



DHSESA Newsletter

MISSING PERSONS!!!



The Principal has received the above photo from Sharon Llewellyn, whose late mother-in-law Beryl Koetsveld is the Prefect at the front right hand side of the 1937 photo.

Can someone please tell us for the archives who are the other Prefects?



This photo of the same year shows Beryl in the door of the bus

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From the Principal—Martin Culkin

It is with pleasure that I make this contribution to your newsletter. Recent times in the school have been most exciting and energising. There is something about working in a great school with such a long history that draws out the special efforts in people.

During 2005 & 2006, apart from leading the school in its normal work of educating its current enrolment of students, I have been working with my leadership team - Mrs Robyn Stevenson, Mr Barry Wiggs and Mrs Jill Laughlin on the Dandenong Education Precinct Project. As anyone can appreciate, work to bring three schools into one school is time-consuming work. During the time referred to, the work has concentrated on the development of things such as the Educational Rationale, a Business Plan and the Master Plan.

I want to refer to the Master Plan in this article. It is significant that the work with the architects and with the other two schools has now developed a plan which will see the retention of the original (1919) building and its extensions. We will also see the retention of the Library Block and the Gymnasium Block. Demolition of other buildings on the site will take place once the project is funded—the next stage. Members of the Ex-Students Association are very welcome to obtain a copy of the Master Plan from the school or from one of the members of the executive. This Master Plan has now been signed-off by the School Council and will be submitted to the Department of Education for funding support on Tuesday 12th September.

The work so far has not been without its difficulties. There is still some concern in some quarters about the name of the school. The School Council has made it very clear to the other schools and to the Regional Office of the Department of Education that the name "Dandenong High School" must continue into the future. The Department of Education is also aware of the view of the Ex-Students' Association. It is also the view of the staff at the school that the current name must be retained. The support of the Association is most welcome in the school. A further meeting with the Principals of the other two schools, with School Council Presidents and with representatives of the Department of Education will take place on Tuesday 12th September.

Information regarding the work of the Dandenong Education Precinct has been shared through community public meetings and through the Reference Group which is a community based committee. This group will meet again on Wednesday 13th September to discuss the latest work—the Master Plan.

In closing, I am happy to provide information, briefing to members of the Association on developments in the school

Notes from Gary Matthews.....

Since leaving school at the end of 1960, I had close to a 40 year career in the electricity industry, including several years as an industrial relations officer in the former SEC's Melbourne head office. I later became assistant company secretary of Hazelwood Power Pty Ltd, one of the privatised generating companies in the Latrobe Valley.. I retired from this position at the end of 1998.

Carole and I have stayed in Gippsland since retiring, enjoying rural life in the foothills of the "Jeeralangs", to the south of Churchill.

I married Carole Marsh, formerly of Ann St in Dandenong, in 1969. Carole was a mothercraft nurse, and some may have met her in the maternity department of Dandenong hospital, where she worked for some time. We have two daughters, and two grandsons. Carole and I met while we were both members of the youth group at St James church in Dandenong,

I have tried to be busy in the community over the years, including the usual things, such as school councils, charity work etc. During the 80's I became a member of the Dandenong Council's "Historic Precinct" committee, where I became involved in a project to classify Dandenong's significant buildings. It's with more than usual interest then, and quite some sadness, that I now note that a re-development proposal includes demolition of a large part of the original DHS building, this being one of the buildings on the Council register. I'm hoping a way may be found to avoid this.

My role on the DHSESA committee is to facilitate contact with "ex pat" DHS'ers, in far flung corners of Victoria and Australia, and perhaps even further afield. So, if you know of "faber quisque" people who would like to be a little more in touch with their "alma marta" please let me know.

My email address is gazcaz@dodo.com.au and phone number is 5122 2363.

Students who began at Year 7 in 1981 are having a Reunion

on October 21st 2006.

If you have a query or can provide information for the Database, please contact

**Wendy Metcalfe—0408 358 067
or Email: wendy_met@hotmail.com**

Former Teacher, Greg O'Laughlin's Legacy

Among the many teachers who taught at D.H.S., Greg O'Loughlin was a gem. Greg was admired by colleagues and students alike, for his eccentricity and irrepressible good humour. These qualities in turn became a source of frustration to some of his flummoxed Principals. His lack of pretentiousness and instinctive egalitarianism sat well with students but not with the weighty authorities of the Education Department.

Greg died in March (19/3/2006) after a long illness. He taught at D.H.S for five years (1958-62) leaving an indelible mark on his students. Greg transcended his humble origins and by sheer force of intellect and a passionate nature engaged the world with comical wisdom and mannered elegance.

Greg was born in Jamestown north of Adelaide (20/8/1921). His father, Tom, a Station Master had a large family to support. Greg attended Wilmington Primary School near Jamestown and left after grade six, aged 14, something quite common then.

He began his varied occupational life as a junior railway porter, which, amongst other duties, included picking up cigarette butts- a task he found demeaning.

Sometime during the Depression the family moved to Renmark where Greg as a 'cash and carry' employee was compelled to hand over his pay envelope unopened. Once when temptation got the better of him he bought an ice cream for 'thruppence' resulting in the 'hiding of his life'.

Soon after, he became a drink waiter, something he practised with flair for many years in Adelaide and Melbourne. His devout Catholic upbringing prompted him to join the Carmelite order in 1946 to become a priest/friar. He lasted two years and withdrew.

His father died in the late '40's and Greg, ever protective of his mother, moved with her to Melbourne. His restless nature and innate curiosity led him to Melbourne University to study arts and become a teacher. He was a mature- age student relishing the cut and thrust of debating and the pursuit of ideas. He fell under the sway of Vincent Buckley, the poet. Greg's analytical approach to literary tasks was strongly encouraged by Buckley. Unfortunately Greg was so painstakingly slow in his examinations that he rarely finished the mandatory set number of questions resulting in undeserved failure and making it nigh impossible to finish his degree.

For a brief time, Greg joined the Public Service, and hated it. Having almost completed his degree he found work as a teacher. The shortage of teachers allowed this on the condition of further study. He taught at Northcote High, Princes Hill High, Dandenong Tech. and finally at Dandenong High.

He bought a home in Gladstone Rd. Dandenong North in 1960 and lived there with his mother. I remember his mother Lily as a gentle but very alert old lady besotted with her son and always interested in Greg's students. Greg's home became a veritable home theatre. Students wallowed in the luxury of sound cascading from a state of the art Hi-Fi, Philips Sound System. Here they reclined on carpet imbibing Beethoven or Olivier's Hamlet like pampered viziers. Greg's taste in music, food or cars always erred on the side of extravagance. Greg enjoyed the good life but only if he could share it.

Greg had a great social conscience and was highly attuned to injustice or cruelty. This propensity led him to join the administration of the V.S.T.A. (the current A.E.U) where he worked with Brian Conway the founding President of the Secondary Teacher's Union.

In the meantime Greg's life had begun to change irrevocably. Greg loved women in all their manifestations but was a novice in romantic matters and greatly benefited from the amusing tips offered by such urbane coaches as students Tim Kupsch and Malcolm Pettigrove. Thus it came to pass that Greg attracted the attention of Iris Breur, fresh from university and fascinated by his playful personality. They married in 1961 and children soon followed:

Amanda/Marie (1963), Dominic (1968) and Caroline (1971). The family shifted from Kew to Mt Eliza in 1970.

Forever adventurous Greg had gone from one extreme to another leaving the union and taking up the position of Development Officer at Peninsula Grammar. He worked there for fourteen years acquitting himself with great charm and effect.

Upon his retirement in 1984 Greg didn't remain idle, concentrating on his religious interests by working for the Catholic church and Save the Children Fund. In his inimitable style Greg took pilgrims to France, Spain and what was then known as Yugoslavia to visit holy sites and study the lives of inspirational saints.

From 1990 onwards, having survived a car crash and incurring broken wrists in another accident, Greg began to experience health problems. It ought to be said that I have never encountered a person so inured to pain and cheerfully stoical as Greg.

Former Teacher, Greg O'Laughlin's Legacy continued...

As his health declined Greg moved closer to the city in Prahran where he spent relatively happy days in Fitzgerald St. close to his beloved St. Joseph's parish church. A deteriorating heart and the onset of cancer ended his life at Cabrini Nursing Home Ashwood.

As a teacher Greg was unusual in that he would never lose his temper, and while chaos reigned in some of his classes, he soldiered on regardless. As distinct from Aldous Huxley who simply put his feet up on his desk reading some French novel while, according to George Orwell, the class ran riot, Greg continued explicating Shakespearian text unperturbed.

Eventually he wore down the most vocal clowns who yielded grudgingly to his earnest requests and began to take notice. With Falstaffian bombast and the physical grace of Fred Astaire, Greg would enter the classroom and make his presence felt.

Incidentally Greg was an outstanding if theatrical dancer, his intricate pirouettes causing much amusement.

Outside the classroom he would say to some inveigling student 'just call me Greg!' and somehow it seemed natural to do so.

Greg was a subversive ahead of his time. A.S.Neill, the Freudian based educator, would have welcomed him with open arms at Summerhill.

The more able and sensitive students discovered the wonder and depth of language through Greg. When reading an evocative soliloquy from Macbeth, Greg morphed effortlessly into Lady Macbeth, or in the case of Hamlet would dwell on the painful vacillations of the hero and Greg's dramatic rendition, made distinctive by his beautiful voice, left his literature students nodding in awe. Greg understood the elusiveness of language but also its power and beauty. Unsurprisingly, Greg also wrote plays and did public reading of plays for the A.B.C. He became a good friend of Barry Oakley, the writer, with whom he shared his literary enthusiasms.

To finish and illustrate the above point I will quote one of his finest attempts at orotundity, this at the age of 16:

"In promulgating your esoteric cogitations and articulating superficial sentimentalities and philosophical observations beware of platitudinous ponderosity. Eschew all conglomerations of flatulent garrulity, jejune babblement and asinine affectation. Let your extemporaneous descanting And unpremeditated expatiations have intelligibility without rodomontade or thrasonical bombast. Assiduously avoid all polysyllabic profundity ventriloquial rapidity and pompous prolixity"



Put simply, in stating your view don't beat about the bush, be brief and to the point. Vintage Greg!
May he continue his confabulations in the hereafter.
p.s. Thanks to Dominic, Amanda and Caroline O'Loughlin for their input.

Henri Licht

Editor: In thanking Henri for this contribution, and as an equal admirer of Greg, may I dispute, in the most friendly way, the reference to cars. The consumptive, soft-top Vauxhall in which Greg took we Drama Club students to the Traralgon Eisteddfod in 1958 was certainly not worthy of such a grand description!



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Membership of the Association

Membership of the Association is taken to be for a calendar year, regardless of which month the payment is made. Some people choose the option to pay for two or three calendar years. If a new member joins in the last 3 or 4 months of the year, their membership is usually carried into the next year. These practices have been adopted to be in line with the rules of the Association and to create the least work for the committee.

Calling all DHS Ex-Students, their families and friends

While you were at DHS did you ever...

- Play in a Band
- Sing in a Choir
- Perform in the School Production

*Do you enjoy attending concerts or going to the theatre? ...
Have you ever considered becoming a patron of the performing arts? ...*

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions then we need your help! The newly formed DHS Friends of the Arts Association will be holding its Inaugural General Meeting on: **Wednesday 1st November, starting at 7pm in G4**

Membership is open to all Ex-Students, Parents and Friends of the School. We also urgently require interested volunteers to become part of our executive and general committee; so come along and show your support for the Performing Arts program at DHS! We look forward to seeing you at the meeting!

RSVP (including nominations for a position on the executive/committee to:
Mrs Caroline Servadei (Music Coordinator) at: caroline@axionware.com
or phone 9792 0561 (during school hours)