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Where Are They Now?

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Above: Michael and Jane Gaertner  
Below: Matthew, 16, and Sara, 18



### Michael Gaertner

"After leaving Penno in 1973, went straight to work in the accounting profession and studied at Macquarie University... Oops, almost forgot to mention schoolies week prior to work... Yes, that's right, even back then, there was a schoolies week. Spent the best time at the Gold Coast with **Mark Vilimaa**, **Glenn Howells** and **David Mariner**.

I married Jane in 1979, and shortly after, we spent a year travelling overseas which was the most wonderful experience. We lived in Glenhaven prior to moving to Alstonville on the Far North Coast of NSW in 1988 where we currently reside. I now have my own accounting and financial planning [business](#) in Ballina, and Jane develops computer software for the [aged care industry](#).

Continued to play soccer with and against a lot of ex-Penno guys for many years, and to this day am still playing for Alstonville (Over 35s -- just one more year). Have also been coaching soccer for many years and am still doing so for my daughter (Sara - 18) and son (Matthew - 16). In fact, **Peter Gillette's** son (Josh) is currently in Matt's team. Water skiing still continues to be an important part of our family life.

Gosh, there is so much more that has happened since leaving school, and I can't wait to catch up at the reunion... Hope many of you can make it."

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### Margaret Streater (nee Garbutt)

I was contacted by Rowena Hawton who I have kept in contact with off and on since our nursing days. My initial reaction wash OH NO! however having spent more than an hour on the site and having such a great laugh over some of the stories I thought why not. My story? Gee, where do you start?

Married in 1981 and separated four years ago. I have two gorgeous kids who I love to bits. Chris is 19 and studying TV Production at North Sydney



Chris at 17, now 19!

TAFE. Michelle is 16 and Year 11 School Captain and is keen to pursue Environmental Planning.

As a single mum I work for Penrith City Council having spent 10 long years in real estate. I lived on Norfolk Island from 1996 to 2000 and returned home in 2000.

I live in East Blaxland in the Blue Mountains and divide my weekends between there and Easts Beach near Gerringong on the south coast. I am currently renovating my home when not down the coast. I love my job which sounds terribly boring compared to many of you however I love my life and look forward to the reunion.

Thanks for the great web site  
Margaret Streater (nee Garbutt)

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Michelle 16



I told you I would win!!!!!!

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**John Garnett**

Hello Bron,

I've enjoyed trawling though the website and will certainly attend the reunion. It will be great to catch up and discover how well everyone's weathered the last 30 years, and maybe even talk to some people that for some inexplicable reason I never really got around to back then. For example, although I'm sure she'll be as repulsed by the thought of it now as much as she would have been at the time, but I never understood why Neryl Wilson couldn't work out I had a massive crush on her for what seemed like an epoch during 3rd and 4th year. It never dawned on me at the time that I needed to talk to her at least once if there was to be any hope, no matter how remote, of progressing the matter past ... actually, I've probably said more than enough!

The thought of a class reunion after such a long time is also a bit scary maybe (and not only just because Neryl might be there). Only tonight I noticed the presenter of the Lotto draw on TV was looking a bit tired, and then abruptly remembered (I think correctly) that she was once a gorgeous, bikini-clad, young woman I lusted over in the very first Moove commercials back in our day. Of course, I'm well over all those ridiculous desires of my youth... I now drink skim.

My mother still lives in the vicinity of the bus bay. It's staggering to think she has spent more than a generation watching - initially through the slightly imperfect cover of horizontal venetian slats - a sea of excited, buzzing students disgorging from the school at 3pm to be whisked away by the Glenorie, Hornsby and Hills bus companies. I still clearly remember the sharp contrast of eerie quiet just moments afterwards, when all bar the stragglers held up by detention had fled for the day.

After spending a few years at Uni after school - I started so many things I can't remember what I eventually graduated in - I lived in Sydney around Marsfield till the mid 90s working in the telecommunications industry by day and spending lots of good times out on the Hawkesbury river or at Myall Lakes skiing, camping and generally talking shit by the weekend. But the bad back, blue-gree algae, skin cancers and two young children put paid to most of the latter activities - you'll have probably already noticed which one has been retained - and the traffic in Sydney became seemingly unbearable, so we moved to Canberra which has proved a nice place for a family to live. Not that I'll spend any time trying to convince anyone from Sydney of that!

I really like the idea of getting together at Penno pub. Although I didn't waste as much time as some others in the place because, no matter how hard I tried - and I really tried to fit in and dutifully respond to peer pressure even if Ian Gudgeon will never believe it and maintains I was stubborn - I couldn't acquire the taste for anything other than the odd beer, and only ever once incinerated my then perfectly good set of lungs with a full inhale of Marlborough toxin. But I still racked up many hours in the place just for the great company, and have fond memories of friends flatly refusing to include me in a shout. I still can't believe some of them were too embarrassed to order a schooner of orchy without ice for me in the public bar: the same people that later in life were perfectly happy to order two dogs xxxxxxxx at full voice across a crowded bar or at a mormon's wedding (that very last bit never happened). As you know, juice is impossible to savour, so I drank gallons of the bloody stuff while Penno friends sipped sophisticatedly (read slurped) on their various favourite brews and turned the place, and me, rancid with smoke. In hindsight though, there are many positive legacies from those times, with one being I've not caught a cold or bout of scurvy since.

Like so many others, Penno pub was also the scene of my second criminal act i.e. drinking under age, with the first being - you guessed it - also drinking under age at the Vicar of Wakefield a few weeks earlier. I can still remember

rehearsing for hours that highly complex phrase " A schooner of old please, mate", with a suitably nonchalant and mature intonation: the sole aim of course being not to draw the fossilised barman's attention to my total lack of facial hair at the time (still quite a major if not relocated problem today actually if you exclude nostrils, eyebrows and ears).

So, thanks for making the significant effort along with Michael, Jenny, Janet and others to organise the reunion, and if I'm still invited after the above uncharacteristic and unintended burst of honesty, I'll enjoy seeing you then.

John Garnett

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**Peter Geer**

Hello Bron

Just letting you know I will be coming to the reunion with my wife Suzanne and organizing a money order tonight. I have also contacted Peter Williams and Shane Humphreys as well.

Cheers

Peter Geer

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**CONTACT INFO:**

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**Peter Gesling**

Hi Bronwyn

What a fantastic job you guys are doing. Yes I have finally made the time to explore the website and schedule to be at the reunion. 30 years (WOW):

After leaving Penno in 1973 I studied Civil Eng at Sydney Uni which took me 5 years, married Linda Page in Dec 1977 and moved to Walgett, NSW in Jan 1979 working in the Local Government industry. Learnt to fly light aircraft and participated in sport flying for a number of years, joined Rotary and played a lot of social sport (golf, tennis, bowls, cricket).

Moved to Wellington, NSW in 1982, completed a Town Planning degree and spent most of the 11 years there as Shire Engineer & Town Planner. Involved in Rotary, cricket, tennis, golf and caving. My children Stephanie (1983) and Kristofer (1986) were born there. I also managed the bushfire and SES planning and response role, gaining experience in wildfires, floods, structural failures and community response / recovery. I gained a 3 month overseas study grant to investigate local emergency planning and tourist cave development in 1990. In addition I was involved in a partnership that built, operated and trained in ultra light aircraft

Relocated to Port Stephens in 1993 gaining a position managing the engineering management of that area. Completed a Master of Business in 1995. Participated in a 5 week international due diligence exercise before establishing the first co-composting domestic waste processing plant in Australia at Raymond Terrace. In 1998 I gained the position of General Manager / CEO of Port Stephens Council where I am in my second contract term. In addition, I have a number of company Directorships and I have a sole operator consultancy that advises Boards on corporate governance and seeks environmental technology. Not much time for sport these days. Divorced in 1998, I am still friends with Linda. I live at Arcadia Vale on Lake Macquarie. My partner Susan works in Sydney and we have a unit at Cammeray and a beach house at Blueys Beach. Between our 6 kids, 2 grand kids, work, and commitment to ongoing personal development, life is full but enriching.

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**CONTACT INFO:**Email: [peterg@aussiemail.com.au](mailto:peterg@aussiemail.com.au)**Peter Gillett**

Hi. Great website. I see Michael G fairly regularly so it was fantastic news to hear about the reunion. I already spent time catching up on the web page - ain't these modern inventions fun. I'm just in the the process of moving back to the Gold Coast after spending 18 months living in Ballina. I teach PE / sport ( got a masters in it ) and do a variety of related work in that area. I married sonia Wong, got divorced and we have a 16 year old who is growing taller than his parents (shows no respect). I still ride a surf board (I'm very good at falling off), gardening, computing are all good fun. I will endeavour to send a file with a pic and some info for your site- it is just than I am between locations at the moment. Certainly be there on the big weekend. Mick also gave me a few names and I will catch up with **Wongy, Baldy, Martini, Mick Patto, Westy** and **Anne** (I 'll let u work out who i'm talking about).. anyway they will contact u.

Take Care  
Peter Gillett

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**Greg Gillies**

Greg Gillies contacted us and he is currently the Finance Manager at [Mingara Recreation Club](#). We look forward to hearing more news from Greg in the near future.

Photo at left are Greg's kids, and three grand-kids.

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**Greig Gittoes**

I have been living in Port Douglas for the last eight years. Hoping to make it to the reunion and catch up with old friends and visit the school.

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**Peter Gray**

*Message to Bronwyn Edwards from Greg Foulds, February 14, 2004*

Forgot to mention I have passed on reunion info to the last email address I have for Peter Gray. If I don't hear from him I'll sic my mother onto the job of locating him and I'm sure he'll contribute. He was/is one of the top engineers for the Southern European Observatory and has some fascinating experiences of living up in the mountains of South America (Peru I think) and out in the Indian Ocean.

Cheers  
Gregory Foulds

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*Good picture this, as you can't see the bald spot.*

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**Ian Gudgeon**

Michael

Good on you mate. I am very excited about a reunion.

**BIO:** I live in Gladstone Queensland and have done so for five years. I am now a confirmed country boy, living on a bush block and travelling 10 minutes to work each day. I have been too long away from the big smoke and now only come to Sydney as a novelty or on a work junket. Julie (who is a nurse) and I have 4 children, the two older boys, Ben and Jed, being 24 and 23. Alf and Lucy still at home at 17 and 15. We are all now together in Gladstone, having left the older boys in Mt Isa for a while when we moved to the coast. I am now a proud grandfather.

I have worked in a many places around Australia since leaving Sydney in 1980. I have tried a few career diversions, with mixed success, but now find myself in an Alumina plant as an engineer. It didn't turn out as I had imagined and I didn't make my first million by age 30, but that's life I guess. After 30 years of toiling, I have just about exhausted my career ambitions and have concluded that there are more important things than earning more money (all poor people say that!). I am very contented both at work and home. I expect, all things being equal, to be here for a long time to come.

Something I read about the seven ages of man, a long time ago (probably from my beloved Mr Woodlands. He did teach me something other than holding my hand up so he could get a good swing at it). Don't know which age I'm at, probably around the fifth, but I sure changed from one to the next in the last decade.

I enjoy, apart from my family, motorbike riding (although it has nearly killed me), beer brewing and socialising. I am swimming and exercising in an attempt to keep my body in line with my mind for a couple more years. Still have trouble relating to being 48. The only consoling factor is that I know there are at least 150 others, in a picture I saw recently, at the same point in their life.

Its good to see most of us are still walking this earth. I think we have done better than most groups of this size. Our friend Bruce died of a heart attack whilst swimming. He was fitter than most of us. Just goes to show you never know when your time is up.

Still keep in contact with a few from this group. Mr More, Lammo, Ronnie, Alf (when he feels like it), Nig Price. Lammo and I have had a long running challenge of a 100m race, which we carried out last year. Got to say it was no contest, after he pulled up short with a hammy, but I was well in the lead. He couldn't walk for the next week. Don't know if we will have another race, as he continues to deteriorate physically J.

Looking forward to seeing us all again. I would really love to see my old friend Pat Dawson (nee King), who I have lost contact with. Does anyone know where she is? Couple of people I don't see on the list, who I would love to see again. Pete Williams, Peter Gilmore, John Gazzard (contacted).

My recollection of all those years ago is pretty limited, but a few that still make me smile

- Rolling a car at the pony club after school.
- Wagging at Mores place
- Hitch knocking himself out on the door frame
- Swarv Harv's Triumph - where are you mate
- New Zealand - Form 5
- Charlie Nicita getting the crap belted out of him by the big fellas and still laughing all the time.
- Pauline Allen at a dance
- Nig Prices pushbike getting knocked off and accusing me.

- Mr Shirley and the strap.
- Letterbox wars (no names please)
- Baz breaking his arm at footy.
- Parties at Workies place.
- Drinking Old at Penno pub.
- Walking home with Hitch, Cheryl and Wendy
- Woody's cane
- Sitting up the front with the girls in Mrs Saunders science class. (She thought it was punishment)
- Getting the milk when everyone else was doing maths
- Greg Foulds consuming a whole bucket of yoghurt in 20 seconds.
- John Garnett squeezing blackheads from his nose in a vice.

Good thing I wrote these down, as I will probably need the reminder by the 40-year reunion. Love to hear from any of you people. See you all in June.

Gudge 15/4/04

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