From The President

Welcome to the first newsletter for the Coogee Prep Old Boys’ Union. It has been some time since we have formally communicated with Old Boys, something we would like to rectify with the publication of this newsletter.

There have been many exciting changes to Coogee Prep in recent times. The School now occupies a wonderful new building, there is a young, committed and talented staff, strong parent support and of course, a great group of boys.

As we approach the School’s centenary in 2014, preparations are underway for this to be a year to remember. The Old Boys’ Union wants to make contact with as many Coogee Prep Old Boys as possible between now and then so they can join in the celebrations we have planned for the Centenary. Leading up to 2014, we will be hosting various events where Old Boys can get together and share memories and stories of their time at Coogee Prep.

Student numbers at Coogee Prep are currently at an all-time high, which is a very positive sign as the School prepares to move into its second century. It is quite an achievement for such a small school to have such strong enrolments given the ever-increasing competition from larger independent schools in the area.

My sons and I remain involved with the School (my two sons were third generation Coogee Prep boys). I very much enjoy organising the bi-annual Rugby and Soccer Tour to New Zealand for the Year Five and Six boys. This Tour isn’t just about playing sport – it is a cultural and maturing experience for the boys that stays with them forever. It is with pride that the boys represent Coogee Prep in New Zealand and it is wonderful to see them put the values that underpin the School motto (Gentleman, Scholar, Sportsman) into practice on and off the field.

It is our intention to publish a Coogee Prep Old Boys newsletter twice yearly. I would encourage everyone to contribute any information, photos or news they may have and to let other Coogee Prep Old Boys know about it. Please direct any Old Boys to the School website to register their details on the Old Boys page www.coogeeprep.nsw.edu.au or to call the School directly on (02) 9398 6310.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter

Brett Jowett
PRESIDENT
COOGEE PREP OLD BOYS’ UNION
Headmaster’s Welcome

It is my great privilege to welcome all Old Boys of Coogee Prep to the inaugural Coogee Boys’ Preparatory School ‘Old Boys’ Newsletter’.

Important History

As a School with a proud history of being the oldest preparatory School in Sydney’s eastern suburbs, it is important that Coogee Prep celebrates its past students and encourages communication and connection amongst its Old Boys. Whilst I know that over the years many Old Boys have organised reunions and made on-going efforts to remain in contact with their Coogee Prep schoolmates, the responsibility of reconnection has been largely overlooked by the School’s administration. With the School’s Centenary approaching in 2014, it is more important than ever that the School support and encourage Old Boys to reconnect with Coogee Prep. The publication of the Old Boys’ Newsletter is the first step in making this happen.

Recent Changes at Coogee Prep

Over recent years there have been major changes to Coogee Prep. In 2009, with assistance from the Federal Government via the ‘Building the Education Revolution’ (BER) initiative, the School had a major renovation. Coogee Prep now has new classrooms and a Library/IT Learning Centre where students and teachers utilise Mac computers, iPads and SmartBoards alongside traditional methods to give the boys a more enhanced learning experience.

The introduction of the ‘Alpha Leadership Program (ALP) for the Upper Primary Years (Years Four, Five and Six) is designed to teach the boys the importance of leadership skills, respect for themselves and their community. The program helps reinforce the foundations of a responsible and confident young boy, who is well prepared to make the transition into high school. The objectives of the program support the School motto and goes to the very heart of what it is to be a Coogee Prep boy.

Whilst the physical aspect of the School has changed, the ethos of ‘Gentleman, Scholar, Sportsman’, introduced by Mr William Nimmo, (the School’s Founder and first Headmaster), continues to be the cornerstone of the ‘all-round’ education Coogee Prep boys receive.

Memories of Coogee Prep

I am often reminded by many Old Boys of the wonderful times and friendships they made at Coogee Prep. Many of these friendships have continued for decades and it is with much pride that our Old Boys acknowledge their past association with the School. I encourage all Old Boys to visit the School’s website (www.coogeeprep.nsw.edu.au) and register their details on the Old Boys contact page or call or email the School on (02) 9398 6310 or office@coogeeprep.nsw.edu.au. By doing so we can continue to foster and build on the wonderful good will and positive feeling about Coogee Prep that exists in the wider community.

It is always wonderful to see the sons and grandsons of Coogee Prep Old Boys at our Kindergarten Orientation days. The School has a policy of giving preferential consideration to all enrolment applications from relatives of Old boys and warmly welcomes them into the Coogee Prep community.

I trust you will enjoy this newsletter. Please feel free to contact the School with any feedback, information or memorabilia you may have and/or wish to donate to the School Archive.

Kind regards

JT Dicks
HEADMASTER

Look out for the next issue of the Old Boys’ Newsletter in October 2012.
We look forward to your contributions and feedback at office@coogeeprep.nsw.edu.au
From the Archives

Which house were you in?

Ever wondered how the Coogee Prep School Houses originated...? The House system was originally introduced to Coogee Prep in 1967. In 2010 the School developed house crests that include meaningful images relating to the individual that each House is named after.

Nimmo

Nimmo House is named after the founder and first Headmaster of Coogee Prep, Mr William Nimmo. Mr Nimmo grew up in the Blue Mountains in NSW. He was a scholarly man who had a great love of the law as well as teaching. A man of great vision he saw the need to establish an independent preparatory school in the eastern suburbs of Sydney that would feed into the many large secondary schools in the area, such as The Scots College, Sydney Grammar and Cranbrook. He was a man of his time, conservative and traditional who believed that Coogee Prep would produce boys who were Gentlemen, Scholars and Sportsmen.

McKeown

McKeown House is named after Reverend Vernon McKeown. He was the Minister of Randwick Presbyterian Church from 1949 to 1967. Reverend McKeown was a friend of Mr Nimmo’s and a supporter of Coogee Prep, conducting services in the Randwick Presbyterian Church and attending to the pastoral needs of the School community. He was of Scottish heritage and had a great love of sports – in particular rugby.

Storey

Storey House is named after Lady Ruby Storey. She was a close friend of Mr Nimmo’s and a generous benefactor to the School. She valued highly the gentlemanly behaviour displayed by the Coogee Prep boys. Lady Storey had a great love of the creative and practical arts - in particular debating and public speaking.

WE’D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU .....  

We will be having a ‘News Section’ in subsequent Old Boys' newsletters and would like to hear stories about Coogee Prep, memories of your time at school and achievements after school. Please forward any stories to Mrs Tessa Morris in the School office via email: office@coogeeprep.nsw.edu.au or by mail: Coogee Boys’ Preparatory School PO Box 190 Randwick 2031

CALLING ALL CPS OLD BOYS

We are developing and updating our Old Boy database and need information.

Do you have friends or family who are have not received this newsletter? Friends who have moved? We need their details!

We need your help to spread the word ...

Go to the Old Boys’ page on the school website www.coogeeprep.nsw.edu.au to enter your details or call the School on (02) 9398 6310
Spotlight on Kenneth Godfrey - CPS Old Boy 1929

Mr Kenneth Godfrey (CPS Alumni 1929) is one of the oldest Coogee Prep Old Boys. He has many wonderful memories of his time at Coogee Prep and kindly shared them with us in a recent interview.

‘When I started at Coogee Prep there were one hundred boys in the School. The war was over so the numbers of students at Coogee Prep had started to grow. I had been attending Coogee Public school in my early years, however my parents weren’t happy with my academic progress – in particular English – so they sent me off to Coogee Prep. There were 16 students per year group. There were only three classrooms when I started at Coogee Prep. The three teachers (Mr Nimmo, Mr Earnshaw and Miss Thurloe) all taught two, sometimes three classes concurrently. If a teacher was teaching another class – heaven help you if you thought you could talk or muck around! You had to sit quietly and wait for one of the teachers to come back to your lesson.

My family was living in Coogee when I attended Coogee Prep. I used to either catch the tram from Carrington Road up to the school or I would sometimes walk the mile or so. Each morning we lined up outside the Abbey Street doors and marched into the school hall. There we would say the Lord’s prayer and Mr Nimmo would speak to us before we headed off to our classrooms.

Originally Mr Nimmo had wanted to call his school, ‘Randwick Boys’ Preparatory School’. However he was unable to do so as there was a Randwick Boys’ Public School, so he simply changed the name to ‘Coogee Boys’ Preparatory School’ – even though the school was located in Randwick! He loved sport and as students we had the option of playing rugby, cricket and swimming. Originally we swam at Clovelly Beach and then we moved to Wiley’s Baths at Coogee.

Mr Nimmo was a wonderful man and he loved teaching. His mastership was teaching English, however he also taught French, Latin, maths and history. Mr Nimmo was a disciplinarian, a strong man with a very clear vision for his school. He was most pedantic about manners and talked a lot about this. He stressed to us that on and off the field you played fairly and your behaviour was how people judged you. If he ever caught a boy using bad language he would say, ‘Dam the river, blast the rock and blow the fire to blazes!’

I have very fond memories of my time at Coogee Prep. I thought Mr Nimmo was an extraordinary man and a wonderful teacher. The lessons I learnt way back then – the importance of gentlemanly behaviour, hard work and good manners never left me and I am very grateful for my time at Coogee Prep.’