



Winter 2003

Issue 30

# DHSESA Newsletter

## PASSING THE BATON



### A GENERATIONAL MIX

Recently, the senior student group at DHS maintained the now established and welcome annual get-together with the members of the Ex-students Association.

Reports from both sides of this inspirational conjunction can be read on following pages.

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# From The Chair



The Edna Dawson Vukmirovic Music Scholarship for 2003 has been awarded to Paulina Truong of 10C. She will receive piano tuition for Terms 3 and 4.

Auditions for the Scholarship were held in June and Panel Members were unanimous in their decision. They were impressed by the accomplished and proficient way Paulina played her instrument and by her dedicated approach to her music studies. They were also sufficiently taken by the performance and enthusiasm of the other two students that they decided to extend the Scholarship. Michelle Corera and Tiffany Nish of 10C were both awarded a Music Book Prize. Michelle is studying the piano and Tiffany plays the guitar.

The students were presented with their awards during the SHOWCASE 111 concert held on 26 June at the School. Stana Sargood, Edna's daughter, and Greta Jungwirth made the presentations on behalf of the Association. The girls all performed during the evening and displayed their considerable talents.

Since the Scholarship was established in 1997, two thousand, seven hundred dollars have been provided for vocal, piano and flute tuition. In addition, several more hundreds have been made available for master classes, workshops and transport costs. This year \$150 was used towards the hire of a maxicab to transport ten students to Melbourne to attend "Orpheus in the Underworld".

It is satisfying to know that the aims of the Scholarship have been so well met. It was set up in Edna's honour to encourage students of the School in the general area of music, to recognize individual talent and to encourage diverse musical experiences.

This year the third FABER QUISQUE FORTUNAE LECTURE will again be the main fund-raising vehicle for the Scholarship so you are all urged to attend and support a wonderful cause.

Greta Jungwirth

# School News— From the School Newsletter.

## "The Past Meets the Present"

In recent years it has been the custom for the student office bearers to have an informal lunch with members of the Ex-Students Association. The purpose of this annual occasion is to congratulate the student leaders and to share past and present experiences of Dandenong High School. The students learn about the history of the School and gain a sense of its ongoing nature—how they are part of something bigger than the present.

The ex-students enjoy the exchange of views and hearing about the future hopes and plans of the students of today. On occasion they offer some timely advice.

This year the lunch was held on Thursday 22nd May. It was attended by School Captains Mirjana Markovic and Mubin Rahimi; Vice-Captains Danijela Draskovic and Matthew Knight; and Student Council Presidents Jerome Martin and Kimberlee Paul. Committee members of the Ex-students' Association present were President Greta Jungwirth, Historian Dawn Harris, Newsletter Editor Don Metcalfe, and past Editor John Leah. The gathering was very fortunate to have the company of Mr. Bob Glassborough who attended DHS from 1928 to 1931. Bob, who will be 90 years old in July, had a swag of interesting stories about the early years of the School. Bob's daughter Barbara was kind enough to drive him from Upwey and she enjoyed being introduced to her father's old school.

## 'Captains' Meet 'Prefects'

Being a student at Dandenong High School does not simply refer to attending the classes and taking part in daily school activities, it also means being part of the school's community, and thus the school's soul. We, as the students, pride ourselves in knowing that we belong to a great school community that has such a rich and vast background. On Thursday 22nd May, the school leaders (Captains, Vice-Captains and SRC Leaders) got an opportunity to become acquainted with some of the Ex-students' Association members. It was an attempt to bring together a few different generations of people that share a common aspect: they all went to Dandenong High School. We didn't know what to expect when we walked into the room; however, within minutes all of us were busy chatting away and discussing topics with the easy-going and friendly ex-students. Our main topic of interest was what the school was like all those years ago and in which way it had changed and in which it had remained the same.

It was fascinating learning so many new aspects of our school we never really knew existed. After observing how much the school had changed, we concluded one thing: almost everything else about the school may change but the spirit of Dandenong High School remains forever unchanged. Every student who attends our school notices its powerful character. But where else does one obtain character and spirit but from history? That is why it was such a pleasure and honour to meet the ex-students of Dandenong High School. After all, it is they who made the school what it is today, and they are the ones who gave the School its strength. There was no doubt in any of our minds that one day we too would join the Ex-Students Association and we too will stand in that room 50 years from now passing on Dandenong High School's proud legacy.

By: Danijela Draskovic (School Vice-Captain)

# John Leah Enthuses...

When Greta asked me to attend an annual luncheon to meet the student school leaders, the idea appealed so I went. Delighted is the only word that comes to mind to explain my feelings towards these bright young things when I met them. So charming, articulate, interested, confident, charismatic, idealistic and full of hopes and dreams. Just, I suppose, as we had been. My reaction to the self-assurance they displayed in this social setting was that good old DHS had "done it again" - provided the social soup in which impressive friendships between young people of extremely diverse ethnic origins had grown. This struck me as a powerful thing the School had once again achieved. Today as in our time! In decades to come I'm sure the tug of DHS will reach out to many of them through the Ex-students Association, as they reflect on the value of the fellowship they enjoyed.

One of the thoughtful young leaders asked, "Why do you ex-students do this?" We talked of what the School had meant to us and how important it had been in our lives. The real motivation for me was pure sentiment and curiosity. I just wanted to sit in those rooms again and chat with young people whose age I was over 40 years ago - and whose age I still feel in my head. It was kind of like going back and looking at yourself. Remember that song, "FORTY YEARS ON"? "When you forgetfully wonder what you were like in your work and your play? Visions of boyhood".

I wasn't disappointed. They reminded me of the people we perhaps once were, before we matured, grew more conservative and lost some of our fire.

They spoke of their own contemporary concerns. There was a rather painful sense that they were swamped by an anxiety over their results,

which seem to be much more important these days than they were in our era of multiple golden opportunities.

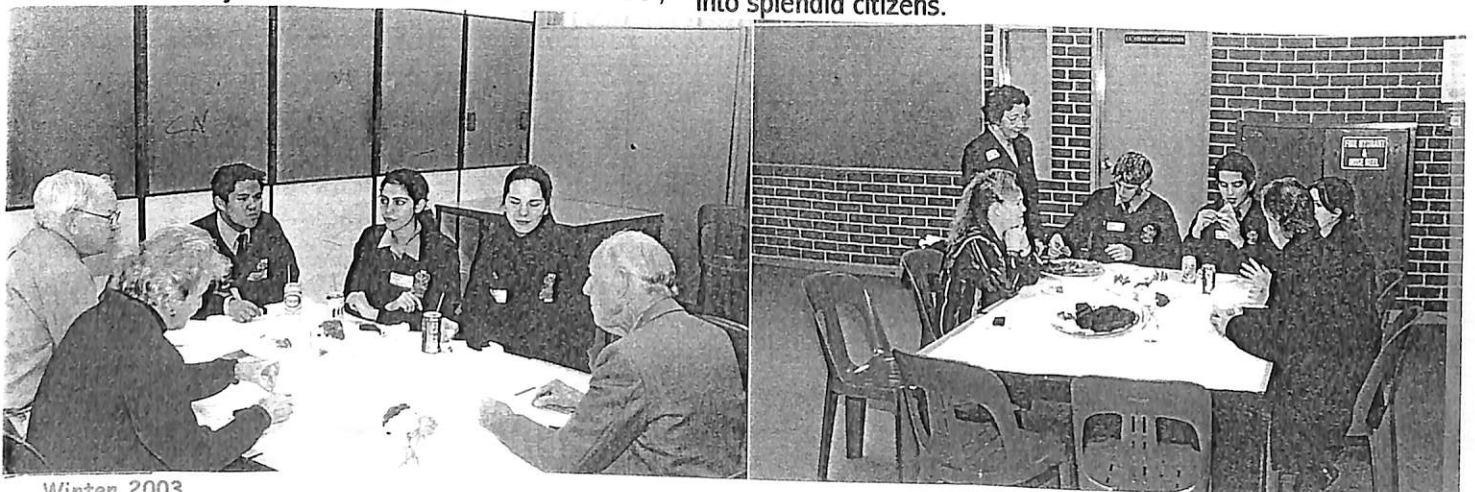
The cruel, wasteful system of saddling ordinary Australian kids with a huge debt, was another concern they voiced.

They shook their heads in wonder at our freedoms. We shook our heads in wonder at their plight. Not all is well for the young in this land of plenty.

But such thoughts they brushed aside. Their eyes shone as they grilled us about "the good old days" and indulged us by listening as we compared our experiences of the School with theirs. One boy admitted that his concept of those days gone by was of a grey and dull time- as if we had lived in black and white, like the old photographs. We explained that the characters on the staff, the memorable incidents, the formative cultural events, the sporting challenges, triumphs and disasters, and the interplay (did we mention flirting?) with our fellow students were as spectacular and colourful as their own experiences.

This they understood. They will understand it better in years to come as that glorious pile of bricks calls to them. Having met them I know they will do the Old School proud. And the nation. They are an even more polyglot lot than we were in the Fifties and Sixties but the DHS magic is still at work. It is just plain sorcery making great young Australians out of the "bubble, bubble, toil and trouble" of every tragic spot on the planet.

That is what I had really come to see because it was one of the things I remember most. A school for the kids of ordinary people of all kinds that so frequently turns bad history into splendid citizens.



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