

Newcastle Boys' High School Old Boys' Association Incorporated

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – 2011

It is extremely gratifying that membership of this esteemed organisation continues to maintain at levels of around 1,050 which is testament to the dedication of all those 'Old Boys' who regularly attend the Annual Dinner. It is also testament to the dedication of all the members of the Committee who carry out their duties with commitment and routinely attend meetings to ensure that the Association operates smoothly. I acknowledge their efforts and wish to express my sincere appreciation.

Being on Committee imposes obligations that one cannot expect to endure indefinitely. For that reason, I appeal to all members of the Association to give consideration to nominating for election to the Committee. Your participation will ease the burden on others, allow those who have served for many years to take a step back and, quite importantly, give you the opportunity to influence the working and future direction of the Association. The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 5.30pm on Thursday June 30 and your attendance will be most welcome and free of obligation.

The Committee meets five times each year mostly at Newcastle East Public School and I thank School Principal and Association Vice President John Beach for continuing to make that facility available to us. However, in March last year we held our meeting at the Waratah Technology Campus of Callaghan College and I thank Campus Principal, Dana Fuller, for facilitating that visit. Before the meeting commenced, Mr Fuller took us on a tour of the former Newcastle Boys' High School which evoked memories and recollections for all Committee members in attendance. It was interesting to see how technology (like Smartboards and computers) has changed the look of the school.

At the last Committee meeting of 2010 a presentation was made to former Honorary Secretary, Greg Box, who vacated the position after many years. Greg has endured more than his fair share of family challenges and we wish him well in the future.

May I also acknowledge the recent passing of an 'Old Boy' who, for a number of years, was our oldest member of the Association. Bob Power who had written widely in his capacity of boxing historian and to whom Peter FitzSimons dedicated his 'The Ballad Of Les Darcy' passed away aged 99. Vale Bob. He will be sadly missed.

I regret that, owing to a theatrical obligation, I was unable to attend last year's Annual Dinner through to its conclusion. In 'show business' parlance, 'the show must go on' and, while my show went on elsewhere, the 'show' at City Hall also went on without a hitch ... thanks to Bob Aus, John Hamall and other Committee members who work tirelessly to ensure the Annual Dinner's success. By all accounts, last year's after-dinner speaker, Russell Cheek, was a most entertaining raconteur. Some have described him as one of the best after-dinner speakers we have had in the history of the Association. Thanks to Russell for supporting the night.

No doubt this year's after-dinner speaker, former Newcastle Boys' High School student and last year's 'Australian of the Year' Professor Pat McGorry, will be just as entertaining, albeit in a different sphere of interest. We are fortunate to have procured the participation of such a prominent Australian citizen and our thanks go to Honorary Secretary Norm Rodgers for organising his visit.

The Association's historical collection continues to grow and is being meticulously catalogued. The focus has most recently been on the admission registers of Newcastle High, Newcastle Girls' High and Newcastle Boys' High Schools. Using digital photography, restoration of all registers has been completed. The collection now includes class rolls for 1912-13 and an inspector's observation book for the period 1914 to 1926. Our thanks go to Bill Storer and Peter Scaife for their commitment to completing this task.

Once again, in keeping with our past involvement in community events, I represented our Association at the 70th Anniversary Commemoration service for The Battle of Britain in Civic Park on September 10.

During the latter part of 2010 I attended a total of six awards ceremonies at Newcastle High School, Waratah Campus of Callaghan College and Newcastle East Public School. Academic prize winners were:

Newcastle High School -

Roy Davis Prize for School Community Achievement
Lewis Keys Bursary
Keys Family Prize for Best Science Student
Dr Alan Knott Scholarship
Margaret Howard Bursary
Caesar Smith Prize for Creative Writing (Junior)
Caesar Smith Prize for Creative Writing (Senior)
OBA President's Prize for Legal Studies

Terence McHugh
Michael Warner
Madeline Hiscox
Sarah Gray
Kate Nielson
Kate Mackaway
Elliana Lawford
Hudson Burns

Waratah Campus of Callaghan College -

F.H. Beard Prize for School Community Achievement
Brian Donegan Prize for Most Improved Mathematics Student
Charles Goffet Prize for Creative Writing (Junior)
Charles Goffet Prize for Creative Writing (Senior)
Keys Family Prize for Best Mathematics Student
Dr David Stewart Scholarship

Rebecca Joy
Patrick Navratil
Jack Malone
Laura Green
Jack Wivell
Tamara Burrows

Numerous students at Newcastle East Public School were awarded books courtesy of our Association.

I thank you for your support of this Association during the past and trust we can continue to count on it in the future. I wish you prosperity and good health and look forward to greeting you at the Annual Dinner.

David R. Gubbay
President
May 10, 2011