

November 2013 News

Northcote High School Archives has been subject to intensive sorting and indexing over recent months and we have discovered that we lack photographs pre-1945 and would be keen to obtain any currently residing with ex-students or families. If made available these could be copied and returned. It is handy to have the names of those in the photographs.

Bill Horman

Bill Horman was mentioned in the last news and more information has surfaced. Bill attended NHS from 1952 to 1954. He achieved a career of distinguished service in law enforcement and emergency management. He is a Member of the Order of Australia, holds the Australian Police Medal along with a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and a Diploma of Criminology. He rose to the rank of Deputy Commissioner of Police in Victoria (Operations) and Commissioner of Police in Tasmania. He was involved in major international peacekeeping operations in his time as well. Congratulations Bill, on a life of outstanding service to the community.



Passing of Micky Wirt

Mark Warcaba, student of the 1950s, has written this tribute to his former class mate who passed away in July. We extend sincere sympathy to Micky's family.

Miki, Mike, Micky, even Michael Wirt was born Miodrag (my dear one) on 23rd December 1940 in Valevo, Serbia, of a Ukrainian father and a Serbian mother.

In 1954, at Northcote High School I was assigned to look after this new kid who didn't know a word of English so we established a hybrid Serbo-Ukrainian language which sufficed until his English progressed. Being so close, we tended to gravitate towards the same activities such as athletics, soccer, art and eventually into our common profession of Architecture.

At NHS, Miki excelled in all departments, becoming a feared goal scorer in our soccer team which became the premier of the High School competition. In athletics he was a standout in the sprints and long jump with many wins in the Combined Schools Carnivals. His art background led to great success as an

architect in London, Edinburgh and back in Melbourne with two highly respected architectural firms. Being elected Prefect and House Captain was proof of his popularity at school. I, along with his many friends, mourned his passing on the 24th July 2013 at the age of 72.

Passing of Stuart McDiarmid

The Association is saddened to learn of Stuart's passing on 21 October 2013. Stuart was, at first, a parent who was elected to School Council. He served as President of Council from 1985 to 1987 and again from 1992 to 1999, staying on after his sons had left the School. He was a hard-working President, who successfully realised the many splendid new buildings which are now enjoyed. This involved meetings with Departmental and political figures to convince them of NHS's needs. He liaised with the Fitzroy College community during the time of its closure. He served on the Northern Region's Education Board. He will be missed as a friend of NHS. Condolences are extended to his wife Noela, sons Andrew and Gordon, Carolyn and family.

October 2013 News

Morning Tea. On Tuesday, 10 September NHS hosted a morning tea and tour of the School at work. A goodly number of ex-students and staff enjoyed the outstanding music provided by the school's large Symphony Orchestra and, later, the Big Band. The high standard of the performances astounded many present and thanks and congratulations go to Mr Peter Lewis, Director of Music and players, for their time and superb playing. The tours were especially interesting as the ex-students could view classes at work and learn about the latest educational developments. A fine morning tea concluded the morning. The Ex-students' Association thanks the Principal, Ms Kate Morris, Ms Kate Challis of the Office Staff and all other staff involved for providing this opportunity and for the hard work to put it all in place.

Passing of Alec Weston

Alec was originally (1940s) a groundsman for the Northcote Council on Merri Park. He became a sports and physical education teacher of the School in the 1950s, although he lacked formal teacher education and was known to generations of boys from that time until he left the School in 1975. He passed away in September this year in country Victoria. He will be fondly remembered by many ex-students and former staff.

Vale Alec!

Dr. Noel Battye

The recent morning tea saw several ex-students mentioning old class mates with whom the Association has lost contact. Noel appears in a photograph in the School History (Page 145) in the role of Eustace P. Smith in the NHS musical of 1951 *Leave it to P. Smith* but little else was known of him until now. Noel proceeded to the University of Melbourne and was active in student theatricals in the Union Theatre. He completed degrees, including PH. D at Cornell in New York becoming a lecturer in history at Melbourne State College and, later, in the faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne. Well done Noel!

Can you help? At the recent morning tea one member drew the School's attention to the fact that Bill Horman, former Deputy Commissioner of Victoria Police, attended NHS. We haven't been able to contact Bill and ask that the member who mentioned this contact Gary on 03 9889 0740 or if anyone else can help please contact.

June News 2013

A highly successful back to lunch was held in June 2013, with over 80 attendees.

[2013 Back To Day attendee list](#)

The Back To Lunch was held on Wednesday, 12 June at Northern TAFE's restaurant (St. George's). Over 80 ex-students attended for a fine three-course lunch and address by the present Principal, Ms. Kate Morris and key note address by the Reverend Dr. Warren Bartlett OAM, ex-student of the 1940s. Warren has been Head of the Psychology Department at University of Melbourne, Minister and Moderator for Victoria of the Uniting Church. A very experienced public speaker, he spoke of daily life at NHS during the war years and of his personal experience of the wonderful teaching of his senior mathematics master, Mr. Roy Maher. Mr. Maher went on to be Deputy Principal of Melbourne High but is still remembered for his teaching by "boys" of NHS.

Warren spoke frankly about his professional life at the University and with the Uniting Church. Those attending, including former Premier, the Hon. John Cain, seemed to enjoy the day.

Thanks go to NMIT, Ms Kate Morris (Principal) and Ms Kate Challis of the NHS Office for the work put into organizing the lunch.

News from the Plustwik family

It was good to hear from Bernadette Plustwik (now Price) who attended NHS in the 1990s to 2000. Two brothers also attended around this time, Stephen and Peter. Bernadette studied Speech Pathology at La Trobe, practiced in the public health area and now operates a small private practice. Peter completed degrees in Arts and Law and works in management for Insurance Australia Group and Stephen followed up his BA with studies as a personal care attendant and works in this field. Their father was Deputy President of the School Council and provided much support to the School.

Dr. Barry York OAM

Barry attended NHS in the 1960s, is an historian in Canberra and is presently working to help celebrate the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. The Old Parliament House in Canberra has one of the few original copies. Details can be found at <http://moadoph.gov.au/blog/magna-carta-the-eight-hundreth-anniversary-draws-nearer/> Barry would love to see comments posted on his relevant blog.

April News 2013

Tom Darragh

Tom (Class of 1958) has recently been in touch with his NHS. Tom graduated from Melbourne University with a Masters in Science and a PhD. He was later honoured with Fellowship of the Royal Society of Victoria. He has been Curator of Fossils at Museum Victoria, Deputy Director of the Museum and Head of the Geology Museum. Now retired, he maintains an interest in cycling. NHS is pleased to renew the acquaintance and congratulates Tom on his achievements.

A 'Special' Reunion took place on Wednesday, 24 April. We reported last month that Brian Brown OAM had passed away after a long and distinguished career in Music. His wife, Dr. Ros McMillan, held a senior position in the University's Faculty of Music and caught up with two of Brian's old mates and NHS ex-students. Ros organised for all three to tour the School and listen to the splendid Big Band of 2013. John Fordham (1948) and Keith Johnstone (1953) are professional musicians and, as lads at NHS, were players in the Big Bands of their day. They spoke fondly of their teacher and band conductor, Stuart Wilkie. We were pleased to welcome all three to NHS and thanks go to Peter Lewis, Director of Music and Nick Murphy, Assistant Principal for their assistance with the visit.

March 2013 News



The Class of 1955 held their 2013 Annual Luncheon at the Watsonia RSL on Wednesday afternoon, 6th March.

In attendance were: Graeme Balaam, Lyndsay Burton, Ken Cunningham , Doug Fraser, Allan Gray, Geoff Henning, Ray Hood (& Gail), Harry Langham, Alex Lopata, Bill Newell, Tony Shallcross, Andy Treadwell (and Jan), Peter Tsitas and Allan Wilcox
(Photo-Back row, L to R; Alex Lopata Harry Langham Doug Fraser Lyndsay Burton Andy Treadwell. Front row, L to R; Allan Wilcox (holding the football), Bill Newell Peter Tsitas)

As the group gathered over drinks it was easy to see that the Annual meeting was now clearly a meeting of old friends rather than a reunion of strangers.

During lunch we remembered that this was the first annual gathering without one of our teachers as Alan Smith had passed away shortly after our 2012 meeting last March. Several spoke about their relationship with Alan and the remarkable career that he had at Carey after leaving NHS. We also remembered the recent passing of John Tsitas in December and several who attended his funeral spoke about the very large turnout of friends who came to pay their respects to John's family.

Lunch continued with the usual reminiscing and eventually wound up around 2:30pm though the last five to leave left a good 15 mins later as it took that long to help one of our colleagues (who shall remain nameless) to find where he'd left his car..Given our advancing age, we may need to keep this in mind for future gatherings!!.

During the day we agreed to again have next year's Annual Lunch at the Watsonia RSL on the Wednesday before the Labour Day Weekend, which we finally determined was Wed March 5, 2014. It was then pointed out that as 2015 would be the 60th Anniversary of the Graduation of the Class of '55, which as we all are aware, was an event that didn't happen in those days. (Q. When was the first NHS Graduation Ceremony held?) To celebrate this memorable occasion, we agreed that we should probably do something somewhere more memorable than the Watsonia RSL!! Suggestions for the location, time and date are welcome and we agreed to confirm this no later than our 2014 luncheon. We also agreed to try harder to locate our missing members and see if we can get them to attend. Those of you who live interstate or overseas should now start saving your pennies (sorry 5c pieces) for the fares. And to finish this on a very positive note, Bill has just informed me that he has just located
E. Barrie Kenney, B.D.Sc., D.D.S., M.S., F.R.A.C.D.S.

Dr. Barrie Kenney is Director of the UCLA Periodontics and Implant Surgery Faculty Practice at UCLA, who apparently graduated from Melb University in 1961.
Allan Wilcox

The Class of 1959 enjoyed a fine lunch by way of a reunion at La Notte Restaurant in Carlton on 28 February 2013.

The event was organised by John Gowans and was attended by as many ex-students as John was able to contact. The intention now is to have regular lunches of the group and contact John at gowans.john@gmail.com if interested. Head Prefect Roy Ward was on hand for the occasion as was Les Comte who served a period on the NHS Council. The "boys" enjoyed catching up and renewing acquaintance.



(Photo from Left to Right - Dave Warry, Roy Ward, Charles Parkinson, Frank MackNamara, Ian Nicholls, Peter Bennett, Alan Pinkerton, John Fawcett, John Gowans, Colin Glazebrook, Gary Israel [representing the School], Les Comte, Doug McLaren and Roy McCarthy. Present but not included Ron Tucker and Ian Southwell [Photographer]).

February 2013 News

Letter from Roy Ward

Roy was Head Prefect of 1959 as well as Captain of Darebin House and Captain of the First XI and has written to NHS. He became a primary school teacher and later Principal of Epping

Primary School. He has pointed out that in 1955 he captained the Under 14 Football team to the premiership under Alan Smith, Coach.

The team lost at one point to University High but the umpiring was deemed “unfair” and a replay was ordered with NHS winning. It is recorded in the history as “Rematch ordered” but should correctly be recorded as a premiership to NHS! Thank you for that information Roy.

Roy points out that in 1956 four Ward brothers were in attendance at NHS Roy, Graeme, Robert and Mervyn. Alec Sutherland, Headmaster, made all four stand up at assembly which highlighted this milestone for the School. Roy was somewhat uncomfortable with this attention.

Vale

Since the last news we have lost a number of people associated with NHS.

Bill Moorhouse

Bill Moorhouse attended NHS 1937 to 1941 and later became a cost accountant with Lincoln Mills in Coburg and later a public accountant. He was Captain of the First XI, Baseball team and was a member of Diamond House. He strongly supported the Ex-Students' Association and will be missed at the luncheons. He was a respected supporter of Scots Uniting Church, Heidelberg and passed away on 7 December 2012. He is survived by wife Rae and family.

Brian Brown OAM

Brian attended NHS 1946-1949 and became an architect before following a career as a soprano saxophone musician. He was for many years at the forefront of new Australian music and Head of Improvisation Studies at the Victorian College of the Arts. He had over 60 LPs and CDs of original music accredited to his name and his passing resulted in some major obituaries in daily newspapers. He played in the first Big Band at NHS and also captained the Under 16 Cricket and Football teams. He died on 29 January 2013 and is survived by his wife, Dr Ros McMillan and family.

Walter ROBERT Giles Bridges

Walter died on 9 February 2013 after a battle with cancer. He taught at NHS on and off over 23 years from 1973 to 2004. He was a revered teacher of English and History who was a specialist in Year 12 English and Senior Greek History. He was a co-author of *The Green, the Purple and the Gold, History of Northcote High School*. His perfect polite manner and constant support to his students meant that he was the 'Mr Chips' of his era. A large crowd at his funeral in Thornbury was testament to his standing as an educationalist.

The Ex-students' Association mourns the three men above and extends sincere sympathy to their families *Meliora Sequamur*.