



KENTIAN SOCIETY

SUPPORTING KENT STREET SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Newsletter

September 2025

A New Beginning

Welcome to this special e-Newsletter following advice from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) that our application for Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status has been approved.

The Kentian Society may have started in 1991 as an alumni group, but over time it has developed instead into an organisation running a small community museum built on the collective efforts of a multitude of volunteers since archiving began in 1994.

The Museum has thousands of catalogued school artefacts and documents, from building plans and uniforms to classroom equipment and historical photographs, and provides valuable data and insights for families, university researchers, and the general public.

It operates without any recurrent government funding and relies on the support of members, volunteers, and donors to carry out its work of collecting, preserving, interpreting and sharing Kent Street Senior High School's unique heritage for present and future generations. For too long now, we've urgently needed to secure a stable financial foundation for the Museum to address mounting conservation costs and exhibition needs.

Last year, major steps were taken to create a vehicle that included the tax-deductibility of donations made by alumni and the broader community, thus providing donors with a stronger incentive to contribute.

In this newsletter, we'll look at why this latest news is so important and what it will mean for the future of the Kentian Society Museum.

We'll examine how the tax-deductibility of cash and material donations will make a difference to our Museum, and what will now be possible with new sources of funding such as grants available exclusively to DGR entities like ours.

And we'll also look at the effect of this on other Society activities and services. Does this mean for instance the end of reunions with former classmates? Not at all.

In fact, we expect that a revitalised Museum will help provide a greater focus to support all of our work for you.

WELCOME to your **Kentian Society e-Newsletter**, offering two-way communication with all interested members, families and friends.
We hope you find it both interesting and informative.

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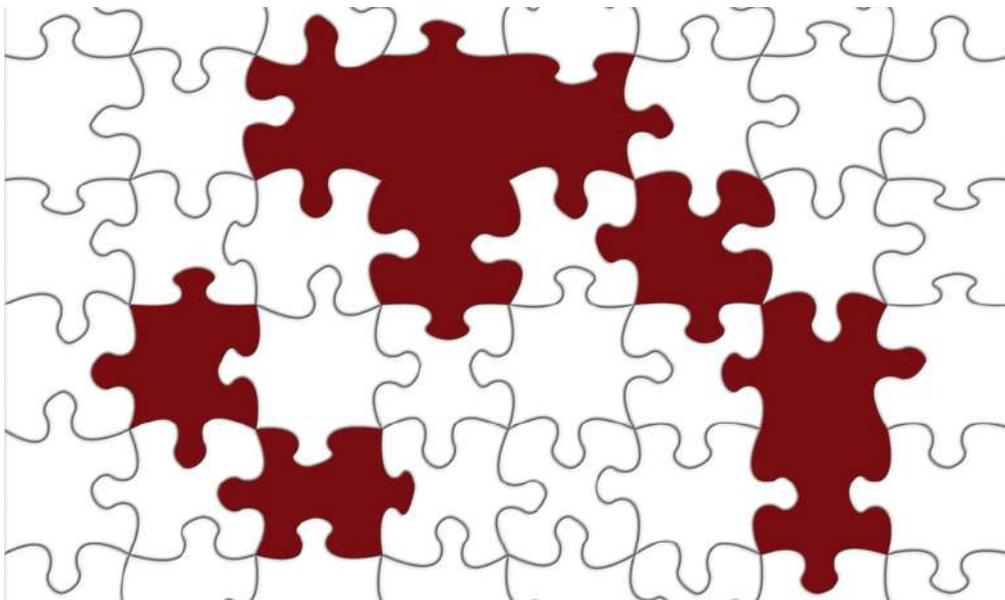
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Perth's Hidden History

The cardboard edges of the puzzle pieces bit into her fingertips as she turned them over, one by one. A corner piece—finally. She placed it at the top left of the table, then found another corner, and another. But as the border took shape, gaps yawned between the connected sections.

She rifled through the pile again, searching for the distinctive straight edges. Nothing. The box showed a cabin nestled in pine trees, but on her table, the sky had holes and the forest floor was riddled with emptiness. She kept searching, moving pieces around, trying to conjure completion from absence.

At 3 AM, she was still staring at the fractured image, her fingers raw, the missing pieces like phantom limbs she could almost feel.



Ever tried to complete a jigsaw puzzle when several of the pieces are missing? It's not only hard, it's next to impossible, isn't it? Yet that is what it's like when much of our history is overlooked or even just ignored.

Quite a few people here in WA could readily name Perth Modern School (and possibly even Hale School) as the two oldest secondary schools still operating in this State. Yet very few would be aware that Kent Street Senior High School when it opened in 1940 was only the third secondary school facility in the entire State, and the very first south of the Swan River in metropolitan Perth, to be built independently of a primary school.

At that time, every other secondary school in WA, apart from The High School in Perth (opened in 1877) which later became Hale School, and Perth Modern School (1911), had grown from existing primary schools.

Kent Street Senior High School boasts unique characteristics: a long history in public education of achieving results above expectations, notable architecture ¹, a wide intake area since its inception covering the south eastern suburbs of Perth and beyond, and a robust community museum and scholarship foundation operated by its alumni.

It's one of only two government secondary schools in Western Australia still holding extensive archival records from its earliest beginnings in a museum operated by its own alumni. The other one (that is much better known) is at Perth Modern School in Subiaco.

Its past students and staff include a former state governor and governor-general ², a supreme court justice ³, three of the first entrants to the UWA Medical School in 1957 ⁴, notable community and business leaders ⁵ and countless sports people and Olympians ⁶.

What is less well known are the extraordinary stories the Museum can tell of thousands of more ordinary people who've also been associated with the Kent Street school.

Like Marjorie, the teenaged girl enrolled at the school in the early 1940s while her father ⁷ was playing a key role in the arrests in Perth of members of an extremist group planning to help the Japanese armed forces.

Ten years later, he was also closely involved in arranging the defection of Vladimir Petrov from the Soviet Union to Australia.

... arranging the defection of Vladimir Petrov

Or the stories of the many families who moved into new suburbs like Lathlain, Carlisle, Bentley and St James for instance after the Second World War. Previously vacant bushland, these districts east and south of Victoria Park soon took their shape as residential suburbs. Both the War Service and State Housing Commissions played a major role in this, building over 2 000 houses in Bentley and St James alone from 1944 to 1986.

The Museum preserves crucial resources on Western Australian childhood history. Its database of student records from 1940 onward—containing details on parental occupations, home addresses, contributory and destination schools, and student siblings—offers valuable data for academic researchers.

To give just one example, in his series of historical booklets about the south-eastern suburbs of Perth former Premier Dr Geoff Gallop mentions an ex-soldier ⁸. In 1946, this man bought the site on the corner of Albany Highway and Alday Street in East Victoria Park for his new butcher's shop. It opened the following year with the family living at first in a garage behind the shop before moving later to a house in nearby Balmoral Street.

Quite a few of the butcher's children (most born during the Great Depression) were all students at Kent Street SHS during this period. Many of the post-war pioneers in the new suburbs lived this way, with tents and rented caravans also being used for accommodation while new houses were being built.

While Bentley has changed significantly over the years, due to major new residential, educational and commercial developments, Dr Gallop says there was little change in the residential character of St James. However, he notes that in 1979 the family of the butcher spoken of earlier went on to develop a shopping centre on the land they owned on the Alday Street/Albany Highway corner.

Unlike animals with sharp fangs, thick hides or blinding speed, the evolutionary advantage of humans has always been our ability to solve problems as a group. This requires imagining outcomes that haven't yet come true, and of seeing your neighbour's welfare as tied up with your own.

How humans tick, and what drives us, is something universal, shared across cultures, and generations, and socio-economic groups. It's common ground from which we can find a way to be more understanding of one another, and kinder to ourselves.

Consider how you consume stories, through TV, film, music, books, social media, conversations, even daydreaming. Now think about cave paintings, poems, folklore, and fairytales; humans have been doing this forever. Human beings have been telling stories as long as there's been a language to tell them in. We think in stories, remember in stories, and turn just about everything we experience into a story.

Being human is magical. In spite of the spiralling world around us, we set ourselves crazy goals and achieve them through steadfast positivity and sheer willpower. We constantly push ourselves to create order from the chaos. This is because we are all storytellers. And the many stories the Kentian Society Museum can tell will help fill in many of the gaps in the jigsaw that is the history of Perth.

Even more incredible, the Kent Street school is still here, unlike many other schools such as Rivervale Primary School and Kewdale Senior High School (both closed), or East Victoria Park PS (now a shopping centre site), or Bentley SHS (now the site of Canning College). Or a raft of other high schools in Perth that are now all gone like City Beach, South Fremantle, Hamilton, Craigie, Hollywood, Swanbourne, and Scarborough.

English folklore has it that the abbey church of St Peter sold off assets to pay for repairs to St Paul's Cathedral, thus originating the phrase "robbing Peter to pay Paul". It's kind of like using one credit card to pay off another - you always lose out in the end.

Closing all those schools may have rationalised public expenditure, but the community probably lost something important in the process. Which is why it's especially crucial that we don't take Kent Street for granted. To that end, we're hoping that a revitalised Museum will sharpen our focus on serving you better. *[Editor: please also see our story on page 9 about how this all relates to other Society services and activities.]*

¹ The school still has many of its original group of buildings, which have a definite 'Art Deco' feel. The theme of the earlier buildings, with a red base and painted above, has been carried through into the later buildings, so, even though the styles are quite different, there is a cohesiveness to the whole complex and it is on the State Heritage Register.

² Hon. Michael Jeffrey AC CVO MC

³ Hon. Christine Wheeler AO KC

⁴ Drs Michael Cohen, John Milne, and Trevor Redgrave - see story in Feb 2024 e-Newsletter

⁵ like former Belmont Mayor and MLA Glenys Ward Godfrey, Rothschild Australia Executive Chairman Trevor Rowe AO, former athlete and joint founder of Dome Cafe Phil May, and current Kalamunda Mayor Margaret Fenn Thomas JP

⁶ such as water poloist Zoe Arancini, test cricketer Rod Marsh, netball player, coach and sports administrator Elsma Harris Merillo, athlete Shirley Strickland de la Hunty, and discus thrower Len Vlahov, long jumper Eva Kampe Vlahov and their basketball-playing son Andrew Vlahov OAM

⁷ police officer and later intelligence operative George Ronald Richards OBE

⁸ butcher Claude Henry Hendley - see his story in "Know your Suburb - Bentley and St James" by Dr Geoff Gallop

The Best Stories Start With Giving

As noted at the beginning of this newsletter, our Museum has now been endorsed by the Australian Tax Office (ATO) as a public museum. As a result, many donations to the Kentian Society (Inc) can now be claimed as tax deductions under certain conditions.

Our work is never ending and our aspirations are high. Becoming a member of the Kentian Society or donating to our organisation will support our vision and mission, bring our local stories to life and make them accessible for all.

Financial donations are always very welcome, as they help fund major museum projects to ensure the history of Kent Street SHS is protected and accessible for current and future generations.

If someone donates any of the following to a DGR like ours, they may be able to claim a tax deduction:

- **Money:** Gifts of \$2 or more in any one financial year;
- **Property:** As well as physical things (such as land and objects), property includes rights and interests that can be owned and have a value (such as shares and ownership rights); and
- **Cultural items:** If an organisation is a public art gallery, museum or library the Cultural Gifts Program allows it to receive gifts of cultural items. These donations are exempt from capital gains tax (CGT) and the donor may also be able to claim a tax deduction (please see story on page 7 for more details).



It is the donor's responsibility to comply with ATO guidelines for the valuation of any property offered.

Special Note: Bequests

A bequest is a gift left to the Museum in an individual's will. Naming the Museum in their will gives someone the opportunity to make a lasting contribution and every bequest, large or small, can help. People can leave:

- A residuary of an estate;
- A percentage of an estate;
- All of an estate;
- A specific sum of money; or
- A particular asset.

General bequests are preferred as they enable the Museum to allocate the gift to where it can be best utilised. However, unlike donations made during a person's lifetime, bequests in wills offer no tax benefits to donors—a key distinction when considering DGR status implications.

“This Belongs In A Museum”

It's not just a turn of phrase: when you're downsizing or sorting through a relative's possessions, it's not unusual to find documents or artefacts that need a new home, but which are old and without an obvious place to go.

We're talking here about those boxes of curious historical papers, books and paraphernalia. They're fascinating, with too much cultural value to discard. This is when you might consider donating a collection, or even just an object, photograph or document, to an organisation like ours.

The Kentian Society Museum is always looking for items with strong stories and connections to Kent Street SHS and its history as well as items that will contribute to the creation of outstanding displays that will attract visitors to the museum.

We rely greatly on the donation of objects to build our collection, however it is physically impossible for us to accept every object offered for donation. The main reasons we might not accept an object are:

- It does not fit our Museum Collections Policy and collecting aims (please see our website for more details).
- We already have examples of the object in our collection.
- We do not have the resources to adequately conserve, store or display the object.

Our Museum also cannot accept an object if it is not legally owned by the donor, or if it contains hazardous substances (such as medicines and firearms) that could be dangerous to our staff or visitors.

In some circumstances your donation may be more appropriate for use with school or visiting groups and, with your permission, it could instead form part of our valued Education Collection which is used for 'handling' purposes.

For all the above reasons, it's best to discuss your donation offer with us first rather than just sending it to us by mail or dropping it off at the school.

If you are interested in donating to us, please email: society@kentians.org.au

Please include in your email a description of the object/s you would like to donate. The more information you can provide, the easier it is for us to assess what you are offering.

Useful information includes:

- Your full details – including a current phone number or email address
- A physical description of the object/s
- Images of the object/s
- History of ownership
- When and how you acquired the object/s
- Include any stories about this object or about the people connected to the object, if known
- A description of any supporting material including documents, photographs or film
- A description of the object's condition

Cultural Gifts Program

The Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program also provides tax incentives to Australians who donate items of cultural significance from their own private collection to public collecting institutions like art galleries, museums, libraries and archives.

Gifts can range from paintings, books, sculptures, manuscripts and personal papers to jewellery, ceramics, technological, mechanical, scientific or social history collections.

The Kentian Society Museum is registered as a recipient under this program.

Donors are eligible for the following tax incentives under the program:

- The market value of the gift is fully tax deductible, with some exceptions (for instance, you can't claim a deduction if you received a personal benefit or something in return, except for token items that have immaterial value relative to the size of the donation).
- Donors can elect to spread the deduction over a maximum of five income years.
- Gifts are exempt from capital gains tax.



Donors may also claim a tax deduction for the cost of valuations obtained specifically for this program.

The Cultural Gifts Program is administered by a secretariat based at the Office for the Arts in Canberra, up to the point at which claims for tax deductions are lodged with the ATO.

Gifts must be valued by at least two valuers who are approved to value for the Program. Our Museum cannot provide valuations.

A list of approved valuers is available to download on the Cultural Gifts Program page of the Office for the Arts on the website of the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts.

Offers of any such donations should be referred to the Chair of the Kentian Society in the first instance.

Unlocking The Power Of Private Ancillary Funds

Ancillary funds are trusts established to provide a link between donors and organisations that are able to receive tax deductible donations. They are known as 'vehicles' to drive charitable giving, acting as a conduit between the public and charitable organisations.

All such funds have a specific Deductible Gift Recipient category, and distributions from them can only be made to other DGR entities like the Kentian Society (Inc).

There are two types of ancillary funds, being public ancillary funds (PuAFs) and private ancillary funds (PAFs). As of February 2023, there were 1,172 public ancillary funds and 2,035 private ancillary funds reported in Australia.

Public Ancillary Funds differ from PAFs in that they can accept money from the public to disperse to non-profit organisations.

A Private Ancillary Fund is a unique charitable fund created and controlled by individuals, families, or organisations. The 'private' aspect means that it's not open to the public—it's a tailored giving vehicle for those who want to make a meaningful impact in the charitable sector. The average PAF is distributing roughly \$200,000 annually, in tranches of \$5,000-\$20,000 per organisation.

Many people for instance know of Gina Rinehart's *Georgina Hope Foundation* or the Forrest family's *Minderoo Foundation*, yet there are many other PAFs (like the Feilman Foundation, the Malka Foundation or the Meridian Global Foundation - to name just a few here in WA) that are also quietly engaged in major philanthropic giving.

Most PAFs remain largely undocumented, with many smaller foundations cultivating a deliberate invisibility. This "below the radar" approach has become their hallmark.

Now that the Kentian Society has been approved as a Deductible Gift Recipient, this is a whole new avenue of funding available to the Management Committee to investigate.



Other Society Services

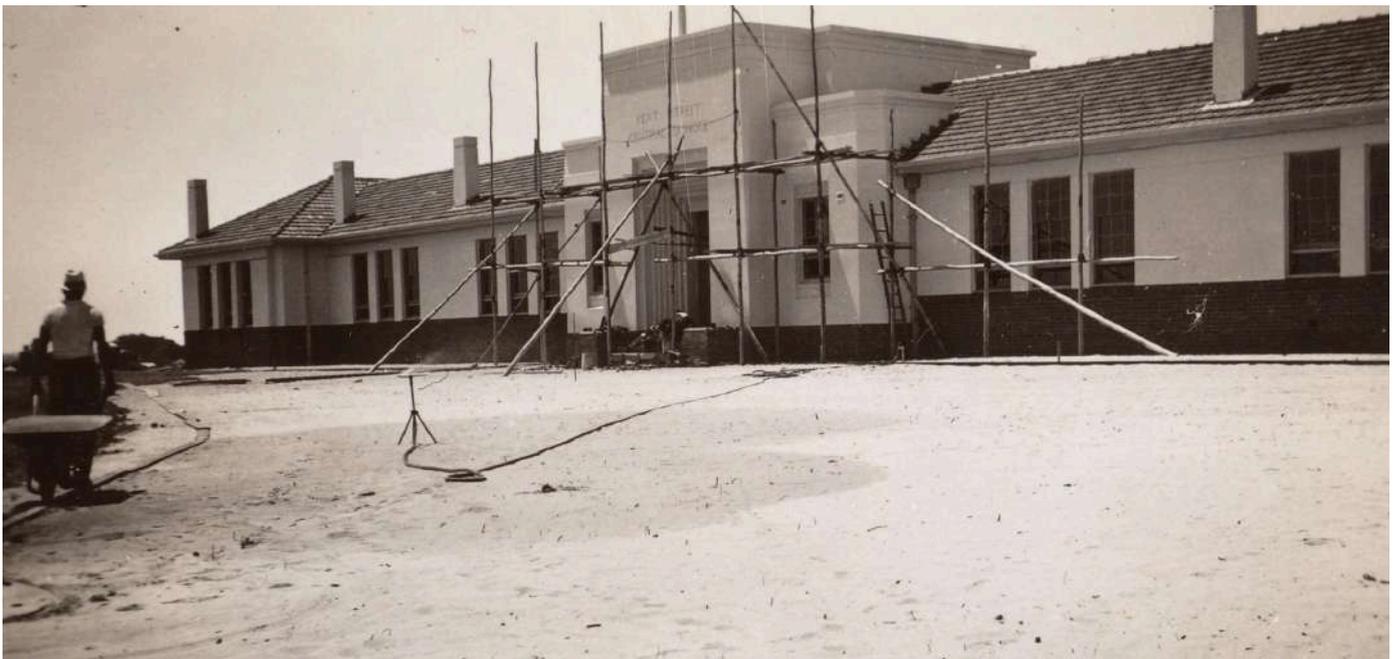
Many people seem to think of museums as being like Botticelli's Venus, a perfectly formed entity that simply rises into being, already whole. Some might also think that the non-profit status of small community museums means that there is not a marketing side essential to their creation or growth.

However, museums can't serve their purpose if people don't know about, engage with, and support them. Activities that form part of a marketing strategy are as much a part of operating a public museum as the actual keeping, exhibition and study of objects or materials of historical interest.

Brand thinking for museums is now well established and the term "brand" is widely understood to mean much more than just a pretty logo or interesting tagline to put on mugs and tote bags.

Making it easier for potential visitors, volunteers or donors to get a taste for what the museum is about is critical for them to take the next step and either visit, join, or donate.

A successful brand communicates some of the essence of the organisation. Successful museums make it clear who they are and what they stand for. Their brand identity helps them to communicate with their audience.



School Construction 1939

The primary purpose now of the Kentian Society (Inc) is to operate a museum — its motive being to promote the history of the School.

One of the means of doing this is through marketing the museum by also offering services and activities that emphasise the brand of the Society as an organisation. Every such occasion provides an opportunity to create awareness of the Society and its role in operating the museum.

Such activities include for instance supporting the School by:

- encouraging the involvement of alumni as volunteers or mentors for students;
- helping alumni renew and maintain their associations with the School by providing information to facilitate them contacting old school mates or arranging reunions; or
- co-sponsoring with the Scholarship Foundation an annual student scholarship.

While each activity requires only a small commitment in time or money from the Society, all can help generate positive publicity for the Society and its role promoting the history of the School.

Doesn't Make Cents But Volunteering Is Rewarding

Ever wanted to contribute your skills, life experience, diverse background, and interests to a wider purpose, working in a friendly and stimulating environment?

Our museum is growing, and many of our dedicated senior volunteers are stepping back after years of service, so we need fresh faces. We're seeking curious minds from all walks of life—people eager to learn while making a real difference in our community.

In particular, we'd like to hear from people interested in working in a range of roles associated with the:

- [Museum collection](#) (people with interest in or experience as curatorial staff responsible for the care, interpretation, and display of collections, as well as the development of exhibitions and educational programs);
- [Library and Research collection](#) (people with library, archival and history research interests or experience); and
- [Education collection](#) (people with teaching and practical skills).

We know almost all volunteers for organisations like ours have considerable commitments caring for family members or in other volunteer roles, so contrary to expectations are usually unable to be flexible with their time.

Our community museum aims to tailor work plans to each volunteer's skills and availability, building roles around people rather than forcing people into predefined roles. Although plans must be more flexible, we believe we can still achieve our goals and maintain a happy, fulfilled workforce.

One example of our willingness to challenge accepted ways of working is an outreach volunteering scheme that's currently being considered.

If for instance a valuable volunteer were to find travel too challenging to get to the museum, our team could assemble work packages to be completed at home and take them to the volunteer, collecting and exchanging work packages say every 2 weeks.

The work might mainly be digitising images or transcribing handwritten documents; something easily achieved away from the museum, if people are willing to carefully select items and take a practical approach to collections care.

It's a simple idea, and it would take some planning and organising, but ultimately it could benefit both the museum and the individual.

Moreover, the volunteer maintains regular contact with friends at the museum, gets to hear any news and gossip, and also contributes to the community through their work.

Why not email us (society@kentians.org.au) if you're interested in any of the roles outlined above or want to know more?

Your Say

Readers appreciate the news brought to us by members, and often are important for inclusion in Archives records and displays, allowing us to honour the history and share the heritage of Kent Street Senior High School.

Your contributions should be sent directly to society@kentians.org.au

Subject: John Rozentals (Rozy)
From: Dr Bill Toussaint, student 1953-57

One of the few regrets I have about my time at Kent Street is not saving a copy of "The Daily Croak – Published weakly"). This was a few pages of cartoons hand drawn by John Rozentals (*student 1954-57*), depicting the classroom events over the week.

The cartoon sketches were not reproduced but simply handed around the class, from person to person. How I wished I had kept at least one! As well as being a brilliant student, John Rozentals (or "Rozy") was an expert cartoonist who produced the "Croak".

It was in the third-year class of George McClure (in 1955) that we got to see the cartoons that Rozy produced – hand sketched and distributed weekly (or "weakly" as Rozy would claim). He was able to do cartoon sketches of most of the class members as well as the teachers.

On the international scene, it was the time of "The Big Four" (leaders from the UK, US, USSR and France) conference in Geneva.

Around about this time, some of our teachers used to have a small meeting during morning recess (in Vince Heinrick's room as I remember).

After one of these meetings, Rozy produced a sketched cartoon of "The Big Three" meeting. In it were beautifully sketched cartoon forms of teachers George McClure, Vince Heinricks and one other teacher. In the sketch, they were the ones at the Geneva conference.

In his later school years, Rozy was also an Officer in the school cadets.

I often wonder if any of my classmates kept a copy of the “Croak”?

Rozy passed away in 2024.

[Editor: Please see our March 2025 e-Newsletter for more information and historical pictures of John Rozentals and his classmates.

All attempts to track down surviving copies of the “Croak” have been unsuccessful so far. If you have any, please let us know.]

Society Membership

*New Society Members and renewals since **February 2024**:*

Bev Adam (Smith), student 1953-56
Lloyd Blake, student 1957-60
Beverley Booth, teacher-librarian 1992-2018
Stephen Cohen, student 1971-75
Geoff Cooper, student 1985-89
Steve Dobson, student 1994-98
Alun Dufty, student 1954-59
Marg Fox (Jarvis), student 1956-57
Warren Grellier, teacher 1973-76
Jennifer Hughes (Morris), student 1971-73
Bob Jarvis, student 1959-60
Pip Jarvis (Burbridge), student 1957-60
Jim Langford, student 1957-61
Hailey McArthur, student 2021-23
Jude Quinn, student 2020-23

Have **YOU** completed your **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / UPDATE?**

Forms are available on our website www.kentians.org.au

Your membership contributions help us to keep you connected, build new connections, promote reunions, and preserve your memories in our museum.

Don't risk YOUR membership falling into arrears. We are always reviewing our membership records, so if you want to remain a financial Society Member please make sure to update your details (including your email address) on our new Update Form. Also, remember to pay your membership fee into the bank account specified on the form.

Don't delay - do it today.