



KENTIAN SOCIETY

SUPPORTING KENT STREET SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

History of the Archives

View [Plans and Photos](#)

Following the formation of the Kentian Society, archiving began in 1994 under the supervision of the first head boy, Norm Tredrea. This team included his wife Audrey, Jeanette Dolman and three others. They worked in an office of the newly opened Aviation Centre, collecting photos, pictures, programmes, textbooks, student uniforms and classroom material, departmental publications, and student enrolment forms. This took place twice weekly with Saturday morning used for those in paid employment.

From the enrolment forms, a database of students from 1940 to 2000 was established on floppy disks. Some records were established on a computer purchased from a WA Lotteries grant. Norm also acquired a filing cabinet and a map drawer for storage of materials.

After Norm's retirement as Society Chairman in 2000, the archives moved to the old boys changeroom. Judith Lee replaced Norm as the archivist, assisted by Bill Prince and Audrey on Thursday mornings during the school year. At this stage, the changeroom was a shared classroom. The shower area had been converted to form a storeroom and a small washroom with the storeroom shared by the Kentians and Phys Ed. Outside archive signage was provided by Jodie Hawes's father who lived in Victoria.

Audrey retired in 2002 and eventually the Kentians became the sole occupants of the changeroom. Another dozen lockable filing cabinets, no longer required by the school were moved into the changeroom and all recoverable student records (white ant damage destroyed some records) were moved from the Science dungeon to be stored alphabetically by the year students left, in filing cabinets and the storeroom.

In 2010 Pat Sanders joins Judith as her assistant. This was an important event as preparation for the 70th Anniversary of Kent Street was well under way. Some posters had been made for the 50th Anniversary. These were updated and added to, expanding the set to 2020. Saturday mornings, in the sewing room was the venue, supervised by Celine Turton and Pat and able assisted by a few Kentians and several student volunteers.

During the planning of the upgrade of the Science wing, Principal Rod Beresford saw the opportunity to provide an office, next to the dungeon for the Kentians. Rod's vision included relocating the archives to the adjacent dungeon. On completion, the Kentians commenced converting the dungeon to a designated archive and furnishing the office.

The dungeon had been neglected for years but fortunately the 70th celebration provide the work force. Twelve men cleaned out the dungeon, removing ten cubic metres of rubbish. The dungeon stairs were halved in width before railings for the stairs and second level were installed, from old net ball fencing, under the expertise of Graeme Campbell during which



KENTIAN SOCIETY

SUPPORTING KENT STREET SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

time Bill had his first lesson in pipe bending. Following the removal of an unwanted half wall and vacuuming of the floor, the room was sealed and painted to door height by John Matson and Bill Prince.

On completion, the back wall of the upper level was erected.

While this was happening, Lach MacKinnon and Lyn Walsh had been working with fifteen women sorting the student folders into alphabetical order, by year of birth (1967 – 97), this method being selected to match that of the State archives. Boxes were labelled from a database produced by Lach. Fittings for the office, shelving and compactus for the archives were also ordered and paid for by the Kentian Society.

Bill supervised the installation of the shelving along the front and back walls of the dungeon, ably assisted by Kim Douglas and others. Graeme Campbell managed the installation of the office fitting and furniture while the compactus was professionally installed. Graeme is the Kentians handyman, being responsible for maintain wall displays in the office. On one occasion he rearranged the placement of honour boards in the Reception area to correct the spacing between them and their height.

Professionals (Ants Removal) were contracted to relocate archival material and required furniture between the changeroom and the dungeon. Help with the heavier items, shelving of boxes and storing of other items was provided by the Kentians. Only two filing cabinets were needed in the new archives so those unwanted were sold by the school.

The formation of the Scholarship Foundation in 2009, lead to the splitting of the Society's funds. Bob and Elaine Linfoot had donated a substantial sum to the Kentian Society and with their approval, seed money was transferred to the Foundation, with the balance remaining with the Society to fund the establishment of the new archives and the 70th Anniversary.

At the time of completion of the new archives, the Kentians had paid for all items related to the office and archives except for the shelving along the back wall, six office chairs and the blinds on the windows. Door signage, by All Signs WA was also paid for by the Kentains. The chairs are well used as at times we have up to six people working in the archives

Following Judith's retirement, Pat Sanders took over as archivist and was joined by Vicki Duball and Paul de Laeter. Programs have been designed to accommodate efficient recording of student enrolment and staffing (1940 to 2020) as well as box labelling and an archives catalogue. The first and last of these are on Access, the others on Excel.

Since 2011 we have continued to collect, store and catalogue archival material, manage student records up to 2005 births and improve the catalogue system. Student records were sent to the Archives in five to six boxes, to be added to these records, at the end of each year and usually re-sorted by the end of March. By the end of 2020 there are 167 boxes with another five boxes to be added to the stored boxes of student records.



KENTIAN SOCIETY

SUPPORTING KENT STREET SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

In 2018, the department insisted that all student enrolment forms be sent into central office and all records be kept by the school until the end of the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse. Both these requests were followed although retrieving the enrolment forms was a huge task. If it had not been carried out by the Kentians, it would have been the task of the office staff who had more than enough to do in the front office.

During 2018, the lower level was carpeted using left over carpet tile from the Science block refurbishment. This work was done by several students from the Year 11 Alternative Learning class who had found difficulty in fulfilling Work Experience requirements. The work was supervised by Bill and counted towards student requirements. It was a pleasure to work with this group who completed the job to a very professional level. More remarkable was that following Bill's explanation of the task, including the laying areas, patterns and cut-in required, one student took over the role of supervisor, helping other students to resolve any problem that occurred. The carpeting has been greatly appreciated by the Kentians especially on Year 7 Orientation Day, when they are on their feet for over four hours.

Covid-19 curtailed Kentian activities in the school between March and August, in 2020 but the volunteers have been continually active since then. The Year 7 Orientation Day, an annual activity for the past ten years, where the archives and its content are on display and very much appreciate by the students, was completed before lockdown. Much of the display is interactive, with students enjoying the use of old typewriters, writing with pen and ink and grinding carrots and beans with a hand mincer. Time in the office, archives, listening to 'cane' tales and other ex-student stories together with a slide show fill out the hour, that never seems enough, for each class.

December 2020 sees the end of an era. The department has issued a directive that all student records will be removed from the archives, to be housed in a central location and manage by the Department's School Archiving Service. This has been done without consultation with the Society's executive who believe this is a backward step and will diminish the heritage of the archives. Plans are being made to manage the situation that may mean different use of shelving along the front wall. We are prepared to withdraw from the upper level of the dungeon that can be used by the school and continue to have full use of the lower level. No discussion has taken place to compensate the Kentians for the shelving along the front of the Upper level, on the left-hand side of the stairs or the funds spent on all the archiving boxes on the lower level.

Written Dec 2020

Edited Feb 2021

Historical corrections will be made from information of those involved. Names and roles of Kentians missed in this document may be added.