

Errol Tapp



Above: Foundation Scholar Mr Errol Tapp.

Above left: The College Prefects, 1923.

Standing left to right: P. McGowran, S. Pick, J. Tyler, J. Scollin, P. Haheisy.

Sitting left to right: G. Culshaw, N. L. Carrig, Rev. Bro. Purton, J. McDonnel, E. Tapp.

Old Collegians' Rostrevor Dozen

In 1997 a pack of twelve premium red wines was offered for sale as the Rostrevor Dozen III. The wine is the work of six Old Collegian winemakers and offers exceptional value at the 1997 price of \$160.00 a dozen. **A Stuart Auld Cold Ridge shiraz cabernet, a Brian Barry cabernet sauvignon, a Jim Barry cabernet sauvignon, an Anthony Brady Wendouree cabernet malbec shiraz, a Brian Walsh Yalumba Galway hermitage and a David O'Leary Annies Lane shiraz make up the unique collection.**

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Red & Black spoke with Errol Tapp, 93 year old Old Collegian, who was one of the original boarders of 1923, the founding year of the College.

Errol has spent much of his life on his property northeast of Broken Hill, "Nuntherungie", apart from a year in Sydney in 1925 at the Wool Store.

In 1916 Errol's father joined the A.I.F. as a forty six year old and fought in Egypt as a sergeant. At this time Errol was around 10 years old and attending C.B.C. Wakefield St. As his father was away at war his family took a house in Ward St. North Adelaide and he would either walk or catch the tram into Wakefield Street each day.

He distinctly remembers his first journey by tram to take residence as one of the first boarders at Rostrevor in 1923. Errol recalls "the country fellows were delighted to have the open spaces, the paddocks and the waterfalls" after life in the hustle and bustle of inner city Wakefield St. In that first year he was one of fifty or sixty boarders who slept on the balconies around the upstairs of Rostrevor House. He confirmed that it was comfortable accommodation and with canvas awnings the weather was usually kept out. On the odd occasion they would climb into bed to find the foot of their beds wet with the days rain – but this was rare.

Errol had an illustrious if not short stay at Rostrevor. He was a Prefect, College swimming champion, he was on the inaugural Rostrevor College Sports Day Committee as joint Honorary Secretary and served on the inaugural Literary Society Committee of which Headmaster, **Br Purton**, was President. From the 1923 Annual Br Purton reported "The advantages gained by Rostrevor boys in their discussions on literary, historical, and social questions are inestimable. It should and it does contribute in no small degree to that culture which has been, and let us trust ever will be the hallmark of a C.B.C. boy."

On his swimming success Errol recalls a different slant on his achievements than the Annual. Errol modestly recalls that nominations were called for the College Championship and Errol was reluctantly "roped in by his mates to swim." The Annual records "The announcement that the College Championship was the next event caused a stir among the onlookers, as a great struggle was expected, but the result was disappointing. E Tapp, a champion in the making, forged ahead almost immediately, and the result was never in doubt. He finished in master style, and was proclaimed the champion swimmer of Rostrevor."

Errol remembers many classmates with fondness, **George Culshaw, Kevin McEntee, J. Johnstone** as well as **Br Murphy** reputed to be "the strongest man to ever come from Ireland" but his recollections of Br Purton are as warm and enduring as if it were only yesterday. " 'Old Purt' was absolutely one of the finest men I have ever met in my life. He had a tremendous ability to handle people. He was a very calm man but always in a hurry as he had much to do in the running and establishment of a new College. I recall

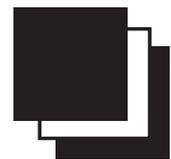
an occasion where a student burst into a Latin lesson proclaiming the creek's bank had been breached. Without missing a beat, Br Purton advised that the footballers should get into their togs and collect shovels and divert the water away from the creek and into the lake. He then continued on with the lesson with the problem solved."

Of course there were myths. **Pat Glynn**, a fellow student of Errol's, used to spread the story that Br Purton (who had a habit of keeping his hand concealed in his pocket) was a Maori and in his pocket was a hatchet which one day he would brandish and kill somebody!

Errol married Betty Hogarth in 1946 and they both worked at Nuntherungie until he retired to Adelaide in the '60s. Errol's health remains good. Betty has difficulty getting around but is otherwise healthy. In his early years away from Rostrevor, Errol would make contact with Old Scholars at the Amateur Sports Club but since the twenties he has had little contact with Rostrevor.

Last year, our 75th Anniversary year, Errol was made an **Honorary Patron of the College.**

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