Manea Senior College
– Where it all started –

History/Background

The history of the Manea Senior College (SC) actually commenced in the late 1960s, when the Bunbury City Council, led by the then Lord Mayor, local GP, Dr Ernie Manea, created a vision for an education and training precinct. A large tract of land was set aside on Robertson Drive to build this precinct on and 40 years later, this vision was realised.

Located in Bunbury, Manea SC is the only specialist senior school in the South West region of Western Australia. Manea SC caters for motivated Year 11 and 12 students from across the region, with students seeking university or vocational pathways coming from 30 different schools. Strategically located between Edith Cowan University and South Regional TAFE, Manea SC students have the opportunity to combine their school programs with nationally recognised quailfications as well as the ability to access resources and facilities across the precinct.

The range of courses available for students to select from is extensive and Manea SC students can now access the largest selection of courses in the South West. The College accommodates the needs of senior school students, providing flexible, individual and innovative approaches to their learning.

Ernest Cosmo Manea (1926 - 2013)

Born in Albany on the southwest tip of Western Australia in 1926, Ernest Cosmo Manea went to local Primary and High Schools before graduating Bachelor of Medicine (MB) and Bachelor of Surgery (BS) at Perth and Adelaide Universities. He was later a Fellow of the Royal College of General Practitioners (FRCGP).

Establishing a medical career and medical centre at 26 years of age in the nearby big country city of Bunbury in 1952, Dr. Manea met his wife Beulah that same year at Royal Perth Hospital, where she worked as a nurse. He became involved in the local business and political worlds of that city, later becoming Mayor firstly in 1966-1972 and again in 1988.

Mayor of Bunbury

During his time as Mayor, Bunbury Town Council was selected as the most efficient and progressive local authority in Western Australia. Bunbury also won the Tidy Town Competition twice.

In the three decades 1960-90 Ern was appointed Director of South West Development and Regional authorities, Chairman of St John's Hospital, and community representative on the WA Technical Education Board. He also became a member of the AMA State Council, and Foundation President of the Bunbury Arts Promotional Council, as well as participating at a high level in many service and planning organisations in the Bunbury region.

As a highly popular Mayor of Bunbury his views on politics and planning were frequently sought by the various Premiers and Ministers of the State Governments of the day. His appointments included membership of the WA Government Committee of Inquiry into Rates and Taxes, plus Regional Planning and Development Committees. Dr. Manea was selected as the first elected member of Local Government to address the Institute of Municipal Administration in Canberra.

In 2001 the newly elected MLA for Bunbury Tony Dean, in his inaugural speech, said "without doubt, the major political giant of Bunbury in the past 30 years has been Ern Manea, a politician of such stature and skill that he has remained aloof from the party political process. I had the pleasure to serve three years as a councillor with Ern Manea when he was Mayor of Bunbury. He is a remarkable man with an intellect as big as his ambitions for the seat of Bunbury".

As Mayor of Bunbury he was a leader in many initiatives including a Sister City Agreement with Setagaya City in Japan and he signed a major commitment with the local Nyungar to work together and recognise their rights and histories - only the second of such commitments in Australia.

His contribution as a member of the Rotary Club of South Bunbury for many years was noted in 1996 with his being made a "Paul Harris Fellow". He was already a Fellow of the Edith Cowan University, a University that he was prime mover for its establishment when Mayor of Bunbury years earlier.

His contribution to the community and local Government was recognized earlier in his life, being appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1985 and an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1998. He also received the Australian Centenary Medal.

The sporting community

Earlier in 1954 Dr. Manea had become involved in the local Bunbury youth sporting community and became President of the Bunbury District Junior Football Association in 1961. This later extended in 1965 to Presidency of the Bunbury Sports Youth Foundation, and his involvement in organising an annual charity football match which brought many celebrities to town, including Melbourne's Ron Barassi and Adelaide's Neil Kerley. He became closely associated with local senior football as President of the South Bunbury Football Club in 1961, graduating the same year to President of the Bunbury District Football Association.

His strong contribution to local affairs is reflected in the twelve life memberships he holds in sporting and community clubs, and in 2009 he was named as the inaugural patron of the South West Academy of Sport in Western Australia. There is also an educational college in Bunbury named after him.

Earlier on in his football administration days he and his wife Beulah had taken in and raised an aboriginal teenager called Syd Jackson who developed into a star footballer in the South Bunbury FC and later moved to Melbourne where he became a notable player with the leading club of those days - Carlton.

Harness racing

In his student days in Adelaide he had frequently attended harness racing at the Wayville Track and then later, when a medical officer at Royal Perth Hospital, he attended patients from nearby Gloucester Park harness racing accidents.

On setting up medical practice in Bunbury he loaned one of his patients the cost of a service fee to a local pacing sire and when the patient could not repay he was given the resultant foal. Seemingly the harness racing industry was beckoning him into the sport - and it is an interest that still continues after 60 years at various heights of local, national and international involvements.

Becoming the owner of several pacers he founded the Marden Stud Farm in the 1950's just south of Bunbury. His best horse in those times was the smart pacer Marden Miss which won the Bunbury Cup and he later bred and raced Mighty Michael, a high class Gloucester Park winner.

Ern joined the WA Trotting Association at Gloucester Park in the mid 1960's and was co-opted on to the Committee in 1978 to help resolve disputes within the Committee. In a similar timeframe, he joined the Bunbury Trotting Club, and was elected to President in 1980.

In 1979 (to 1987) he became President of the WATA which led to Presidency of the Australian Harness Racing Council 1984-2000 and the Inter Dominion Harness Racing Council 1987-2000. In 1991-1993 Ern served a term as President of the International Trotting Association (ITA) and became a long term attendee at the bi-annual World Trotting Conferences.

During this period Ern was elected a Member of the Racecourse Development Trust and the Totalisator Agency Board. Other positions he held were Board Member of Bunbury Institute of Advanced Education, Chairman of the Board of Western Broadcasting Services PL, and Chairman of the Board St John of God Hospital in Bunbury.

In 1992 the AHRC acknowledged Ern with the JP Stratton Award, the highest Australian Standardbred Industry award. This was for his Leadership, Significant Achievement, Foresight, Initiative on a national and international basis over a significant period of time warranting national recognition by the harness racing industry. In 1997 the International Trotting Association confirmed his contribution to International Trotting affairs by awarding him Life Membership. In 1997 the Ohio House of Representatives (USA) awarded Ern a Special Recognition Certificate.

In 2000, on completion of his Presidency and handover to Mr. Tony McGrath, the IDHRC awarded him its Gold Medal, and renamed the award the "Ern Manea Inter Dominion Gold Medal".

One of the many tributes at the time came from The United States Trotting Association: "Dr. Manea has not only been a leader in Australia, but is equally respected and recognised on a world-wide level. Ern Manea IS harness racing around the world, and he will be missed more than he may realise. With a heavy heart we farewell a good friend."

Ernest Manea Recognised

In 2002 Dr Manea ended a 50 year relationship with his medical centre and established a private practice. At this time it was stated that he had delivered three thousand five hundred and eighty one babies.

On Australia Day, 2007, a special presentation was made to Ern in Bunbury - a set of tapes and transcript of interviews detailing his life, including his involvement in harness racing, which Bunbury Trotting Club highlighted in 2006 with the inaugural Manea Classic race for pacers, which is being run annually. In 2010, his induction as an Associate into the Western Australian Racing Hall of Fame was a further acknowledgement of his outstanding service to the industry.

Dr Manea's death in October 2013 after a short illness brought numerous tributes, with politicians, community leaders and the standardbred industry included. His immense contribution to the community will be a continuing legacy shared by many. http://interdomhalloffame.com.au/people-ern-manea.asp

Beulah "Snookie" Manea, OAM (1929 - 2017)

Beulah "Snookie" Manea was born Claudine Beulah Snook in 1929.

Her childhood was spent in the Perth Hills suburb of Roleystone and she later trained as a nurse during which time she also performed in some musical theatre. Clearly her social life didn't impinge on her nursing studies as in 1950 she finished second in the final examination for general nurses.

On 18th August 1949 she shared a kiss with one Ernest Cosmo Manea, who was serving an internship at Royal Perth Hospital where she worked. They moved to Bunbury in 1952 and the rest as they say is history.

Years later Ern admitted that the only person who could make him change his mind was Beulah and they were very much a team.

Snookie was a very good public speaker, and her contribution to the Bunbury community was significant with her involvement in a huge number of community groups. Her service was recognised nationally when she was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in June 2006 for service to the community of Bunbury through conservation, health, welfare and sporting organisations.

She had earlier been awarded with the Centenary Medal in 2001 for long and voluntary service to the development of the Bunbury community and saving its heritage. The Bunbury City Council made her a Freeman of the City.

The contribution of Beulah and Ern Manea was also acknowledged in the naming of the Manea Senior College in 2008.

Her list of community work was extensive:

- President, Bunbury Timber Jetty Environment and Conservation Society since 1996; Member since 1990.
- Chair, Collections Committee, Bunbury Regional Art Gallery, 1980-1991; involved with the establishment and opening of the Gallery in 1987; Life Member. Member, Bunbury Regional Hospital, 1994-1998; involved in the collocation of the St John of God Hospital with the Bunbury Regional Hospital.
- Involved in establishment of Bunbury Meals on Wheels 1966; volunteer, for many years; Life Member.
- Lady Mayoress (spouse Mayor 1966-1972 and 1988-1997); supported her husband during his two terms as Mayor; 'Freeman of the City', 1997.
- Supporter, South Bunbury Football Club, 1969-1972; fundraising and catering.
- Involved, collaboration on and publishing of Reminiscences of a Rural Practice: Dr Foster and Associates 1947-1999, 2000.

As well as being mother to her own children, Mark and Denis, Beulah and Ern accepted a young Aboriginal footballer, Syd Jackson, in to their family home for a period, and he too became a part of their family.

http://www.harnessbred.com/vale-beulah-snookie-manea-oam/

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