

The Principal

Agricultural High School

Harvey.

Dear Brian,

J. WEST  
59 OLD YORK RD.  
GREENMOUNT

9.7.87

09-2941607

I was Principal of Harvey Agricultural Junior High School 1958-59. The death of Mr John Clifton on 2nd July and a telephone call to Mr Kingsley Waterhouse prompt me to write to you as Principal and Chairman of the Advisory Council. It is a little bit of history of which you may not be aware but I think worth recalling. It will be known to Mr Iven Manning, to whom I send my kind regards.

Under pressure from the Director General and Minister, I accepted the position as Principal in mid 1957. I was at York intending to move to Perth, but there was grave concern in the Department about the Ag. School.

The Ag. School in 1958 was simply the Army Camp first occupied by Mr Hanay Barton in 1952. No farm, no machinery, no bus, no truck, only an Army International utility. (By the way, the boys called the place "Barto's hill".)

The students were hard to occupy. The utility took them out to district farms for the day and collected them in the afternoon. It was traditional to play up at night. There was smoking, drinking (they could easily obtain 'plonk' at 1/- a bottle) and barbecuing of Chooks. They gave the local picture show money hell, and so on. It was some job.

But the Advisory Committee was tremendous. I doubt I would have survived without their support. Jack Johnson, Bill Crows, Jack Clifton, all deceased. Syd Byrd, Iven Manning

nd Brian Swan (Ag. Dept.)

First term I lost a lot of sleep patrolling after midnight. I sought a near league footballer as a housemaster and got a beauty in Rod Pether, now Perth's City Planner. We made a gym from an empty building and Rod had the boys circuit training at 6am. A few months later we cleaned up Nanragin School of Ag. at football and never looked back. The boys now slept at night; they needed all the sleep they could get.

We next gained the adjacent 23 acre Laurie Clifton farm. Jack Clifton owned no horse and one furrow plough. We were able to appoint a Farm Supervisor, Angus James, who produced our first crop - magnificent tomatoes.

We discovered in Rupert Keller, who the Dept. thought was an ordinary manual Arts type, a genius motor mechanic. He could make anything go (and later did at Amundsen, now Amundsen Museum). On 28<sup>th</sup> June we were told we could buy a tractor provided the account was at Head Office by 30<sup>th</sup>. Fortunately the local dealer had a suitable Ford. Then we got a little bus, too small, but better than the utility.

Every time we ordered food etc we asked for a few lengths of pipe. One day we had a shud without the boss (Harry Barton) knowing. (Rupert Keller again)

One day the P.W.D. District Architect informed me that the proposed High School would have to be at the Junior High School site. They had not been able to acquire a suitable site. I rang Jack Clifton who was a Shine



Councillor. As a result the Government <sup>was</sup> were offered the  
Saleyards which were going to shift sometime anyway,  
and so the new High School was built.

Then came the day I was instructed to consult  
with architect, Marshall Clifton (Jack's cousin) to build a  
Kitchen - Dining Room Complex, Dining Room to be  
multipurpose. And what an architectural gem he  
produced.

In case anybody remembers them, some of the  
staff were:

Rupert Heller (now S. Ma Geraldton), Malcolm Shalders  
(Acting Ppl Perth Technical College) Rod Pether (City Planner)  
Claude Bogg, Malcolm Rosier (ACER), Joan Standbury (Miss Australia)  
Marg. Waddingham (Mrs John Lowe) Shirley Muddford (Mrs  
Standbury), Betty Burt (Dr Killera's wife), Mrs Dyer (Sec.) Alex  
Bergh, Ron Campbell (Cook), Joe Hitting (Cleaner)  
Keith Philmore, John Harbister, Con Keogh - all retired.  
Brian O'zanne and Ron Goodson were at Jack's funeral.

I hope you will pardon an old bloke  
reminiscing, but it seemed appropriate to do so.

My kind regards to you and maybe I will  
make it to a Field Day. Kingsley is always on my back.

All the best,

Jim West.