

SOAKS Old Boys Newsletter Number 2 2021

Welcome to the second **SOAKS Old Boys** Newsletter for 2021. In this edition, **SOAKS** March drinks at Tom McHugo's Hotel are covered including our special drinks with Simon Boss-Walker. The '**SOAKS in Time**' section includes an item that reflects on **SOAKS** contributions to schoolboy rugby spanning more than 50 years. A special spotlight is shone on one of **SOAKS** remarkable stars and characters of the 1960's in the shape of Peter Riley. Along with that, season 1975 is celebrated in verse courtesy of **SOAKS** balladeer Leigh Sealy. Plus plenty more! I hope that you enjoy the news, humour and nostalgia.



SOAKS Special Drinks with Simon Boss-Walker

Tom McHugo's Hotel was the venue for drinks with special guests Simon and Dawn Boss-Walker. Simon and Dawn were down from Hervey Bay Qld and caught up with a number of **SOAKS Old Boys** along with New Town High School teammates from the 1971 U/16 team which Simon coached in between training and playing for **SOAKS** senior side that same year.



March 2021

Mark Oakford, Burnie's Gerry Horch, Dawn, Simon and Paddy form a tight five! Simon, John Gillon, Paddy Dorney and Dawn recall a few rugby and surfing tales from the past.

March 2021

SOAKS Old Boys are seen aplenty and team-mates from the 1971 New Town High School U/16 premiership team line up alongside their coach one more time. Ron Plummer, Robin Kerstan, Barry Woods, Ken Mackay, Tim Oxley, Rob Luck and Simon Boss-Walker; fifty years on and they still look a formidable bunch!



SOAKS Monthly Drinks

SOAKS Monthly Drinks for March attracted some animated **Old Boys** eager for a beer and a chat!



March 2021

Herbie, Blair and Dave embrace the moment as Mark, Harry, Damian and Lynton add some colour to the pub.

March 2021

Nigel, Richard and John are a trio of happy drinkers. Meanwhile Steve and Barry stand by as Lynton tries to fill out his new **SOAKS** retro jersey!



Spotlight on Peter Riley



Peter Riley played for **SOAKS** 1966-1969. He was a speedy and powerful winger/outside back and great finisher scoring numerous tries. Peter was a representative player in each year he played for **SOAKS**, whether that was for Southern Tasmania or the State. Highlights were his appearances for Tasmania against the All Blacks in 1968 and as part of the State team in the Southern States Carnival in Perth WA in 1966 where Tasmania finished second. He was also STRU registrar in 1966-7 and **SOAKS** club secretary 1969. He won the President's Cup for **SOAKS** best clubman in 1966 and 1969. The photo of Peter (courtesy of Peter's son Fergus) was taken at the then Rugby Headquarters at Clare Street Oval in New Town. The following reflection comes courtesy of Peter's great friend and fellow **SOAKS** Old Boy John Smith.

(Below) Peter Riley is seen accepting the **SOAKS** Presidents Cup from Club President Peter Doe at the 1966 **SOAKS** Presentation Dinner.)



Peter "Randy" Riley on the rugby turf was enthusiastic, smart, tough, elusive, fast, determined and indeed a great little wiry winger and team player. He was just the same at training and enjoyed a few beers afterwards, but not too many. I shared a flat with Riley for four years until he married Fran. We used to call each other "Smith and Riley".

He worked at the Hydro as an engineer designing dams His first project was the pumping system to move water from Shannon Lagoon to the Great Lake and you can still see the little shed as you drive into Miena (which I do quite often). He moved to Gowrie Park with Fran before going to the UK to study rock mechanics and then to Auckland where he eventually set up a large consultancy. Those of you who knew Riley will recall his intensive enthusiasm about: dams, geology, work, his farm near Auckland, rugby and everything else about life.

*We did a lot together including fishing, surfing, camping trips as well as diving for golf balls, Riley told me that “the **one** good thing about flatting with you was that you always made us do things”.*

One trick was to go diving to catch cray fish before ringing the nursing home with an invite to a party at our Lindisfarne flat. That’s where I met Helen who became and still is “great mates” with Fran.



The two of them always attended the rugby walking up and down the sideline talking with no interest and therefore no recall at all about the rugby. They were doing the same on the North West Bay golf course, on one of our golf and ball dive days when Fran was hit with a golf ball in a very pregnant tummy. Another great flat mate and character, Bob Sampson (now deceased) when flat hunting recalled being met at the door by a naked Riley which Peter denies. Well there is more to tell, but what happens in the flat stays in the flat.



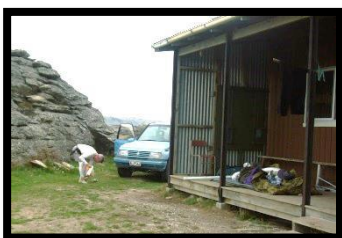
I have had several trips to NZ to visit Peter since retiring in 2002 where we always did things. Riley with the same enthusiasm took me to every dam on the South Island, including a night in a shepherd’s hut before camping at Lake Poolburn. We did the Routeburn Walk one year, Riley as he did for rugby insisted on training, with a near death climb up Sealy tarns known as ‘the stairway to heaven’, but no beer at top just a swim. We met up with Peter’s brother Chris, another equally enthusiastic Riley, and his lovely partner Lee for physio on sustained injuries so that Margaret, (Peter’s third partner) could challenge the walk.



Riley, always the hunter gatherer, often talked about possum hunting and his exploits climbing trees with knife held in teeth to dispatch the NZ pest, with frequent stabbing hand motions. He hates any food waste and would store stuff for weeks. He loved collecting mushrooms and on one trip insisted on feeding all, somewhat reluctant starters, at the Lake Pukaki caravan park to avoid waste.



On his beloved farm he took me for a trip in his boat-on-wheels. On high tide we set out down a small creek before entering the sea where Pete caught a nice salmon. However, on returning home the tide was out with no access up the creek. No worries for Peter as he headed off to the boat ramp and along the highway in the self-propelled boat-on-wheels. One couple on a park bench having a quiet drink still wonder today if they were hallucinating.



There are lot of memories of time spent with Peter Riley with never a dull moment. I look forward to catching up with Riley on my next trip.

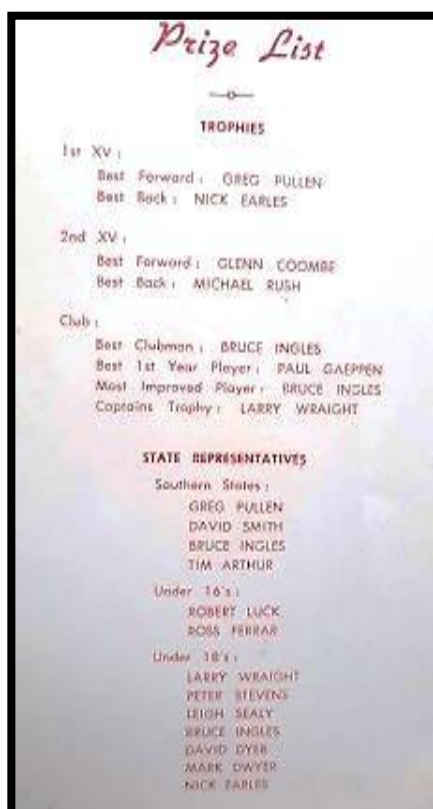
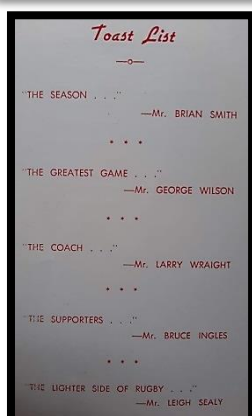
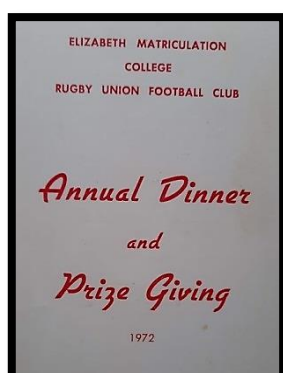


SOAKS in Time

This year marks not only the 50th anniversary of **SOAKS** 1971 Senior premiership winning side, but also the anniversary of the 1971 U16 New Town High School premiership winning team.



Whilst a number of schools and colleges provided a pool of future **SOAKS** there was a rich vein of talented players to emerge from New Town High School and Elizabeth Matric College. Both NTHS and EMC provided a steady stream of recruits for **SOAKS** over the years. In the 1969 EMC photo (above) three young future **SOAKS** can be seen: Fred Morey, Ian Carter and Graham Laing. In the 1972 EMC Rugby Club Annual Dinner and Prize Giving program (below) there is a veritable who's who of future **SOAKS** of the 1970s and beyond.



Lost and Found

Question: Who can remember what the 'Big Three B's Night' was all about back in 1979?



In another classic Julian Mattay photo from the past, **SOAKS Old Boy** Graham Fiddaman is captured in an animated discussion with referee John Barnett during a match at Wentworth Park. The exact nature of the conversation remains a bit of a mystery, unless someone can provide some insight into its content.

Hey Barny, is that the best way back to Hobart from Wentworth Park?



How the hell would I know ... I'm just a rugby referee!

From the **SOAKS Vault**

A Legend in One Part – Part One (Season 1975) by SeaLeigh 5 November 1975

In the course of human history
There are heroes by the score
An to these lists of demigods
The scribes will add one more

As the ancient antiquarian
Takes quill to parchment dry
He will think upon **Associates**
With a bright but moistened eye

Of the great and lasting exploits
Of these Samsons in their prime
Of the hallowed turf of Rugby Park
That was these warriors' clime

He will visualise the glory
Of these great Conquistadors
But if he would be kind to us
He won't record the scores

He will think of brave coach Lawler
His Pythagorean stance
His Pictish perseverance
And his ventilated pants

And then of "Calv." the red-beard
Who left his foe nonplussed
As he prayed once more to Zsa-Zsa
For the power of the Pus!

He will think on Diesel Doyle
This warrior so great
That history will forgive him
For always being late

Then of stout Paul Oxley
The pugilistic Prop
The Archive shows he took the blows
And never touched a drop

He will ponder on his brother Tim
Whose motive was not clear
Tho' he claimed to like the battle
He also liked the beer

Of Ivan the Terrible...
His acts so bore his name
That a wiser man once sent him off
In a friendly social game

Ian Nute the Breakaway
A Devil to be sure
Trims his fingers with a meat-axe
And throws them on the floor

Vile Ron Moss his mind does cross
The Beast of Bealy Court
None can tell how ill or well
In future he'll be thought

Of great Pork Sword the minstrel
The future's praises go
His beaten body guards a mind
As pure as driven snow

Then Carter is remembered
For his vocals during play
Invecting all and sundry
In his quadraliteral way

Fiddaman the fitness freak
Was often wont to score
But if he dashed but thirty yards
Then he could run no more

King will be remembered
As a Bulldog not a pup
As the broken bones of backmen show
He always "set'em up"

When Dwyer is recalled to mind
There's a murmur one can sense
As wistful aged fighters tell
Of 'pugnacious defence'

Justin Cooke the speedster
Dashed often for the line
But the saddest part about it is
He'd leave the ball behind

And Schmidt the stoic stayer
Was a panther in attack
He played Fullback like a Forward
And Wing Forward like a back

And who'll forget Pete Tucker?
That Engineer of Fate
Who went to Lawler's dinner
But was twenty-four hours late

And Coxy once again was there
He cringed from no man's wrath
With his dashing mercy missions
His water and his cloth

The ancient antiquarian
Now lays his quill aside
Recording for posterity
With care and no small pride

The history of a group of men
Who played the game for fun
And didn't go to training
If there was drinking to be done

He rises from his dusty desk
He is trembling at the knees
As a distant Highland brogue reminds
Ya Hav'na Paid Ya Fees!

Watch out for the monthly drinks email reminders and the periodic **SOAKS Old Boys** email newsletters in future. You can also keep in touch by viewing or joining **Hobart Convicts Rugby and SOAKS** Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/68764449606/>

