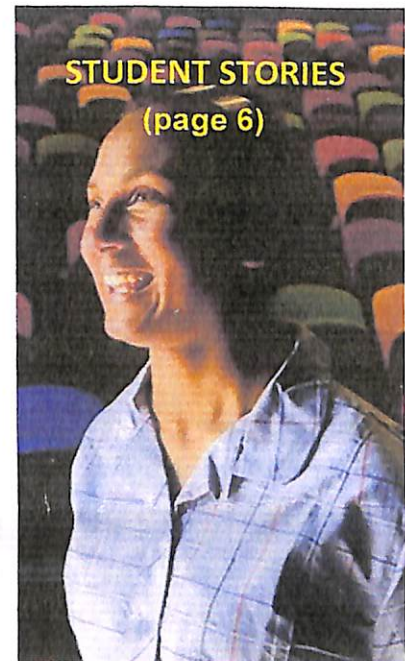


DHSESA NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2014

ISSUE 63

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Kasey Boavida is a recipient of an Edna Vukmirovic Scholarship.





Reunions

As a direct result of the marvellous work undertaken in the last eighteen months to sort through the Doveton and Cleeland archives, two successful reunions were recently held for past students and teachers.

On 13 September, the Girls' School and Cleeland High School groups gathered on the Ann Street site to meet old classmates, reminisce and say goodbye to the old buildings that will make way for playing fields for an enlarged school. Registration was in the old school hall where six to seven hundred people were greeted. An extensive collection of their archives, dating from 1957 to 2007, was displayed in the gymnasium building, to the great delight and interest of the visitors. Phone cameras were flashing all afternoon around those tables. A short speech I made on behalf of the School and the Ex-students Association was the only formality at the brief assembly. I began with:

"Welcome back to Dandenong Girls' Secondary School.

Welcome back to Dandenong Girls High School.

Welcome back to Dandenong North High School.

Welcome back to Cleeland High School.

Welcome back to Cleeland Secondary College."

These were all followed with cheers from different parts of the hall so it was obvious that all eras were represented. Then the final greeting:

"Welcome to Dandenong High School, Ann Street Campus."

This was met with hearty boos which made me laugh and remark that it was good to know where loyalties lay. I then continued:

"Place is important. The place of childhood and adolescence is especially important - and that includes school. It is tied to a time of expanding consciousness, of intense

emotional experiences, and growing awareness of the world and our place in it.

And everything is still possible.

Friendships and relationships formed can have a lifelong impact and with luck can last a lifetime. I guess that is why you are here today. When you walk around the buildings you will notice area of sad neglect. That is because everything will be demolished as soon as the renovations are finished on the Dandenong Campus. The buildings may go, but your memories will remain."

It was wonderful after all these years to reconnect with my own Cleeland High students and learn how they had fared in life after their school days. They had entered many and varied careers and most were parents and some even grandparents. To meet former staff members, my colleagues from the 1970s and 1980s, was both a delight and a reminder of the march of time.

Gratitude must go to Ralf Halder and his team of volunteers for the months of planning and their efforts on the day. Thanks are also due to members of our Committee who gave their time to set up and then supervise the archival display.

On Sunday 12 October, it was the turn of Doveton Technical School to fly its colours. The venue chosen by the organizers, Chris Holland and Lance O'Reilly, was the Dandenong Workers Club in Wedge Street. It was close enough to be able to look over the creek and see where the school used to be in Box Street.

Chris and Lance had taken the year to plan the reunion for students who attended the school from 1963 to 1990, after which it became Doveton Secondary College.

Most Wednesdays they visited the Ann Street Campus to make copies of original photos housed there and their efforts resulted in a display that took two hours to mount around the walls of the venue of the day. They were ably helped by committee member, Margaret Haywood, who took charge of the decorations.

All their hard work was rewarded by the smiles of hundreds of people who came that afternoon. Most were former students and their partners, and two former Principals, one aged ninety-eight, and a small group of former staff members also attended.

Noel Chapple, a long time teacher and later principal at the school, spoke of his strong attachment to the place. He said many teachers and students did not want to leave and kept coming back in spite of moving house or being appointed elsewhere. The reason was simple, the school had heart. This intangible but real feature bound people together.

Noel is still on the staff at DHS and works from the Ann Street Campus.

Then it was my turn. I said I represented the DHS Ex-students Association, although I had spent two terms in the library of the school in the early 1970s, which gave me a tenuous link. I said we understood attachment, our Association having started in the 1920s and continuing into the present. Because of that we had accepted custodianship for the Doveton archives and took this responsibility seriously. It was my hope that the alumni of the three schools could form ongoing connections.

New Buildings

On the day of our last committee meeting in November, we were treated to a tour of the new buildings, conducted by Principal, Susan Ogden, and Associate Principal, Mark Gow.

First was the recently completed Melaleuca, a huge structure situated between Ann Street and David Street. It houses facilities for drama, music, dance and physical education in the form of a 300-seat theatre, rooms for ballet, drama and music students, including a recording studio, and a very large double gymnasium. This ten million dollar complex will be a boon to the School and to public groups that can hire the state-of-the-art amenities. Students will have access early in 2015.

Next was Jacaranda, the Commonwealth funded, bonus building that has been in use for over a year. It sits just over the road at the end of Ann Street. It consists of a series of flexible spaces: classrooms, conference hubs, a staff kitchen and a large open central area.

It was all very impressive and should provide a boost for educational outcomes at the School.

Awards and Scholarships

Over the years the scope and number of our awards have increased.

This year an amount over one thousand dollars was made available from the

Edna Dawson Vukmirovic Music Scholarship funds to support four students. The main recipient, Misivila (Misi) Tanuvasa, a Year 9 boy, was given five music books relevant to his ability and needs, and the use of a new guitar. Three other students received specialist books to improve their singing and two vocal lessons each from a visiting teacher.

Reports indicate that previous recipients have all benefitted from the Scholarship and have shown encouraging progress.

At the coming Awards Night in December, Association awards will again be presented to students in the fields of music (The Bruce Rayment Award) and Art and Drama (Dandenong Festival Awards). Their certificates will be accompanied by letters informing them that certain amounts will be deposited into their individual school accounts to be used for educational expenses in 2015. After many months of discussion about supporting academic achievement, it has been decided that the Association will give financial recognition to the Dux at each year level from Year 7 to Year 11.

Also in the pipeline are family awards that will honour and commemorate significant connections to the School of former students and teachers who are, in the main, deceased.

VALE MARG STORK (ARCHER)



The suffering of Marg Stork has come and gone, as she passed away earlier this year.

She was a proud ex-student, and a fervent supporter of all things DHS, using her career of nearly 75 years at the well-loved Dandenong Journal, as a vehicle for expressing her passions.

Marg Archer was born in Toorak in 1923, but was brought up on a dairy farm, 'Ryecroft' at Lyndhurst. She was educated at Hampton Park Primary School and Dandenong High School.

While a student at Dandenong High, Marg was encouraged to write by teacher, Mr. J. L. Griffiths. However she relates that she always had the urge to write and was just nine when she had her first piece published in 'The Countryman'.

Her parents were also supportive of her efforts. When she was ten, her father bought her a second-hand typewriter, and it was her mother who took a folio of her published clippings to Mr. Bennett, then Editor of 'The Journal' in Dandenong.

Aged fifteen and still at school, Marg's first position with the paper was as honorary correspondent for the Hallam, Hampton Park, Lyndhurst and Cranbourne areas, covering the social life of the community. (Sort of Facebook by Remington!) After twelve months, she was appointed to the staff. She learnt much from Greg Dickson, who took over the paper and succeeded Mr. Bennett as editor.

During the war years she worked in the Land Army and for the paper, writing as well as doing the bookwork.

Marg loved her work and always gained the greatest satisfaction from writing.

Having grown up during the Depression she knew everything had to be earned. She was only in her mid-teens when she started work for The Journal, cycling here and there.

Her first husband, Ron Stork, was a third generation of his family—grandfather, father and brother—to work at the Dandenong Bacon Factory.

She was a fantastic collector of facts, and wanted to share them all with readers, something which would annoy acerbic sub-editors always looking to save space.

In fact, if it was one thing Marg struggled with it was the way newspapers changed, from text-heavy products that you paid for to advertising friendly handouts with far less information pushed into your letterbox.

Technology was also a problem. Marg never adapted to computer-driven journalism.

In the mid-'80s management did try to make her use an early type of PC. They were not user friendly and hurt Marg's wrists. She dug her heels in. The machine went and the clickety clack of the typewriter returned.

Sourcing ribbons and getting Marg's typewriters repaired was one of the banes of the life of her editor.

She was immensely proud of Dandenong and the larger district.

"I never saw her happier than when she was named a City of Greater Dandenong Living Treasure and she never missed an opportunity to spruik the city and its organisations, the CFA and Dandenong Show in particular."

Editor's Note: I was a great admirer and beneficiary of the talent of Marg Stork, and we express our appreciation of former Editor of the Dandenong Journal, Peter Simcock for some text for this obituary.

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES



THE PIG

The Dandenong Bacon Factory is mentioned in the **Marg Stork (Archer)** obituary on page 4. The Dandy Bacon pig deserves its own mention as a Dandenong icon. Many generations will recall this welcoming porcine, high up at the south end of Lonsdale Street. It is believed to be one of the oldest animated neon signs in Victoria, and it now rests at the Dandenong Market.

Dandenong North Primary is planning a grand reunion next year. You can register your interest with Committee Member **Margaret Haywood (Banfield)** at 9700 3973.

At a recent Melbourne Symphony Orchestra concert in the Warragul Cultural Centre, the **Editor and Lorraine Metcalfe (Vincent)**, caught up with **Lorna Petzke (Hosking)**, a student from the mid-1940's who still lives in West Gippsland.

...FROM THE CHAIR (continued)

Urgent Appeal

It has come to our attention that a group of fifteen "unaccompanied minors" is being educated at the School. That means teenage refugees who have arrived in this country without their parents or other adult relatives. These boys are being housed together with minimal support and little access to social services. Many restrictions are placed on their activities. They are studying to obtain their VET certificates with lessons being conducted at DHS and the local TAFE College. A major stumbling block for them is that they do not have the means to pay the subject fees, which can be anything from \$100 to \$600. We appeal to members to offer one-off payments for these subject fees so that these boys have a chance to become qualified and make a future for themselves. Please make contact through our website or directly to the School as a matter of urgency.

Greta Jungwirth (de Vries)

President

DHS TODAY— A THOUGHTFUL PIECE



The Age newspaper last month provided a substantial look at the state of Secondary Schooling in Victoria, with a page 2 feature about Dandenong High School.

On its website, the Age carried a heading, "Redefining success in year 12: stories of hope and inspiration from Dandenong High". The current aspirations of the year 12 students and their parents opened the story, identifying the potentially disheartening aura which can surround "success" at the end of a secondary school career, in an unequal society. It identified the well-known community expectations associated with picking the schools which will have achieved most "perfect scores", and which school will 'top the State'.

It then rightly pointed out that with schools such as ours, where most students come from poor families, where 25% are refugees and 96% have English as a second language, comparisons can be odious. Susan Ogden, the Principal, expresses concern "... around results because there is a perception in the community about what success looks like, and it's very much connected to academic achievement". The Age then ran the following profiles of the lives of three senior students.

"Kasey Boavida didn't think she'd make it to year 12, let alone become house captain, because as she does not live with her parents yet has to be a role model for a younger sibling who also attends DHS, so school was hard for her.

However, she does have a beautiful voice, and

this helped her get through VCE. She realises that school has made her a better person".

"Mehdi Sina (pictured) was 16 when he came to Australia seeking asylum. His mother and siblings are still in Pakistan. In the language of bureaucrats, Mehdi was an unaccompanied minor. His former school was the object of a terror attack, and closed for a month. He was detained in Leonora detention centre in WA before starting at Dandenong High at the end of year 10. When Mehdi arrived in Australia in 2012 he reckons his English was a three or four out of 10. Learning English was the most challenging, because it caused him to struggle with other subjects". He hopes to do biomedical engineering

Jessica Hosking has spent the last two years working in hospitals as part of her Aboriginal school-based traineeship with Monash Health. This was fortuitous, as this year, she and her sister were able to provide medical support to a violence victim by the timely application of CPR. Jessica completed her Victorian Certificate of Learning this year. She wants to become a midwife so hopes to go to TAFE next year and then university. In her opinion, Dandenong High is great. It has a lot of opportunities; you don't see much bullying; and you don't see racism. Everyone is really multicultural and welcoming and friendly.

These stories about the lives of three students exemplify the fervently held position of Susan Ogden, when she says that she "... hopes students such as Kasey, Mehdi and Jessica are aware of their own success".

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

Joyce Taylor (Little) has died, having been born at Murray House, and then lived the next 83 years in Dandenong. She attended DHS from 1941-1945.

Joyce had a love for music, and having obtained two diplomas from the London School of Music, she became a lifetime supporter of the Dandenong Festival, and was for many years the pianist for a local Scout group's Gang Shows and the Westernport Theatre's productions.

Other commitments were the Dandenong and District Hospital, President of the Mother's Club at Dandenong Primary School -1403 and the Red Cross.

Joyce was married to Cliff for 51 years and had two daughters. As a teacher, she suffered from the regulation whereby upon marriage she had to forgo her vocation. She was later called back to her beloved career.



MEMBERSHIP RULES

This is taken to be for a calendar year, regardless of which month the payment is made. Some people choose the option to pay for 2 or 3 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.

SCHOOL BADGES

Available from our memorabilia collection, and can be purchased through the Association. Price is \$10 which includes postage within Australia.

- A Replica school badge
- B Stick pin
- C Special 90th Anniv. badge

DHSESA OFFICE BEARERS

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WEBSITE/INTERNET

The web address is www.dhs-exstudents.synthasite.com. A further option for finding us is to do a 'google search', and simply type in **dhs ex students**, **without** clicking Australian sites, and you will see our site at the top of the list.

For further information, contact Gary Matthews by email at gazzacazz@hotmail.com or phone him on 5941 2507.

If you would like to receive the Newsletter by email, please notify the Secretary, as we are considering this option. Also for those over 80 years, there are no annual fees. Please advise.

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