

Report on Hunter Valley SOF commemorative Dinner  
On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at Sebel Kirkton Park Hotel,  
Pokolbin NSW Australia

A dinner was held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015 to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of Framlingham College in 1865, and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli in 1915, for Australian and New Zealand Old Framlinghamians.

Fifty six guests attended, including: Chris Essex, the newly elected Presidents of the Society; Simon Dougherty, a past President and current Governor, and David Ashton, the current Deputy Head of Academics at Framlingham College. Also, Stephen and Aileen Sayer from Oman, David and Fran Newson from North Island New Zealand, and Jack Channell, the Arch-wizard of New Zealand who lives in Christchurch. Our honoured guest was Trish Evans, representing her husband Len Evans, the legendary figure of antipodean wine. The remainder came from throughout Australia, from Perth to Cairns. The dinner was hosted by Chris and Rebecca Shaw, and Mike Garnett, and Peter Hollins has offered to organise the photos.

It's fair to say that this was the first OF dinner attended by many guests, and bonds of friendship going back fifty years or more were re-kindled. Peter Bailey and Peter Simpson, both in their 90's, attended, and gave real meaning to the word 'indomitable'. One of Len Evans' favourite words was 'Joyous' and I think that encapsulates the mood of the dinner and its aftermath.

Some guests arrived on the Saturday, and gathered at Twines Restaurant, which is within walking distance from the Sebel. Simon Narroway hosted that not very dry run.

On Monday, there were games of Golf, wine and cheese tasting, shopping and getting to know the Valley, and each other.

On Tuesday, when most people were leaving to go home, there was a cyclone; a vicious storm with torrential rain, flash flooding and trees down on roads for at least the surrounding 100km. The esprit de corps, the cooperation and the focus brought to bear on these adverse conditions by Old Framlinghamians would have kindled a flame in the most cynical of educators. We all made it home safely, although we left behind 300,000 homes without power for up to seven days, and houses and cars washed away in swollen creeks and rivers.

Welcome to Australia!