

## HF Radio & Party Lines to Satellite & Zoom

I returned to Longreach on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November to celebrate 50 years of ICPA and, as I listened to the debate, I realised many of the issues have remained the same, but many have changed. Who would have thought, in 1971, that I would be attending a hybrid conference via satellite in 2021? I recall Monty Morris (Qld Education) talking about a facsimile machine at the Blackall conference in 1974 and we thought that was amazing, even though we did not know how to spell it!

Communications have certainly changed from our days of School of the Air over HF radio with very poor voice quality, particularly on hot stormy days.

The catch cry we had in the 70's at ICPA was *'we want a telephone, a telephone that works and a telephone that works all the time'*. Didn't I hear a similar message in 2021.

Reception and delivery of service was still an issue at the 2021 conference as delegates debated the phase out of the DRCS phone system to, I understand, a low geostationary satellite. We are led to believe there will be minimal delay so we pray this will be the case.

It was very special for me to see Wally Mitchell, our first Federal President, open the 50th Conference with Trish Mitchell OAM. Mike and I were at the conference in Bourke when a vote of no confidence in the Government of the time was passed by Margaret Lacey from Meekatharra WA. Margaret was small in stature but found a very powerful voice that day.

The Minister for Education at the time, Malcolm Fraser, was unable to attend so Bob Katter Senior took the rap and headed back to Canberra very humiliated. There was no

**BOARDING PLACES  
AVAILABLE IN  
2023 & 2024**

**WHERE IT'S YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME**

For information about  
available Scholarships:



P - 12 Co-education | Boarding Years 6 - 12

**S<sup>t</sup>PETERS**   
LUTHERAN COLLEGE  
Indooroopilly  
[www.stpeters.qld.edu.au](http://www.stpeters.qld.edu.au)



Teresa responds to acknowledgement of her presence at the very first conference and at the 50th anniversary conference. Teresa represented Yaraka Isisford Branch as an observer in 2021.

response from the Government of the time which, soon after, lost power and it was Kim Beazley Snr, the new Labor Minister for Education, who introduced The Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme (AIC) which was then a basic allowance. The Scheme was reviewed by the Schools Commission in 1982 under Minister Peter Walsh (Labor) who introduced the Asset test. ICPA reacted very strongly to this as you could well imagine because no one in the public system is asset tested to access a school.

My observations from the conference, coupled with what is happening across the nation: there is a trend to larger holdings held by big business with many parents managing these properties, so it was good to see companies considered at the conference as they trend to support their staff with boarding. I was made aware of the closure of most of our hostels in Queensland. Longreach shire had recently sold the Longreach hostel to a tourist operator. Hostels were once a significant portfolio in Queensland under the watch of Jan Gall.

It would seem many children are continuing with secondary schooling via distance education. The cost of boarding is still beyond the reach of those on a salary or wage. The Longreach School of Distance Education is staffed to cater for these students.

Our youngest grandchild Grace, aged 5, is very keen on dance, particularly ballet and she has dance lessons online with her teacher Miss Amy who, I believe, is based at Julia Creek. How good is that!

Mike and I are to be great grandparents at Christmas and in 2022 so we look forward to another era in our lives. Our best wishes to all members for Christmas and thank you for continuing what we all started out to achieve in 1971.

**Teresa Cobb**  
**QLD.**

## SA ICPA 50th Celebrations

Open up those fresh 2022 diaries and mark in Friday the 1st of April for the 50th celebrations and conference of SA ICPA. The meet and greet will be on Thursday evening the 31st of March at the Australian Arid Lands botanical Garden in Pt Augusta. Pt Augusta Branch will welcome you to the Central Oval for "the Looking Forward, Looking Back" conference.

Some stories of old and new will be spun in-between conference debate that will help build our children's future educational endeavours. We look forward to welcoming Sarah Powell from Champions Academy, and former rural woman of the year, as our guest speaker and to help inspire and secure young people to stay in our rural and remote areas.

We finish the day off loading up the buses and driving you to Tickle Belly Hill for final celebrations of our 50th year of advocating for rural and remote families with a yummy dinner and cocktails.

Can't wait to see you there.