



Spring 2002

Issue 28

DHSESA Newsletter

REUNION
ISSUE



Photo from the 'Waverley Leader', shows Don Turner, Marjorie Lampard, Elaine and George Gill planning the 60 years reunion. (A report from George Gill can be found on page 6)

DUAL REUNION REPORT CLASSES OF 1961/1962 Participant Henri Licht— 'enlightens' us!

Reunions are funny gatherings, especially given a long lapse of time. On a less dramatic scale it's like making contact with one's great grandparents as they step out from still sepia photos. You are in the present shaking hands with people from a different era. Yet they seem so familiar. Reunions also tell us as much about those who turn up as those who do not. Sentimentality, curiosity, indifference and superiority surface mysteriously.

(Article continues on page 4)

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From The Chair



Four groups have been planning reunions for the end of this year and the beginning of next year. These are for the Classes of 1952, 1962, 1972 and 1982 - back to DHS 20,30,40 and 50 years on!

The motivations for going to reunions are as diverse as the number of people attending. In their own way they all acknowledge the importance of the past. Some people hope to see their teachers to explain the influence they have had on their lives and to thank them. Others come to settle old scores and hopefully put past grievances to rest. Many come to see their classmates again and reminisce about shared times and catch up with current circumstances.

When reunions succeed magic happens. Decades instantly peel away and the past lives in the present. People relate to each other with familiar recognition and the sense of belonging is strongly rekindled.

I was part of the organizing committee for the CLASS OF 1962 REUNION held at the School on 12 October and it was gratifying to see smiles everywhere and to feel the excited expectation in the air. Magic did happen, due in no small part to the presence of ten of our teachers. It made all the preparation and hard work worthwhile.

The Association has always encouraged and supported decade and class reunions - as has the School. We wish the other groups great success and enjoyment for their special days.

Greta Jungwirth (de Vries)
President

President Greta, a not infrequent letter-writer herself, has been singularly impressed by ex-student and letter writer extraordinaire, Frank Hainsworth, now of Burleigh in Queensland. Frank's business card describes him as "author-writer-domine". A recently published piece on Frank records that he has written some 3800 letters to the editor over the last 14 years.

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Mentioned In Despatches

JAN TRESIZE (MACKAY), former Councillor and recently retired principal of The Gleneagles Campus of the Eumemmerring Secondary College, recently returned inspired from a trip to East Timor. With support from Councillors of the City of Casey, including ex-student Wayne Smith, Jan organised a fundraising dinner for the world's newest democracy. Special guest was Nobel Peace Laureate, Jose Ramos Horta.

Artist SUE JARVIS, who is regularly featured in these pages, has a current exhibition at the office of the City of Casey at Narre Warren. These paintings highlight Afghan themes. Sue's Gallery is in Blackwood Lane, Gembrook.

Remember Me?
I attended Dandenong North Primary School in 1971-72, and Dandenong High School in 1973-78, and would love to get in touch with any friends who remember me from those days. Names that spring to mind include Elene Andrigiankis and Teresa Lidonband and two young children. I would be delighted to renew links with folks in Dandenong.

GAIL SCHOLES (nee Godding)
18 Carnation Rd, Farnworth Bolton BL4
ODT, Lancashire, UK

Former Shire of Cranbourne Councillor, ex-student

ARTHUR WREN, died recently. Arthur contributed to many organisations, including Wallara (Dandenong) (20 years). Arthur was Captain of the Rye Beach Community Action Group, well as Hon. Secretary for 15 years. An obituary in the 'Herald-Sun' read, "Arthur will always be remembered as a hard working and community minded gentleman." Arthur was an uncle of Sue Jarvis, mentioned also on this page.

MAX OLDMEADOW has retired from the committee of the Dandenong Historical Society after 10 years holding several executive portfolios.

IAN THOMAS, Proprietor and Director of South East Newspapers, who over 28 years in the newspaper industry was often the purveyor of news, became news recently when awarded the Order of Australia medal. Congratulations Ian Thomas, O.A.

The Gilbert family of Officer, is often mentioned in this column. CLIVE GILBERT, father of CAROL (PORTER), died recently.

He attended DHS until he was 15. He was a founding member of the Toomuc Fire Brigade, inaugural President of the Pakenham Organ Club, Hon. Secretary and a Life Member of the Officer Football Club. He was a member of the Pakenham R.S.L. Club. Carol was present at the 1961/1962 reunion mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter edition.

Also on this theme, LEON PAROISSIEN, now of Potts Point, Sydney, was awarded an A.M. (Member of the General Division), for service to the Arts in Australia, as a curator, administrator, arts manager and writer, and through support for innovation and excellence.

Henri Licht ... continues

REUNION --1961-2--IMPRESSIONS

(Continued from page 1)

It therefore came as a pleasant surprise to see how well the day unfolded. They materialized from everywhere- Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania, the countryside and the coastline. All converged on that redbrick building that meant so much. The profile of those approaching sixty is quite different from those in their strident forties. Perhaps a more muted, reflective bunch. Yes! Yes! We can congratulate one another with career and material successes and know that most of us have made it- conventionally meaning, solid families, comfortable life styles and still in reasonable health. But these gifts quickly evaporate. What people were really interested in was the matching up of that elusive world of Dandenong High School during the 50's and early 60's with their current state of mind. After all, to state the obvious, a great deal of murky water has flown under the bridge over the past forty years.

You could see it in their faces and the bemused gestures. As one wit put it, "it's funny how everyone has changed except me." We were all too polite to say, "little does he know!" Of course! some of us have aged better than others. But in the end, who cares? At this fascinating age, we look into one another's eyes and discern what we never understood while at school- the transient nature of time and our inherent humaneness. Subconsciously, we wanted to resuscitate the spirit of the times, the tensions and tribulations of House competitions, the commitment to sport and academic striving and the embellishments of various misdeeds. And in a way we did as we lustily purged ourselves by singing the school songs with gusto. And I became reminded of that wonderful school motto *Faber Quisque Fortunae*.

Despite some mitigating circumstances we are indeed the architects of our own destiny. What struck me so forcefully at this reunion was the sense of compassionate exploration and dare I say it shameless disclosure as to where people were at in their lives. So, a few of us had some unfortunate marriages and personal tragedies while others have had the good fortune to have survived relatively unscathed. I never detected any sense of moralising or *schadenfreude*. This reunion was so splendid because people essentially accepted one another for what they were. The interaction was spontaneous and naturally engaging.

Apart from the ex-students, the day was enriched by tales from teachers of the day. Age may weary them but not their sparkle and well preserved intellects. John Robertson undoubtedly influenced by the Great War recounted the origins of the threatening science experiments drew a few laughs while gentle Henry Aaron took us back to his travels and geography needed to know 'to stop beating about the bush.' Max Oldmeadow arrived a bit late but didn't go unnoticed. Evelyn Dee kept on relatively unchanged.

But not intending any disrespect to the wonderful contributions made by the various ex-teachers I felt that the teacher who captured the zeitgeist of Dandenong High School most emphatically was John Menadue. Such enthusiasm, delicately under-Mollie Cowen, Edna Dawson and Betty Stainforth were missing. We, as students, were blessed to have had such inspiring guided tour which became misguided as we discovered that the open quadrangle of yesteryear is no more. Instead, no doubt for practical reasons, that inner sanctum had been concretized and rendered soulless. It felt as if Shakespeare's the Globe had been transferred to the Docklands stadium. This act of vandalism was commented on by various people. What price progress, eh what! The old library also seemed shrunken. Still the oval was there to remind us of our former feats and past glories.

And so the evening waxed and waned as we regaled one another with humorous and bizarre anecdotes. Photos were taken and photos were swapped. We looked at the display of youthful faces somewhat wistfully realizing now what Oscar Wilde (or was it G.B.Shaw?) observed that youth is wasted on the young. But we weren't too upset just a wee sad and misty. The day came to an end. People returned to their cars and familiar routines. But for one day, at least, we relived the riots and rigours of those early days. Strange to say, the weather seemed colder yet sunnier then.

Finally, the day wouldn't have been so successful without the effort of Greta de Vries, Sue Martin and Emily Smudek who organized the contacts, the food, the logistics and ensured that we all had a great time.

Henri Licht

Photo montage from 1961/1962 Reunion



President Greta Jungwirth (de Vries) and Julie Ross



Principal Martin Culkin and Sue Martin



Teachers Greg O'Loughlin, John Robertson, Frank Milne and Clive Worrell
Mrs Whykes, Ion Whykes, Lorraine Hicks, Henry Aron, Miss Dee.

From the School

The now traditional 'International Week' was celebrated at the school during October. The festivities emphasise peace and harmony.

'The Journal' recently carried a story about St John Ambulance calling for volunteers to join its 'Visiting Friends' program, and carried a picture of current School Captain PIA FARRIS-HERNANDEZ.

SONIA BRITO, the daughter of teacher PREMILA BRITO, was recently selected for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester.

BARRY JONES, O.A., recently returned to the school to 'Run The School For a Day', a program organised by the State Education Department.

School Nurse, KATIE STRAUSS, student Welfare Co-ordinator DEL WRIGHT and Chaplain DAVID ODGEN, together with students CASSANDRA CONWAY and DEJAN KARAC, recently presented a filmed highlights package of a trial anti-bullying program to the Secondary School Nurses Conference.

The State Governor, JOHN LANDY, A.C., M.B.E visited the school earlier in the year.

Nice to relate that the House Choirs compete annually for the 'Mollie Cowen Perpetual House Chorals Trophy'. Winner this year was Clematis.

Class of 1947/1952 50th Anniversary Reunion

Fond memories, stories (somewhat embellished), recollections, smiling faces, loads of laughter & frivolity flowed at the 'Best School of All' on Saturday afternoon 26/10/02, when the above group of students held their 50th Anniversary since leaving the hallowed halls.

It was attended by some 60 former students & their partners for a delightful afternoon-tea prepared by 3 of the committee ladies.

A tour of the school, which has changed significantly since these students attended, was thoroughly enjoyed, under the capable guidance of former student & now a Vice Principal, Mrs. Robyn Stevenson, who advised that there are now some 1240 students attending, compared to approximately 680 when the 1947/1952 group were there.

Many funny reminiscences were recalled during the tour of the various rooms. The day continued on to a dinner at the nearby Imperial Inn in the evening where additional colleagues joined the force, enjoying a sumptuous buffet meal together with further stories of old being related, interspersed with many bursts of laughter & conviviality, with old friends again seeing faces which in some cases they had not seen since leaving the school.

George Gill

FURTHER RUMINATIONS UPON 1960/61

FROM EVELYN BOURKE (MISS DEE)

"I found it an extremely enjoyable afternoon. It brought back memories of very happy days. I was delighted to trace the progress of students I had taught over 40 years ago and I rejoiced in the successes they have enjoyed."

FROM ALLEN CANOBIE

"We enjoyed meeting friends from 'yesteryear' - what a great group of people. It was wonderful to revisit the School, which looked very well cared for—but where did the palm trees go? All the old photos had palm trees in the front of the School. We are glad we took the time to participate".

FROM CAROL BOAG (ELLETSON)

"Thank you for organising the 'Back to DHS' on Saturday. I had a wonderful time—it was worth the effort to get there (via Sydney). Our group of friends had a great time catching up. Congratulations on all your hard work. It was very successful".

HEATHER WILDES (ROSS) writes:

'41 years on Class Reunion' was the title of the recent DHS get together. What a shock! Surely it's not that long ago since we toiled over the books and plotted against the teachers! And guess what, everyone looks different. It's amazing how you can recognise everyone from the school photo but you have trouble putting the 'now' face after all this time.

We were a tardy lot as we wandered around the buildings, recognising the rooms where memories came flooding back. Comments such as, "This is the room where we side-tracked Barry Jones", and "Where is the art room where Tom Hancy taught?" were heard as we threaded our way through unfamiliar corridors and up strange steps.

But it sure was fun catching up again. I found myself involved in many unfinished conversations as people rushed over to introduce themselves (after peering long and hard at faces). There just didn't seem to be enough time to catch up with everyone. And it was amazing to learn who had crushes on whom when we were all 16.

I thoroughly enjoyed my afternoon and evening visit to DHS, and would like to thank the organisers, Greta Jungwirth, Emily Fink, Sue Martin and Don Metcalfe and I'm sure many others for organising the event. Well done!

Oh! And by the way ...Ion Whykes can still twitch his nose, but still hasn't mastered wiggling his ears.

Heather Wildes (Ross)
DHS Student 1956—1961
DHS teacher 1966-1967

INAUGURAL 'FABER QUISQUE FORTUNAE' LECTURE.

EXCERPTS FROM THE 2001 ADDRESS BY DR. BARRY JONES A.O.

"I taught at Dandenong High School between July, 1957 and December, 1966, a total of 9 years and 6 months. My speciality was Modern History, especially Years 11 & 12, and I also taught some British & Australian History, English and Geography. As you are all well aware Dandenong High School is one of the oldest Metropolitan High Schools, dating back as far as 1919, and 2 of the outstanding "old boys" I came to know very well were Dr. John Farrands, former Secretary of the Department of Defence, (his wife Jesse, also an ex-student, is with us today, and in fine form), and my good friend Will Bailey, who was the CEO of the ANZ Bank 1988-1992.

The school was an extraordinarily interesting one, not the least because Dandenong and the surrounding area was undergoing a rapid, dramatic transformation often called a melting-pot and it was something of a microcosm of Australia as a whole. The period was marked by rapid population growth, an explosive increase in multiculturalism and the transformation from an agrarian to a manufacturing economy. In that period the school also demonstrated the rising levels of educational attainment throughout Victoria and most of the other states. When I matriculated from Melbourne High at the end of 1945 there were only 8 Metropolitan or Outer Metropolitan High Schools which went to Year 12. Dandenong High School among them. The others were MacRob., University, Camberwell, Hampton, Box Hill and Oakleigh.

Now Dandenong offered a broader syllabus than the last 3 named schools and students were drawn from a very large catchment area, which extended as far as Box Hill in the North, Caulfield in the West, Hampton in the South and Tooradin in the East.

My Dandenong High School period was also marked by increasing participation of girls, especially in Years 11 & 12 and changes in expectation about whether they continued in tertiary education, and it was very striking that Monash University was established in 1959, so in that period of Dandenong High School there was a great opportunity for students in the Eastern part of the Metropolitan area.

I was particularly delighted by the story in "The Age" yesterday called 'Ipso Facto - Latin is Dead but Not Buried', pointing out that Dandenong High School is the only school in the State's system still teaching Latin. I'm delighted to hear it, but I'm very concerned about the narrow instrumentalism of much contemporary education, concerned with short-term material outcomes, and I therefore congratulate Martin Culkin (school principal), for having the guts to keep Latin on.

So when I was at Dandenong, it meant that I had a fair amount of exposure partly because of Quizzes. 1958, which was my first full year at Dandenong, was the year of the Dulux Show, and I had my first overseas travel in May and June of 1958. Then between 1960-66 (inclusive), I appeared on "Pick-a-Box". I have been thinking a lot about those years because I have a chapter about them in the forthcoming memoirs.

I married in 1961 and I was the Secretary of the Anti-Hanging Council for 4 years. When I was at Dandenong I worked on my Penguin Dictionary of Biography, which ultimately came out as the Dictionary of World Biography.

Then in 1963 I was the ALP candidate for Bruce and the seat in those days extended a long way, all the way to Box Hill and as far as Westernport, and had a fair amount of the Mornington Peninsula in it as well, so it wasn't an easy seat, and in fact we got knocked off.

I decided to complete my law degree which had been put on the discard for awhile, partly because I became more and more involved in Teacher Advocacy. Ion Whykes and I ran for election to the Committee of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association and horrified the incumbents, who were a bit of an 'old boy's club', by topping the poll.

So I finished the Law Degree, started doing my M.A. on the Emperor Joseph II and at the time just before the Ryan hanging, there was a great explosion. Henry Bolte rang me up one day at school and threatened me and I said 'Oh well', That's enough. So, I left the system.

Faber Quisque Fortunae (cont'd from page 8)

There was an extraordinary diversity on the staff in my period, which illustrated the destructive impact of World War II, demonstrated, I think, very effectively in the novel by Angelica Szidat called 'Homeland'. If you haven't read it I think it deserves a read, and I think the school clearly was Dandenong High School, although different names are used, but you can recognise all the characters in it. Martin Rich, a mathematics teacher, was a Jewish refugee forced out of Germany by Hitler's rising power had lost many relatives in the Holocaust. Kurt Szidat and Siegfried Martini had served in the German Forces during the War. Jack Muskens who died very recently, had been in the Dutch Underground. Angelica's novel explores the inescapable tensions between the values, history and experience of the home, a particular home, (her own), whose members lived through the Hitler years in Germany and the predominately English speaking multicultural ambience of the Australian community represented at Dandenong High School.

I enjoyed the very strong support from the staff and pupils of the school especially from successive Principals, Len Cook and Ken Mitchell. They rearranged timetables so that I could take one or 2 days off each month to record batches of "Pick-A-Box". The school received very favourable coverage from my exploits with feature articles in newspapers and magazines and it even seemed to make learning fashionable. In an unexpected way I became something of a role model, as I was seen to become a virtual fixture on the program. I also made up lost time with the students by holding well-attended special after school classes cumulating in malted milks and toasted chicken sandwiches in the town. I also endowed a scholarship and gave many books to the school library. When the program was recorded in Melbourne, I arranged a group of Dandenong High School pupils to be part of the audience".

Barry recalled the great support from Principal, Len Cooke, who was a controversial person in some ways, strongly resistant to a revival of the cadets, but with keen cultural and musical tastes. He had, like Barry, a passionate commitment to libraries and sent Barry out on book-buying forays, for which the money would be found later. Barry alluded to the narrowness of some people to literature at the time.

In the audience was ex-student, Ross Fotheringham, who as a representative to the International Labour organisations, met Barry in Venice in 1985, when Barry was leading an Australian Delegation. Ross confided to Barry as they walked through Venice, that Barry's teachings about Venetian and Florentine art etc had seemed so remote during his schooldays at DHS, but it introduced he and his contemporaries to a 'new world'. It was therefore very exciting to be together in Venice, seeing things in galleries, taught by Barry some 20 years before.

In summing up the DHS experience, Barry stated "...I found the period at DHS really extremely valuable and I left with considerable regret." Barry then reminded those present of his 'after-school' life. Five years that were spent in State Parliament and then spent 21 years as the Member for Lalor in the House of Representatives. 1983-1990 was the period as Minister for Science. Barry's succinct summaries of the idiosyncrasies of Hawke and the development of Keating's musical appreciation were welcomed.

Then came the time in Paris with UNESCO, a time of expanding world opportunities, in educational opportunities for girls, although America and Great Britain were demurring at that time. This was followed by time on the 'World Heritage Committee', plus some years as a Visiting Fellow at Cambridge. Barry finished his address with a plea for diversity in education, noting that many leaders in science/technology etc, do not necessarily work in the area of their primary qualification, and for this he was grateful. Also quoting enthusiastically from Pascal, he praised the French intellectual as one of the most profound original thinkers who has inspired him to encourage people to think outside the square.

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**UNIFORMS
WANTED;**

Donations of articles of uniforms, especially the winter navy tunic, straw hats would be appreciated.

**VOLUNTEERS
WANTED;**

Come and join us for a pleasant 2 hours on a Wednesday cataloguing archives.

Contact our historian, Dawn Harris for further information.