first new edition of CBERS Network.

This twice-yearly newsletter will bring news and information to a network of people who want to stay in touch with old school friends and fellow residents from former days.

This is a diverse group and includes child migrants and Australian-born men and women who went to Bindoon, Castledare, Clontarf, Nazareth House, St Joseph's and Tardun.

The newsletter has been mailed to you from CBERS Consultancy in Fremantle, which is the counselling and advocacy service carrying forward some of the former roles of CBERS Services in Subiaco.

CBERS is still a point of contact for newsletter notices, which can also be sent in via the old boys and old girls representatives and Creating Communities.

This publication follows on from the CBERS Express, which was

produced for nine years by long-standing CBERS supporter Deirdre Croft.

CBERS' role in the newsletter is no longer central, and is now one of 'support from the sidelines'. The newsletter is now produced by Creating Communities, and is still funded by the Christian Brothers, who have stated their ongoing commitment to assist people on a journey of healing, where that is needed, and to support all ex-residents to continue to take positive steps into the future.

I am very pleased to be among the contributors to the new CBERS Network, and I look forward to being 'on the sidelines', as the new support and social network continues to move forward.

Best wishes to you all,  
Pip

Philippa White  
CBERS consultant and counsellor

*Picture right: CBERS Consultancy*

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Social Network

page 2

### Forgotten Australians

page 4

### Laying to rest John Coniffe's Ashes

page 5

### A Journey of Discovery, Patrick O'Flaherty

page 6

### TOBA News

page 7



*Please note: Strict privacy guidelines are maintained at CBERS Consultancy. Confidentiality is a key principle of the service and no client information is released without express consent. This newsletter is produced by external groups, however, the final mail-out is conducted by CBERS. This process ensures that client confidentiality is maintained and privacy is respected.*

## DCW EX-WARDS SUPPORT GROUP

Are you an ex-ward?

Do you know of one of the thousands of children churned through DCW institutions during the 1970s and 80s, detained in places like McCall, Clontarf, Mount Lawley Receiving Centre, Hillston, Longmore and Riverbank?

If so, please contact me, as I aim to establish a voice for this generation of 'Wardies' who continue to be ignored by the WA community and government.

Please telephone 040 779 0214  
email me at [fjackamarra@yahoo.com.au](mailto:fjackamarra@yahoo.com.au)

## CAN YOU HELP?

ABC TV want to hear from anyone interested in connecting with long lost family or close friends within Australia.

The ABC program 'Can We Help' has a team of researchers available to locate family and/or friends from the past to share stories and reunite each other.

If you are interested please contact Juliet Wills at ABC on 08 9220 2656 or email [wills.juliet@abc.net.au](mailto:wills.juliet@abc.net.au)

## THEATRE FOR SCHOOLS

Ex-Clontarf boy Michael Dark is keen to establish a Theatre for Schools, which, as the name suggests, will tour schools and present plays.

Michael would value any support that he can receive from those who are able to make and maintain stage props, costumes, scenery, equipment and the like.

Michael can be contacted on 9351 8209 or 0429 930 624.

## CHILD MIGRANT FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WINDS UP

by Barbara Costello

At the meeting of the Child Migrant Friendship Society of W.A. Inc, held on May 13, it was decided to wind the association up, as it no longer serves the purpose for which it was set up.

It was agreed the disbursement of funds would be divided equally between St Vincent de Paul and the Cancer Council.

St Josephs Girls, better known as the Joey Girls, will continue their friendship meetings on a casual basis. Anyone who has news they would

like included in future editions of this newsletter please phone 9304 1353.

For many child migrants next year marks the 60th anniversary of their arrival in Australia. There is much interest in planning a combined social event that would bring together the '1947ers' along with all the other groups. This would be a great chance to catch up with old friends and maintain connections. Look out for more news of this event in your next edition of the CBERS Network newsletter.

In closing we farewell Doreen Cahill and Josephine Cummings, rest in peace.

## SOCIAL NETWORK

Representatives for the informal social network met in May to discuss plans for a combined gathering at the end of the year, or early next year.

There are lots of ideas, ranging from a barbeque at the Esplanade Park in Fremantle, to an evening function at the Maltese Club.

If you received this edition of the CBERS Network newsletter by post, you're already on the mailing list and will receive your invitation in the mail later this year.

If you would like to help out with the arrangements, please contact one of the reps, who are listed opposite.

### Bindoon

Laurie Humphreys: (08) 9337 4850  
[lhu44021@bigpond.net.au](mailto:lhu44021@bigpond.net.au)

Eddie Butler: (08) 9349 4541  
[gdbut@bigpond.com](mailto:gdbut@bigpond.com)

### Clontarf

Michael Hogan: (08) 9297 3684  
Brendan McCloat: (08) 9274 1484

### St Joseph's

Sheilagh Pearce: (08) 9535 4867  
Barbara Costello: (08) 9304 1353

### Tardun

Frank Marshall: (08) 9457 7936  
[marsh.f@bigpond.net.au](mailto:marsh.f@bigpond.net.au)  
John Vella: (08) 9458 9015



# BINDOON CORNER



If one looks at the Roll Call for the years 1943-1960 some 397 boys passed through Bindoon in that period.

I was there from September 1947 until August 1950. Last year I attended a funeral of one of the old boys and the talk, among other things, was "how many of us are left?"

I would like to find out for various reasons; out of interest, to make contact, maybe organise a reunion, certainly for a chat. There could also be help for those who've fallen on hard times through illness etc.

My contact details: Laurie Humphreys  
Phone: 9337 4850  
Email: lhu44021@bigpond.net.au

For privacy reasons names of people who contact me will not be given to any organisation government body or individual.

*Above Left: (third from right) John Coniffe in 2005*

## Rest in Peace John Coniffe

Sadly, John Coniffe (ex-Bindoon) passed away in January this year. His funeral in Kalgoorlie was reportedly attended by a busload of local mourners and was supported by the Christian Brothers and the local Little Sisters of the Poor. Former schoolmates Eddie Butler and Laurie Humphreys reminisced: "John was known at Bindoon as 'Hop-a-long' as he was a good horseman and always in the saddle working alongside the late Brother Sullivan. On the days we played cricket against the local Bindoon cricket team John nearly always got us out of trouble with his ability with the bat, there wasn't much of him but he always hit a six or two".

In 2004 John travelled back to Bindoon on a bus trip organised by Sr Flo O'Sullivan and Mr Gordon Grant. About 20 Old Boys joined with Br Kevin Ryan and former CBERS Committee members Dr Debbi Rosser and Mr George Horton to pay tribute to those who are buried at Bindoon, to view the memorial statue dedicated to child migrants and to take a tour of the working farm.

In April this year John's ashes were taken back to Bindoon, again arranged by Sr Flo, with a group of John's friends.

Yvonne Radzevicius kindly provided this report:

As he was part of the child migrant family, a few of us were only too happy to accompany Sister Flo O'Sullivan to Bindoon to lay John's ashes to rest. Although this was indeed a sad occasion it was made all the more comforting by the companionship of Patrick Cannon, Anthony and Catherine Brennan, Graham Galea, Eddie Cogan, Peter Bent, Norman Yeates, Gordon Grant, Yvonne Radzevicius and our capable driver Sister Pep.

Sister Flo had arranged a beautiful plaque and in a peaceful corner of the one place John recognised as his childhood Australian home, we had a simple prayer service and sang his favourite song: "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean".

*Left: John Coniffe in 1948*





## FORGOTTEN AUSTRALIANS

As a part of the Australian government's response to the Senate Committee Report 'Forgotten Australians' two national conferences were held in 2006 to consider the ongoing needs of Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children. These are being organised by the Australian Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA).

One of the goals of these conferences is to develop a national way forward in responding to issues currently experienced. Invited to these conferences is a range of people - support groups, care leavers, professionals etc. I attended the first of these conferences with Laurie Humphreys. The second conference was held in Melbourne.

One of the things we learned from the first conference is that there is a strong group of people in Australia who are determined to ensure that at both a state and a national level, work proceeds to implement the recommendation of the Senate Report. I hope that we in the West can contribute to this determination. We await the final outcome of both conferences and will keep you informed.

Dr Maria Harries  
(Chairperson of the former CBERS Services)

## CLAN: CARE LEAVERS AUSTRALIA NETWORK

Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN) is a support and advocacy group for people brought up in care, away from their family as state wards, in children's homes, orphanages, other institutions, or foster care.

CLAN is also for anyone with a family member who was placed in 'care'.

Many of these people are now middle-aged or older but still carry the burden of unresolved issues from their past.

Our aim is to raise community awareness of these issues and to campaign for government assistance to redress them.

CLAN welcomes everyone who has been affected by the 'care' system, regardless of their background or heritage - we are here to help.

The CLAN website ([www.clan.org.au](http://www.clan.org.au)) contains a wide range of news and

information about issues that affect care leavers.

If you grew up in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia or Western Australia, you can contact CLAN free of charge on 1800 008 774.

CLAN can also help you get your state ward file or any other records from your time in institutional care.

It's only \$10 to join and you receive the CLAN newsletter as part of your membership.

The newsletter invites members to share their own experiences, and you can advertise if you are seeking contact with anyone from your 'home' or 'care' experience.

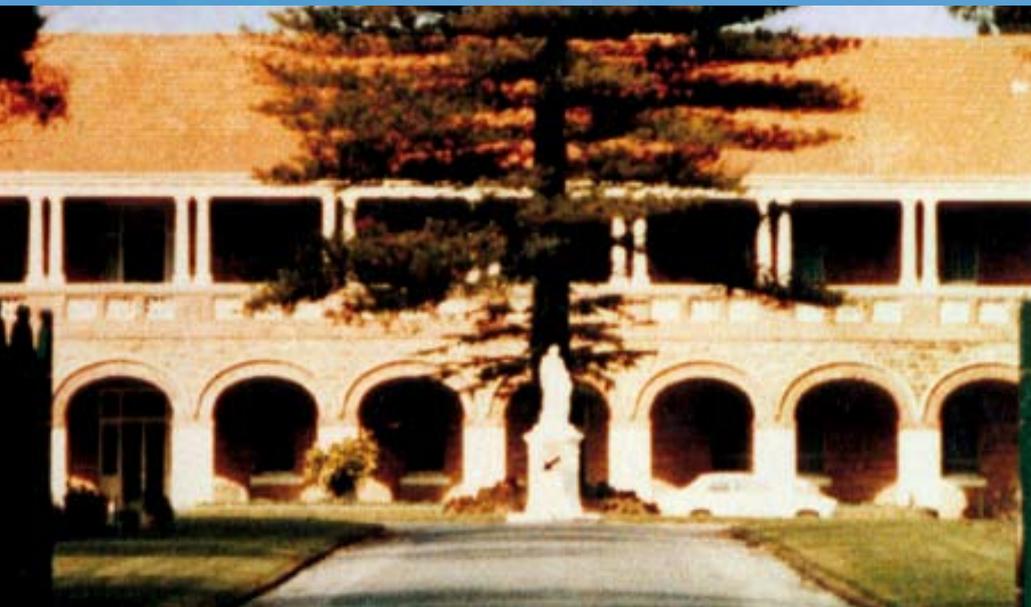
Email us at [support@clan.org.au](mailto:support@clan.org.au) or call CLAN on 9709 4520/ 0425 204 747.

## SEARCHING FOR RECORDS ON THE INTERNET

The National Archives of Australia now has an online search facility where people can locate information on passenger lists and other details regarding their immigration.

The web address is [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au) and the record search section is under 'Research' on the left hand side of the screen.





## CLONTARF OLD BOYS

A group of Clontarf old boys met last February at the home of Anthony (Tony) Brennan in South Perth.

The purpose of our meeting was to create a contact point for any Clontarf old boy, whether Australian or migrant, to meet once or twice a year and enjoy the conviviality, comradeship and friendship in reconnecting with fellow old boys.

The group will have no president, secretary treasurer, AGM or constitution.

It will simply present an opportunity for any old boy to make contact with old friends.

A memorial service, including a BBQ/picnic and drinks, is planned to commemorate the memory of Michael Bowman and the boys seriously injured in the horrific bus crash on December 15, 1955. It's intended the service will be held at the site of the accident at Serpentine Bridge on the South-Western Highway on October 14 at 10.30am. For further information please contact Pat Ward on 9250 2487 or Peter Bent on 9458 4495.

A celebration for the combined network of old boys and old girls is

planned for later this year. Please contact us if you are interested in helping to organise this event. The Clontarf Old Boys enthusiastically invite all 'clonnie boys' to attend.

It has to be emphasised that when you contact us we guarantee your personal details will be kept confidential. We also recommend that you contact CBERS and give your details so you can receive its newsletter. CBERS also guarantees your privacy.

Any Clontarf old boy living in WA, interstate or overseas can contact us. We will assist you, where possible, and may be able to find accommodation should you visit. We hope to hold our own Clontarf Old Boys celebration sometime close to November 25.

If you'd like more information please contact one of the following:

- Michael (Mike or Mick) Hogan on (08) 9297 3684;
- Anthony (Tony) Brennan on (08) 9367 9281; or
- Peter Bent on 08 9458 4495.

## FORGOTTEN AUSTRALIANS CONFERENCE REPORT

by Laurie Humphreys

I recently attended a two-day conference in Sydney.

The purpose of which was to:

- exchange ideas and thinking to promote and focus efforts to support care leavers;
- identify the existing and ongoing needs of forgotten Australians;
- build a shared understanding of good practice in meeting these needs; and
- fund ways to work together to address these needs in the future.

Whilst some long-term strategies were identified at the Conference, our focus was on finding an agreed way forward for the next 3 to 5 years.

A large number of the proposed initiatives have already been undertaken and, in fact, completed by CBERS, such as preserving photos and helping with tracing families.

Whilst it was recognized that not all forgotten Australians would need assistance, service providers should focus on 'high need' clients, whether it be with counselling, health needs or aged care requirements.

Over the years we have been known as child migrants, former child migrants, state wards, etc. Now we are referred to as Care Leavers, Forgotten Australians and even Survivors.

The term 'Forgotten Australians' refers to all who have been in institutions throughout Australia, and indeed those in out-of-family care, such as foster homes.

The Conference was of one mind; injustices, as happened in the past, should be acknowledged as having happened and the Federal Government, as well as State Governments, accept their responsibilities, along with the churches.

# CBERS CONSULTANCY

CBERS Consultancy is located in Fremantle at the Edmund Rice Centre for Social Justice, and is operated by Philippa White.

The office is open on Wednesdays, and an answering service is available on other days of the week. Messages are checked on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Postal and street address:  
CBERS Consultancy  
The Edmund Rice Centre  
24 High Street  
Fremantle WA 6160

Freecall number: 1800 621 805  
Phone number: (08) 9433 3644  
Facsimile: (08) 9382 4114  
Email: [welcome@cbers.org](mailto:welcome@cbers.org)  
Website: [www.cbers.org](http://www.cbers.org)

Services are available to ex-residents and students of Christian Brothers institutions and their families, and to former residents of Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of Nazareth child care institutions.

These services include:

- Counselling
- Information
- Advocacy
- Access to PHIND
- Access to family tracing services
- Referral



Left: CBERS Consultancy operator, Philippa White.

## A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

With a new Irish passport in his pocket, former child migrant Patrick O'Flaherty headed home to a little village in north County Cork called Kildorrery.

After 66 years, Patrick was finally recognised as a citizen of the Emerald Isle when the Irish Embassy in Canberra presented him with his new passport.

Accompanied by his partner and carer, they headed to his father's grave where they were joined by relatives who had journeyed across from Wales.

"I had been seriously ill," says Patrick. "And didn't think I'd be able to

make the trip at all. As I stood at my father's grave with my family I felt connected to Ireland. It really was a homecoming."

In addition to visiting his father's grave, other highlights of his trip included connecting with a first cousin; finding detailed information on his family background; and spending quality time with relatives in Ireland, Wales and England. Patrick said of the 'Journey of Discovery' "It was a life changing event."

To celebrate his new found Irish citizenship, Patrick has taken out life membership of the Canberra Irish Club. This year he joined the annual St Patrick's Day Parade in Sydney dressed as a leprechaun.

Recently, Patrick was a guest at the unveiling ceremony of a new commemorative sculpture called 'Coming and Going', honouring former child migrants at the Maritime Museum at Sydney's Darling Harbour (below).



## SEEKING CONTACT

In the past few months people have been contacting CBERS seeking information on the whereabouts of Tom Cox and Terence (Terry) Smith.

Former schoolmate Guy New is seeking any news on Tom, as is Richard King from Victoria. Richard was only 3 years old when Tom worked on his grandfather's property in 1948.

Richard says Tom would recognize the name Gerald Lovell, and 'Condinup', which was the name of the property.

Additionally, if you know information of Terence (Terry) Smith who migrated on the Strathaird in 1954 and resided at Bindoon until 1961.

Please contact CBERS Consultancy if you have any information.

# TOBA NEWS

## Successful Moore River Reunion

The Tardun Old Boys' Association held its first 2006 reunion at Moore River in February. It was attended by over 80 former residents and partners, some of whom spent the long weekend at the site, others who came up for part of the weekend. The highlight of the reunion was the bocce competition. This competition is becoming an increasingly popular part of the reunions.

During the reunion the General Meeting was held and a new committee was elected. Frank Marshall was re-elected President and Judith Marshall re-elected Secretary. Congratulations and many thanks for their untiring efforts.

The second 2006 reunion took place on the weekend of July 28 - 30. Old boys who are not on TOBA's mailing list can find out more information by ringing Frank or Judith Marshall 9457 7936).



Above: Old boys at Tuppin House at TOBA (Tardun Old Boys Assoc) February 2006 reunion. (l to r) John Vella, Tony Galea, Joe McHardy, Naz Grima, George Vassallo, Sam Vassallo, Frank Marshall.

## Vale

TOBA offers Pam and family the sympathies of Tardun's old boys on the loss of Robert Baker. Bob was a child migrant, arriving in Australia in 1952 and spending his schooling days at Tardun. He will be sadly missed at our reunions. May he rest in peace. TOBA also extends its sympathy to Tom Haydon on the recent loss of his wife Evelyn.

Condolences to the family of Tardun Old Boy Syd Russell who passed away in July 2006.

## Tardun Cemetery

At the behest of Terry O'Leary, TOBA has been in liaison with CBAS about the condition of the cemetery. There's been a good school response and arrangements are in place to ensure the resting place of three former child migrants is well maintained.

## CBAS Going Co-Ed

CBAS is gearing up for the admission of girls in 2007. At this time the boys

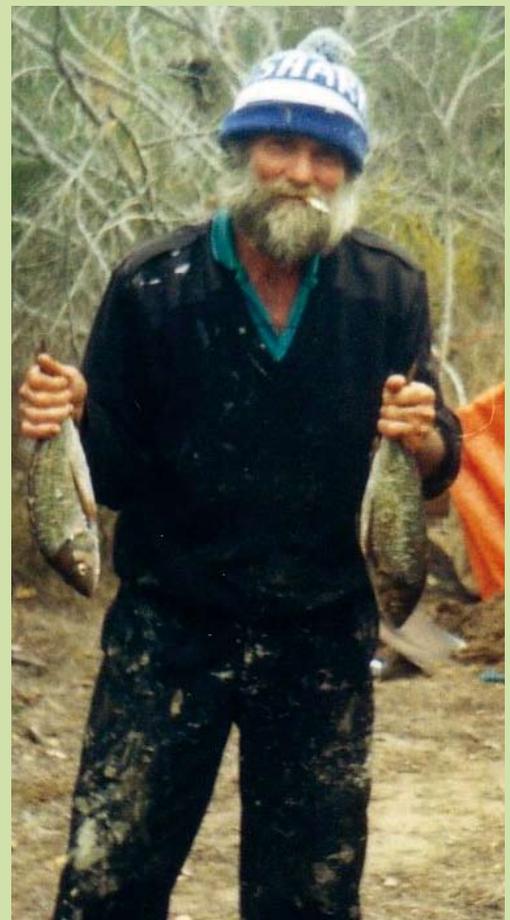
have vacated the dormitories at St Mary's and are bussed daily to and from the St Joseph's campus.

The campus is on the Pallottine Mission site, where boys have four boarding houses— Pallotti, Dean, Thomas and Wandalgu. Present plans are for the eastern dormitories to be converted for the girls.

## 25th Anniversary Celebrations

TOBA will celebrate 25 years of operations in 2007, and the February Moore River reunion will mark this event in a special way. All Tardun old boys are invited to attend the event. For details, please ring Frank or Judith.

Finally, we welcome back Peter Scott from his travels to England. This was his first visit back since arriving in Australia as a child migrant.



Above: Peter Scott

# CELEBRATIONS

## Tardun Old Boys Celebration

TOBA will celebrate 25 years of operations in 2007. The February Moore River reunion will mark TOBA's 25th Anniversary celebrations and all Tardun old boys are invited to attend the event. If you'd like more information please contact Frank or Judith on (08) 9457 7936.

## End of Year Get Together

Plans are being made for a social get together toward the end of this year, or early next year. To help with the planning process, contact one of the social club representatives mentioned on page 2. Look out for more news on this event in your next CBERS Network newsletter.

# IN MEMORIAM

A memorial service is planned to commemorate the memory of Michael Bowman and the boys seriously injured in the horrific bus crash on December 15, 1955.

It's intended the service will be held at Serpentine Bridge on October 14 at 10.30am.

For further information please contact Pat Ward on (08) 9250 2487 or Peter Bent on (08) 9458 4495.

# VALE

Ex-Nazareth House girl **Gillian Collins** died in Geraldton this April after a long battle with cancer. A group of her friends travelled to Geraldton to say farewell and attended a wake held by the Sisters at Nazareth House.

It is with sadness we announce the passing of **Doreen Cahill** and **Josephine Cummings**. **Josephine** has been laid to rest in Kalgoorlie/ Boulder, where she spent most of her life. As **Doreen's** last request, Sheilagh Pearce (nee Cahill) is taking her sister home to Ireland.

**John Coniffe** recently passed away and was laid to rest at Bindoon.

Tardun old boy Tom Haydon has recently suffered the bereavement of losing his wife **Evelyn**. May she rest in peace.

Condolences to the family of **Robert Baker. Bob** was a child migrant, arriving in Australia in 1952, and spent his school days at Tardun.

Condolences to the family of Tardun old boy **Syd Russell**, who passed away in July 2006.

# NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters from the former CBERS Services are accessible from the archived website in pdf and html format, visit [www.cbbers.org/archive/](http://www.cbbers.org/archive/)

The most recent CBERS Express is the January 2006 edition, edited by long-standing CBERS supporter Deirdre Croft, and is the final edition published by the former CBERS Services.

The new bi-annual newsletter provides a regular source of news. This is one of the key service areas identified during the CBERS forward planning process, and is one of the most valued services currently identified by people in the CBERS network.

The format of the new newsletter reflects the changes in CBERS and reflects the independence of a network of ex-residents, ex-students and former child migrants who want to have their own voice.

Representatives of the old boys and old girls networks intend to gather news and information to contribute a page each to the six-monthly publication. CBERS Consultancy has also been invited to contribute a page to each edition. If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please contact one of the social network representatives listed on page two.

The publication will be mailed to people who are currently on the CBERS mailing list. If you're not on the current list, and wish to receive this newsletter by post, send your mailing address to [welcome@cbbers.org](mailto:welcome@cbbers.org)

