

Students who made big mark

A NUMBER of well known Australians have been taught at the Baralaba State School including scientists, business people, academics and sportsmen.

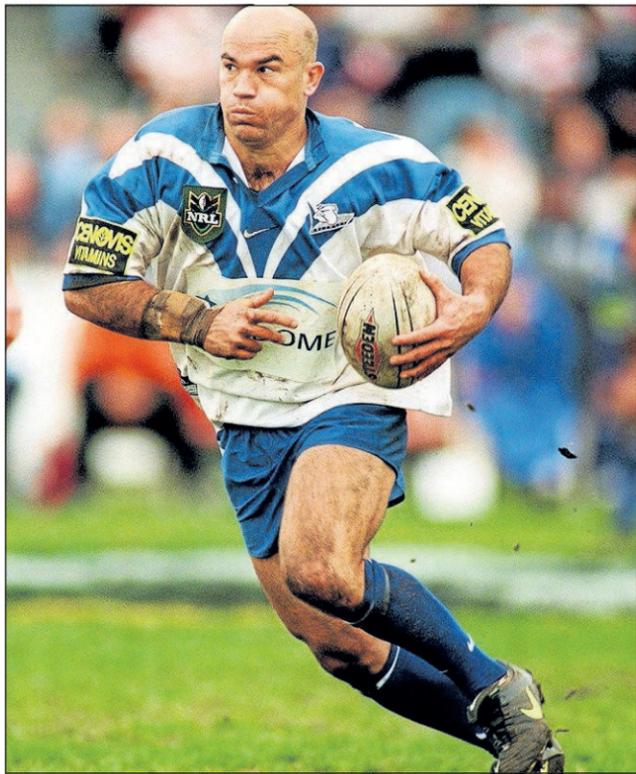
The late Dr Arthur ("Tom") Pryor, who enrolled in 1934, was a principal research officer at the Lucas Heights nuclear reactor and ended his career as a lecturer at Sydney's Macquarie University.

Barry Golding had an extensive career as a mining engineer and director of Promethean Planning Pty Ltd. He enrolled in 1952 and was a Vietnam War veteran.

Darrell Crawford, a paediatrician and lecturer, was a descendant of the Scully family whose association goes back to the tent school in 1918.

Former Queensland State of Origin rugby league player, Jason Hetherington, regularly returns home to Baralaba to visit his father.

He pulled on the famous maroon jersey eight times between 1998-2000 and also represented Australia twice. He played for the Gold Coast Chargers, Canterbury Bulldogs and London Broncos,



RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMP: Baralaba State School student, Jason Hetherington, went on to play for the Queensland State of Origin and Australian rugby league sides.

making his name as one of the toughest hookers in the game.

He remembers fondly his days at Baralaba State School.

"One of my memories of Baralaba State School was

carting around the smoke tins to keep the sand flies away," he said.

"When water subsided after a Dawson river flood it meant one thing - sand flies!

We would duck over to the



PUPIL AND STUDENT: the late Meg Ashton, who was born in 1925, was caned for playing in a muddy lagoon. Most of the children in her day walked to school.

sawmill and rob some sawdust, mix it with dry horse poo and light it up.

"We would carry these tins with us all day, leaving them out on the veranda during class time. When we came out of class we would give it a bit of a shake and hope that it was still alright.

"Our swimming lessons were also held in the Dawson River. I still remember very clearly learning to swim in grade three.

"The principal had the markers all set up in the water and as we were about to get in he warned, 'If you see a croc, jam your thumbs in his eyes.' I still don't like getting in the water today!"

Current Queensland State of Origin and Brisbane Broncos player, Corey Oates, also went to Baralaba school.

Another ex-student, Wing Commander Steve Hoadley, now based at Newcastle, also recalls happy days at Baralaba.

"I have many fond memories of my school days at Baralaba State School. The fun began on the bus ride in where we all caused havoc for the bus driver," he said.

"We were under constant threat of being made to walk. Then there were the flood days when we would have to take a boat from the golf course across to the boat ramp below the school.

"We still got to school safe and dry ... well dry most of the time.

"While I know we did not always appreciate them at the time, we had great teachers and staff. The small classes meant that we got to know them pretty well.

"Above all, I remember the friends, the endless games we played, the laughs, the trouble we made and got away with or not!"

Former pupil and teacher, the late Meg Ashton (nee Pryor), jotted down some of recollections of life at the school in the early days. She was born in 1925.

"In my day we mainly walked to school. We wore whatever clothes we had available and we brought sandwiches from home and a bit of cake if we were lucky.

"Some came by riding a horse and therefore we had a school horse paddock.

"Boys and girls were eligible for the cane for alleged wrong doing.

"The only time I was caned was being in the muddy bilabong beyond the school grounds. The bell rang and I was in mud up to my knees!"



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