

KHS Alumni Network

KHSAN News Edition 3

8 March 2021

International Women's Day Special Edition

*"A challenged world is an alert world, and from challenge comes change."
International Women's Day, 2021*

Dear KHSAN community,

Welcome to our third newsletter: a special edition for International Women's Day. If you're a bloke — please read on, this is for you too.

My name is Megan Waite and I'm a former KHS student (1996 to 1997). Today I live in St Louis, Missouri, with my husband Ben and daughter Elsie. I'm also a proud Wiradjuri woman.

For KHSAN's third newsletter, the organisers asked me to compile profiles of inspiring women from Kempsey High to share on International Women's Day. I agreed to do this because I know we have so many amazing women who have been touched by their time at KHS. It's overdue that we begin to share their stories to inspire the next generation.



Megan Waite
Guest editor

The organisers asked me to name women who have been my role models. I've known many wonderful women in my life. But if I have to pick one role model, it would be my Mum, Ruth Waite. I've grown up watching how much Mum gives to the Kempsey community and beyond without hesitation and sometimes at her own expense.

Mum's dedication has shaped my core values around civic engagement. Even though I live far from Kempsey now — 14,310 kilometres, to be precise — I have never lost sight of the value of sharing time and resources with your 'village'. You can always make a difference!

I choose to make a difference in my current village, St Louis, through my service on the board of a non-profit organisation that provides opportunities to children from families living close to or below the poverty line. More than half of the children we support are minorities,

which finds me supporting kids with similar struggles to my mob back home. I hope to one day bring the skills I've learned back to my community to make our lives better.

My message for the young women of KHS is to remember your self-worth and own it. And to remember the self-worth of all of your sisters, and use your energy to raise them up rather than undermining them. Even if you cannot control others' opinions and actions, you can always control your own.

History has been shaped by women who challenged gender inequality and who worked toward closing the gender gap in education, health, careers, income, and political representation. Susan Varga, Malala Yousafzai, Maya Angelou, and Emma Watson are just a few names. Being part of the solution for a seemingly insurmountable challenge like gender inequality can leave you feeling as though any effort you make has no impact. But even small actions in our own communities can advance gender equality.

Women in our KHS Alumni Network are leading and participating in these actions every day. They celebrate the successes of women, and support women and girls' empowerment. It might seem these impacts are felt only by those we directly help, but the ripple effect of our actions persists and grows as others are empowered.

For our male alumni, your allyship, advocacy and willingness to challenge gender inequality are essential. Collectively, all of us must strive for women's equality and continue to make positive gains. We ask you to listen to women and girls, to believe them, and to challenge gender bias and inequality in your life.

So how will you help forge a gender-equal world? Actions you can take to show support for women and gender equality include:

- **Celebrate** women's achievements
- **Raise awareness** of gender inequality
- **Influence others** through your own actions
- **Smash** stereotypes
- **Challenge** bias
- **Believe** women and girls.

Our network has a challenge that we'd like to work on with the school community. At the moment, our local Council website names a number of prominent men in the history of the Macleay Valley. But we know there are also many prominent women who've shaped our region, including Indigenous women. Identifying these women, telling their stories, and recognising their contribution, would be a great project for the SRC or a senior history class to challenge gender bias.

I hope that the women whose stories we share in this newsletter provide inspiration to our current students, both girls and boys, by showing them there is no limit to what they can achieve. I also hope these stories inspire KHS staff by showing them that their guidance in the classroom does matter, and that their leadership and role-modelling can create lifelong impressions.

In the meantime, please read on. And please share these stories of inspiring women from Kempsey High School - Martha, Shirley, Jaime, Sue, Amy, Elke, and Jill. The dedication of these women to reaching high and overcoming adversity should be celebrated. And if you think your story could help students today, please get in touch.

Megan Waite

On behalf of the KHS Alumni Network (KHSAN)

Contact us with your story

Email khsancommittee@gmail.com
Social Media www.facebook.com/groups/khsalumninetwork
Resources kempseyhighalumni.blogspot.com

About this newsletter

Newsletter compiled and edited by Megan Waite and Alison Jones.
Final edit and any remaining errors: Murray O'Hanlon.

Word of warning

This newsletter includes an interview that describes domestic violence related by a survivor. We believe in giving voice to these experiences, challenging readers to listen to survivors and to believe them, and confronting the reality of violence, abuse and assault in our community. We acknowledge that these experiences will be troubling for some readers and may raise concerns.

Where to get help

Please call Police on 000 in an emergency, if you are experiencing violence or are afraid it is about to happen.

Call 1800 RESPECT (1800737732) for 24-hour counselling support.

Call Lifeline on 13 11 14 for 24-hour support if you are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping or staying safe.

See also:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence/police-law-help/calling-police-for-help>

Martha Austin

Hi Martha. When did you study at KHS?

Hi Megan. I attended Kempsey High School as a student between from 1998 to 2003. After completing my degree, I returned in 2010 to join the teaching staff for a brief period.

What's your favourite memory of being at KHS?

My favourite memory would be the wonderful teachers. I greatly value everything they did for me during my time studying at KHS. I was lucky enough to have teachers who threw everything they had into ensuring we were provided with engaging lessons. I will never forget Ms Sue Couch's ability to get unenthusiastic teens excited about some of the heavier texts. Ms Couch's passion for teaching instilled in us a passion for learning. Ms Sue Tassell giving up her weekends to support us in developing our essay writing skills, Mr Howard Piggott's many weekend art workshops and Mr Chris Dockrill's determination to ensure that opportunities to perform on stage were maximised.



What have you done since leaving KHS?

When I left school in 2003, I had only partially completed a full HSC. I completed three subjects - Visual Arts, Drama and Advanced English. I was considering a career in acting. The University of Western Sydney offered a Bachelor of Theatre-making degree. With my marks from my three HSC subjects and a satisfactory audition piece I was accepted. After completing two semesters I decided it wasn't the degree for me but with healthy marks I was able to transfer to Newcastle University where I completed a double degree: Bachelor of Teaching/Bachelor of Arts. Since completing my degree, I have worked in many schools in the Macleay Valley and Sydney. I have held various positions including classroom teacher K-6, Performing Arts Teacher, English as an Additional Language or Dialect teacher, and most recently, Assistant Principal.

In 2014, I spent six months as a volunteer teacher in Lyamungo Sinde, a small village outside Moshi, the capital of the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania.

Who are your role models and why?

One of the key role models when it comes to challenging gender inequity has been my mother – Lyn Knight. A well-known educator in the Kempsey area for more than thirty years, she recently retired after a total fifty impressive years as a classroom teacher. Throughout her career, including her work as a passionate member and representative of the NSW Teacher's Federation, and her work in women's shelters, my Mum has relentlessly fought for women's rights and has been a voice for girls and women whose circumstances have left them vulnerable.

Martha, the theme for International Women's Day this year is "Choose to Challenge". We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality. We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world.

Do you have any examples of how you "#choosetochallenge" gender inequity?

Working in education, I have tried to challenge gender inequity issues in a number of ways. During my albeit short time in Tanzania, I worked with the director of the charity ABCDreams, John DeRonde, to establish a program in the village of Lyamungo Sinda to assist in addressing the issue of "period poverty" and its impact on the health and education of the girls in the village.

As is the case in many poorer nations, the girls in Lyamungo Sinda were often forced to miss school during menstruation and resort to unsafe alternatives due to lack of access to sanitary products. Some girls were even stopping school altogether once they had begun menstruating. Such conditions had a negative impact on both their health and learning.



I established a Go Fund Me page to raise funds. John DeRonde and ABCDreams UK supported me in establishing a program which provided girls at three primary schools in Lyamungo Sinda with bags containing a three month supply of sanitary products. The girls were then able to return the bag and have the supply refilled when needed. While the funds raised could only see the program run for one year, John deRonde and ABCDreams have found the means to continue this and other projects to assist the education of girls in Tanzania. It is not difficult to effect change if the will is there.

Martha, what is your message to students at Kempsey High on International Women's Day?

Think big, girls. You are fortunate to have wonderful women to model yourselves on: Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern of New Zealand, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the USA, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, Prime Minister Sanna Marin of Finland. Powerful women striding across the world stage and making changes.

But don't think it only happens somewhere else; it happens here in Kempsey too. Just look around you. Look at this school. Kempsey High has produced girls who've excelled as educators, athletes, doctors, politicians, musicians, actors ... the list goes on. No matter which path your life takes you on you have the opportunity to be part of change. Think big.

Post Script from Martha:

Please feel free to click the link below and check out the ABCDreams UK website. There is an option to donate to the charity to support the projects I've been involved with.
<https://www.abcdreams.org.uk/>

Photo: Girls from the school in Lyamungo Sinda, Tanzania, where Martha volunteered in 2014.

Amy Thompson

Amy, when did you study at KHS?

I finished school at Kempsey High in 1998, obtained my School Certificate, then left school to begin work at Booroongen Djugun Nursing Home, obtaining my Assistant in Nursing Certificate.

What's your favourite memory of being at KHS?

Hanging with all my cousins and friends, playing handball and basketball.

What have you done since then?

I have completed my Registered Nursing and Bachelor of Midwifery. I am employed in a permanent position at Durri Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service as a Registered Nurse, and hold a casual position through NSW as a Registered Nurse and Midwife.



Who are your role models and why?

I have always aspired to be a nurse whilst growing up in the Greenhill Aboriginal Community — The Mission, people know it as these days. But in referring to this term, “The Mission”, I was always advised by my Aunty that Greenhill is a community, as it was never managed by the White man. The community managed Greenhill by themselves.

I look up to my Aunty who is an Endorsed Enrolled Nurse, and fellow peers I work alongside at Durri AMS, the Hospital and CATSINaM (the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives). I also express gratitude and admiration towards each and every woman who faces challenges on a daily basis in life and conquers them.

Do you have any examples of how you #choosetochallenge gender inequity?

Women need to know and understand that their right to stand up and become one is empowering for one's self.

What is your message to students at Kempsey High on International Women's Day?

Always remember you are never too old to dream and set that goal to become someone you always wanted to be in life: “Where there's a will, there's a way”. Always keep your eye on the prize.

I always dreamed of becoming a nurse. Growing up on the mission (Greenhill) and being Aboriginal, I never ever dreamed in my wildest dreams that I would be where I am today: a registered Nurse and a Midwife; mind you, the first Aboriginal Midwife for Kempsey Hospital.

But if you have great people around you who are willing to stand beside you and help push you to become someone, then trust me, they believe in you. Make something of it that allows you to *Dream big and Dream out loud*. Chase your dreams with all your worth, eventually you will succeed. You may have some challenges, but always think of challenges as being a part of life. It is up to us as individuals to assess the situation and figure out

which way to get around the obstacles. Life is made of obstacles: every day is an obstacle when we open our eyes and think about starting our day.

I admire the great strength of each individual Aboriginal Woman who faces and conquers challenges on a daily basis in life, to become who they are, and to be where they are today.

Shirley Smith

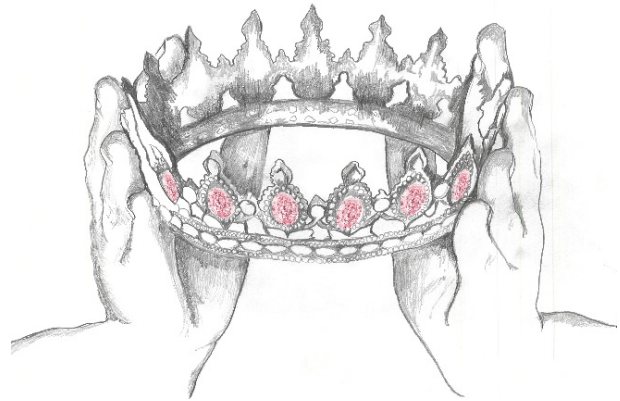
Shirley's interview describes her experience as a survivor of violence.

Hi Shirley. When did you study at KHS?

Hi Megan, I studied at KHS and was in the Class of 2001.

What's your favourite memory of being at KHS?

I'm not sure it's a favourite memory, but it was a crazy day. In Year 8 or 9 cooking class I was paired up with Glen. We were cooking with gas and had put our food under the grill. We thought we had lit the grill, but it was taking a while so I bent down to check the food and realised it wasn't lit.



So I pressed the little button, and KABOOM! No eyebrows, cinched eyelashes, half my hair was gone and I burnt my arm. I stunk like burning hair for the next four days. Don't worry, I was ok. Mr Whalen had to come over and patch me up.

High School for me has probably been the best years of my life so far.

What have you done since then?

I have worked in management positions. I went back to study a diploma in community services, and I have written a book called "*Becoming a Queen Again*".

I have fought to survive every day for seventeen years since leaving school. For the first seventeen years after leaving school I was in a violent relationship. I was beaten, sexually assaulted, tortured, abused mentally and physically, told what to think, eat, sleep, how to dress and when I could use the bathroom.

I was isolated from my family and friends. I tried to leave a few times, but it didn't last long - I went back. I finally got the courage to leave and stay away for good this time.

Every day is a challenge for me, but I get up and push on, through the fear, the anxiety, the nightmares. When I left the domestic violence situation I struggled to get help and support, which resulted in me writing "*Becoming a Queen Again*".

I was never good at English. I used to go to Mrs Tassell's class before school for help, yet here I am writing a book. Like WTF! I WROTE A BOOK.

My book is about my journey of living in the violence, and what it's like to leave. But it's not your normal book. I haven't written it as though I am talking to myself in the mirror. Here is a quote from my book and I say it to myself every day. I want you to say it with me:

I am STRONG
I am AMAZING
I am TALENTED
I am POWERFUL
I am KIND
I am BEAUTIFUL
I am EMPOWERING
I am LOVED
I am ALIVE
I am A QUEEN

Who are your role models and why?

For me, a role model is every person who gets back up when they have been knocked down, someone who dusts themselves off and pushes through the darkest hours. Someone who is kind to others and shows empathy and compassion!

Why? Because that to me is what defines a role model - someone who despite all odds rises again with a smile on her face to regain her Queendom, she adjusts that crown.

Do you have any examples of how you #choosetochallenge gender inequity?

I choose me! I choose to get up every day to stand against domestic violence, to know my WORTH, to know that however bad your day is that little voice inside you screams "You got this, Queen!"

I choose you! I choose to remind you of your worth, your love, your beauty, your kindness, I choose to remind you that you matter; you matter to me. I see YOU QUEEN and I am proud of you.

I wrote "Becoming a Queen Again" because I never wanted another woman to feel the way I did, like she had no way out, that no one cared about her. Because I care, I see her, I feel her pain and she matters to me.

I stood up to my perpetrator. I stood up for my life and I left, and never went back. I wrote "Becoming a Queen Again" as a free book for anyone experiencing domestic violence. I stood up at the 2020 Stop Domestic Violence Conference and told them where they were going wrong in the support of other women like myself. I plan to keep standing up for others like myself.

What is your message to students at Kempsey High on International Women's Day?

My message to KHS students is that no matter the path you take in life, be it a smooth road or a bumpy one, remember: I am STRONG, I am AMAZING, I am TALENTED, I am POWERFUL, I am KIND, I am BEAUTIFUL, I am EMPOWERING, I am LOVED... I am A QUEEN.

Thank you for allowing my story to be heard.

Post Script from Shirley:

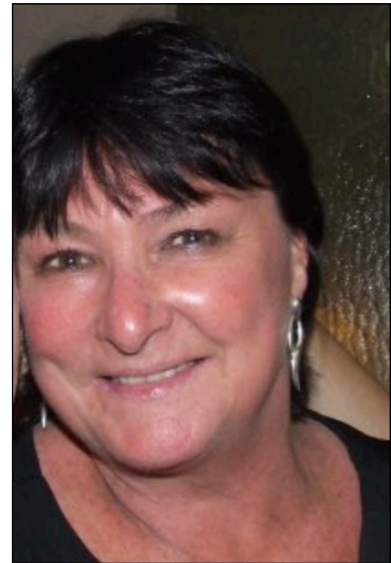
My book can be downloaded on www.sunnykids.com.au "–Becoming a Queen Again". If you are experiencing domestic violence, or know someone who is, please contact – 1800 RESPECT 1800737 732 <https://www.1800respect.org.au>.

Love Shirley xx

Sue Tassell

Hi Sue, when did you work at KHS?

Hi Megan. I was appointed to Kempsey High School in mid-March 1979. It was my first permanent teaching post after training in Newcastle and brief stints at Tweed River High and Chatham High Schools in reserve positions as I was a bonded scholarship student and had to go where I was sent. I was so lucky to be posted to the coast. I was nearly 22 years old when I began at KHS. So young! I was an English/Drama teacher and went on to become the English Head Teacher and spent my last 18 months at KHS relieving as Deputy Principal. As a result, I felt I had ticked all the boxes I wanted to tick in my career and was happy to retire after 38 years at KHS in 2017.



What's your favourite memory of being at KHS?

I was so lucky to spend my career in the Kempsey community. I never wanted to leave and go elsewhere, and when I married a local man we stayed and raised our two sons here. I think this led to my best memories of KHS: I felt so included and welcomed into the community and it made my teaching career here so much more than a job.

I think the fondest memory is the many times, daily, that I laughed. The students made me so happy and comfortable, that I belonged. I felt I made a difference and still enjoy contact from so many past students that I know it was the best decision to stay and serve this wonderful community.

What have you done since then?

Since my retirement I have settled into the easy life at a better pace more suited to my age. I was always involved in sport both at KHS and in the community and am lucky to have continued to enjoy plenty of activity. There is so much to do here. I took up golf, I swim, go to the gym and do plenty of walking. Four grandchildren also keep me on my toes.

Who are your role models and why?

My mother said to me when I was at school that I must get a job that was interesting. She had always worked in office positions and felt that these provided income but were not entirely satisfying to her. My father was a policeman and steered me away from social work that interested me as he thought I would only see the seamy side of life.

Consequently, I went into teaching and have never for one moment regretted it. It felt like a calling I had responded to. I say all this because I think my parents have been my role models. They provided me with the best life possible and had high expectations of me that I wanted to reach. They were both honest, honourable people who supported me in anything I wanted to do.

Similarly, I had leaders at KHS, specifically Chris Dockrill and Mick Eller, who challenged me to be the best I could be and gave me opportunities to grow. Many people have to change to another school to progress in their career. I didn't want to as I raised our family here, but the leaders I had created opportunities for me and I think in many ways it was an advantage to have taught generations of the same families in Kempsey.

Do you have any examples of how you #choosetochallenge gender inequity?

I think the best example of my choice to challenge gender inequity is the way I have chosen to live my life. I was never raised to think of myself as inferior because I was female. Rather I was expected to be able to do whatever I chose and was supported in that quest by all around me. When I married my husband he also supported my career and I remember him being insulted when someone asked him if he was babysitting when he had our sons with him. His curt reply was "No, they're my kids."

This attitude to life is one I think I practice in my dealing with others. I take pride in the fact I have encouraged many girls throughout my career to face inequity head on and become all they can become. And I have taught boys to challenge the expectations placed on them as well. Gender is insignificant in personal growth.

Sue, what is your message to students at Kempsey High on International Women's Day?

My message to KHS on International Women's Day is to ask everyone to be kind to others. I love the wisdom that comes with age and I truly believe this is the most important thing we can do for others and for ourselves. We must be tolerant of all differences that exist between us and, most importantly, accept those differences for what they are: they are real and no person is less important than another. Make wise choices because it is only us and our choices that we can control.

We can't control how others react, but we can control how we act and react. Sometimes I think we should just remain silent and listen. Not everything we think needs to be said. Choose words and actions wisely: what is said cannot be unsaid, and what is done cannot be undone. Look out for each other.

Jaime Schmidt

Hi Jaime, when did you study at KHS?

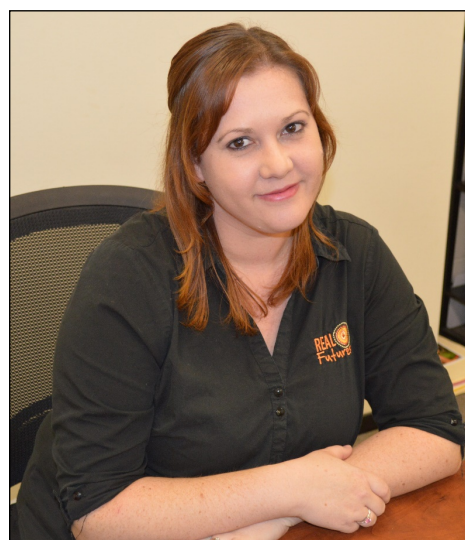
Hi Megan! I went to KHS from Year 7 to Year 10 (left in May, Year 11), from 1996 to 2000.

What's your favourite memory of being at KHS?

New books in the library — I was a bit of a bookworm (still am).

What have you done since leaving school?

I studied Retail and worked from age 16 until 22 in Retail. I had my first child at 21 and when he was one year old in 2006 I changed to Community (Aged & Disability) and Administration work.



I built my skills and went to work in admin for a college in 2009 where I learnt to be a trainer and assessor. I was promoted to Manager within six months and managed the college from 2009 to 2013. I had a two-year break to raise my children from 2014 to 2015.

In 2016 I started part time admin work for my current company. I've assisted in the growth and development of the company: I was staff member number nine and we now have over

sixty employees. I have held different managerial roles as we grew and am now a National Manager in charge of quality, compliance and claims.

On a more personal note, I am a single mum to four kids aged six to sixteen years, and have had to reduce to part time again to cope with everything and with my youngest being diagnosed with Level 3 Autism.

Who are your role models and why?

My role models are any working mum, really. We struggle more than others and should be given more recognition. It's hard to get up early and make sure the kids have what they need, go to work for nine hours, then come home and do domestic chores, homework, appointments, sporting commitments and find time to even breathe.

Another major role model is my company's founder Wendy Yarnold (who also went to KHS with my Mum). Wendy started this company from scratch while raising three kids herself.

Do you have any examples of how you #choosetochallenge gender inequity?

The challenge I would like to see is Childcare. As working mums, we are expected to go to work and leave our children for 10 hours a day in Childcare. The cost of this is astronomical. I had to leave work in 2013 and 2014 when I had two children as it wasn't worth it for me to work. I earned an extra \$50 per week to go to work and not see my kids four days per week.

I left and worked part time one day a week as a trainer/assessor when the kids' father could watch them and was much better off. I would like to see more affordable child care for women — in particular for single women with very little support.

What is your message to students at Kempsey High on International Women's Day?

Don't let anyone put you in a category or box. You don't have to fit someone else's mould - aim to create your own. You can do anything you put your mind, heart and soul into. Sometimes it takes years to achieve your goals, but if you stick to it and never give up, you will eventually see results and be able to celebrate.

I don't often speak about myself, so this is a little daunting, but I have a daughter, nieces, and cousins who will be going to high school soon. I also have my boyfriend's two daughters who go to KHS now, and I want to support them all.

I come from an Aboriginal family, low income with a split parent home. My mother lived in social housing and didn't even own a car until I was 18. I had nothing growing up and had limited options open to me — hence working retail until I was 22.

I was kicked out of home at 16 and had to board with friends until my brother got a flat for us to live in — hence me having to drop out of high school half way through Year 11. Nothing came easy to me, I have worked hard, studied hard and struggled to make ends meet. Now I am going through a terrible divorce and still struggle most days but I think positively and look forward not backwards in the hopes that once again all my efforts will pay off and I can sustain a wonderful fulfilling life for my children.

Post Script

Read about the company Jaime works for at www.realfutures.net/

And read about Real Futures founder Wendy Yarnold on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wendy-yarnold-25a58343/>

Elke Puritau (nee Koellner)

Hi Elke, when did you study at KHS?

I graduated from KHS in 2001.

What's your favourite memory of being at KHS?

Well, it has been twenty years so they are all a little dusty, but it would be a toss up between the critical life lessons learned in Mrs Campbell's hospitality class verses the incredible opportunities for expression with Mr Dockrill in drama.

What have you done since then?

After school I enlisted in the Army as a Direct Entry Officer studying at the Royal Military College Duntroon in Canberra. I was “choosing to challenge” as a female in a male-dominated profession from the earliest opportunity.

Following my discharge from the Army, I took some time out and travelled extensively. I developed a passion for travel and returned to Canberra to hold management roles in retail, corporate and then Government travel functions.

I was recognised for my initiative, coordination and project management skills — and went on to hold various roles, both in Australia and abroad, in the now Department of Foreign Affairs aid program, before going on to be a diplomat in Papua New Guinea. I achieved all of this without a formal degree qualification.

I chose to challenge the norm and left the security of an Australian Government position to lead operations for several aid programs in both Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. All while raising a young family. In my spare time I run an e-commerce business which focuses on helping others and empowering women to want more from life.

Who are your role models and why?

Dame Carol Kidu — the Australian-born, first female opposition leader of PNG. A humble and loyal woman who has dedicated her life to the rights of women, children and vulnerable groups in Papua New Guinea.

Do you have any examples of how you #choosetochallenge gender inequity?

Recently I chose to challenge myself. I left the safety of an industry where I've spent the last decade, taking on a new role as the only female General Manager in Papua New Guinea's largest landowner company. I'm often the sole female participating in board and senior executive meetings. I have developed policies promoting gender equity in recruitment practices and put in place local mentoring and capacity development initiatives in the workplace.

Papua New Guinea is only a few kilometres from the northern tip of Australia. It has the worst statistics of gender-based violence in the Pacific. Over two-thirds of women are estimated to have suffered some form of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.



As a survivor myself, I've created women's networks in each of my workplaces, providing a safe space for women to share about their challenges. I have arranged presentations during working hours from NGOs, health services, Police Family and Sexual Violence representatives and anti gender-based violence advocates. I believe actions like these can enable an informed and empowered female workforce, and help ensure women and girls have access to effective response mechanisms for victim support.

Elke, what is your message to students at Kempsey High on International Women's Day?

Define your own success. It's okay if everything doesn't go to plan. It is in these detours that you will notice how far you have come.

Gillian (Jill) Bottomley

Contributed by Terry Green

Kempsey High School Prefect 1972

My Mum Faye was the eldest child of Ivor and Vera Grayson. Mum was born in Tamworth in 1930. Her youngest sister was Gillian Bottomley nee Grayson.

Mum and Gillian's father Ivor was involved in banking. After returning from Papua New Guinea after World War Two, the family settled in Kempsey. They lived in a small house which is still standing today, next to the Kempsey traffic bridge on the southern side of the Macleay River. Ivor excelled at cricket, rugby league and surf lifesaving.

My Mum was the eldest of four girls: her younger sisters were Marie, Dawn, and Gillian or Jill being the youngest. Faye, Marie, Dawn and Jill all attended Kempsey High.

It was not easy time for the family, and Mum, as the eldest, had to leave school against her wishes and find work to help support the family when their father Ivor left the family.

All the sisters possessed amazing scholastic attributes, artistry, singing and public speaking talents. Jill won several local scholarships which enabled her to pursue the dreams of her sisters and attend Sydney University. There she made a mark — not only on Sydney but on the world.

Jill completed her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) at Sydney University. At Macquarie University she attained her Doctorate (PhD) in Anthropology. Jill became a household name in the academic world, writing ten books from 1992 to 2002 on migration, ethnicity, racialisation, politics of identity, culture, class, and gender in everyday life.

Jill, by then Professor Bottomley, continued her research in France and Canada. She was appointed Vice President of Sociology of the Arts, and Board Member of the International Association of Folk Arts, UNESCO.

One of Jill's books includes a paragraph dedicated to the sacrifice my Mum Faye made to keeping the family together, and allowing her younger sister to fulfil her dreams.

Editor: Thank you Terry for sharing Jill's story. Jill was evidently a trailblazer of her generation, and her story shows what is possible for young women today who are considering further study after Kempsey High School.

About KHSAN

Our **vision** is for alumni of Kempsey High to support and inspire current and future generations of students to realise their potential.

Our **mission** is to build an organisation that:

- (1) Connects former students and employees from Kempsey High in a thriving community, both online and in person, in Australia and around the world.
- (2) Delivers a program of activities designed to expand the opportunities available for current and future students.
- (3) Assists recent graduates to transition from school to the next phase of their lives.

KHSAN is registered as an association in New South Wales under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*.

Our Public Officer is Amy Winters. Our President is Murray O'Hanlon. We welcome all former students and staff to participate in KHSAN.

Read our founding documentation here: <https://kempseyhighalumni.blogspot.com>

Join our online community here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/khsalumninetwork>

Our committee



Amy Winters, Murray O'Hanlon, Donna Kennedy, Crystal Brunyee, Alison Jones,
Elke Puritau, Daniel Parker, Kylie Burley, Rochelle Kim, Josh Smith