

THE ANCHOR



**Williamstown High School
Ex-Students & Staff Association
Inc A0041347A**

DECEMBER 2021

President's Report

Welcome to the December 2021 edition of the ANCHOR.

Christmas is upon us again and the corona virus pandemic is moving on to the next stage. We hope that all of our members and their families are managing to cope with the restrictions that are currently in place. I know it's been tough but as we move towards a more open society a few different options are becoming available for us.

Hopefully we can organise a General Meeting early in 2022. At this stage we are pencilling in **Saturday 27th March 2022**. Our ability to run this event will be dependent on the Covid protocols that WHS has in place at the time. Stay tuned!

We will be on the lookout for new committee members in the New Year. The committee has been very stable for quite a long time now so some are getting a bit weary. If you know of any-one who might

like to join us please let us know. Perhaps you have children who went to WHS that might be encouraged to assist.

In the last week or two WHS has been holding its final assemblies for years 9, 10 & 11. At each of these assemblies the Association has presented 2 scholarships valued at \$250 each. We have been able to make these scholarships available thanks to the donations from our members. Thank-you to all those members who have contributed.

Williamstown High School has had a very interrupted year in 2021. Despite this they have managed to complete the year and even managed to run their production of "Chicago" in the theatre at Pasco St. Everyone is hoping that 2022 is a bit more of a "normal" year!

On behalf of the Committee I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please stay safe and look after yourselves. We will be back again in 2022.

Hold Fast

Fred Cumming

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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WHSESSA
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Articles or comments for the newsletter can be sent to the above address or email to WHSESSA@gmail.com

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Williamstown High School web site :-
<http://www.willhigh.vic.edu.au/>
WHSESSA inc. web site :-
<http://tinyurl.com/whsessa>

DENNIS (D.J.) NILSON

By, Geoff van Wyngaarden (aka *Van Dyke*)

Dennis Nilson was a Physical Education teacher at Williamstown High School during the 1960s and 70s. This is the second part of his memories as told to Geoff van Wyngaarden.

Part 2 *(The first part was published in the September 2021 edition of The Anchor.)*

“ I was once told by a long departed original WHS student Eunice Johnston nee Pittard that in the 1940’s someone had tried to change the names of the houses and that there were strong objections from ex-students around Australia and the World. Eunice also said that that the WHS colours originated from support for brave little Belgium battling in the First World War against Germany.”

“Another bright idea I had early on in my WHS teaching career, I had noticed that lots of students played in church badminton teams. The Wiseman family invited me one season to play with them in the Refinery team. I then decided to form the WHS Badminton Club in the wide and open spaces of the Drill Hall with multiple courts. I was given every encouragement from Betty McTaggart (mum of students Phillip and Rae) and other parents Keith and Jean Tyrell and also David Lees. In the spaces of a few years we won many premierships and produced many state junior champions and at one stage had a membership of over 90 players. Sue Daly later on played on the world scene as an Australian champion.”



“Other memories of WHS include a house football game on the Fearon Reserve in the thickest fog that you could ever imagine.

In 1966 there were 3 of us (teachers), all of similar age on the staff who had FJ Holdens – the other 2 were ‘cartoonist’ Ron Tandberg and Alex Macys. Tanberg progressed to the dizzy heights of a national icon and won numerous Walkely Awards (for his cartoons in The Age newspaper Ed.).

Ron Tanberg had 2 separate teaching stints at WHS. During the second he travelled down from Wandong 3 days per week and was one day booked on the Melbourne Road school crossing. For some time police were depicted in his cartoons until a “cease-fire” was negotiated. Ron recently passed away.

Alex’s FJ was a “Heap” but being an enterprising “Science” type he found one of only two hills in Willy, the Cole Street bridge, and parked it there in the mornings and roll started it after school. Years later Alex was Acting DP at WHS.

“My only love for a school was for Williamstown High School. I am indebted to Phillip Parker and the doyen of the family Laurie Parker for giving me encouragement and support in my time at Williamstown High and giving me a place to live.

Through students of the school in my first year at the school in the 6 week summer break, I got a job as a night watchman at the Ports and Harbours Pier over which time Prime Minister Harold Holt was lost. In the ensuing 4 years, every holidays, I worked at the Clement’s Oat Mills on the Willy Back Beach unloading oats off railway trucks and then bagging and stacking which was a very dangerous job.”

“The best footballers that I ever saw in my teaching career that include 9 schools over 41 years included Jeff Scott, Richard Luke and Jeff Collins. The best student leaders included Jan Owen, Sue Mellis, Rae McTaggart, Paul Granger, Tony Richards (school captain) and the best leader at any level was Jeff Bell. He became a Primary PE teacher, quickly rose to Principal and had the honour of leading one of our early and biggest P-12 schools in Laverton. At age 54 Jeff fulfilled his life-dream of becoming a policeman. He recently retired at the rank of Sgt. Jeff was also a proud Wombat.

Of particular mention was the Girls’ Relay team 4 x100 metres (circa 1973?) of Leonie Parker, Rae McTaggart, Julie Duncan and Wendy McDonald who became “All High Champions”.

The best sportsmen that I saw at WHS included Paul Tyrell, Ray Powley, Ray Lawerson, Phil McTaggart, Tony McVeigh, John and Jim Handley, Graham Shaw, Hugh Lloyd, John ‘Daisy’ Dey, Bruno Kubicek and Gary and Keith Matty.

The best sportswomen included Sue Daly, Rae McTaggart, Jenny Tyrell, Judy and Marcia Lloyd, Jill Tobin, Agnes Veltmeyer, Julie Forbes, Anna Falzon and Ann Marie Burgoyne who recently won a Seniors surf title.

Some notable WHS families were the Parker, Garnsworthy, Shaw, Powley, Lees, Coates, Hewet, Bold, Tregear, Hall, Leister, Granger, Korevaar, Murray, Barnaby, Black, Burgoyne, Evans, Jobson, Camberias, Antworth , Cumming and Lang families, just to name a few.

The Davis family led by Emmy, Arthur, Noel (school captain), Bruce, Lance and the twins Glenn and Mark were all very much part of WHS life. Similarly there were the Norman’s who all went to Willy High led by Helen, then followed Paul, Howard, David (the beaver) and Warwick. All Normans followed their Father and had careers as 3rd generation seafarers. The babe, Warwick now Captain Warwick AO formed his own worldwide shipping coy Rightship. There was also Barry Swettenham (Michael) as a particularly bright student and contrary to most champion boxers, he breezed thru his matriculation year. He not only outboxed them, he also out thought them.

A must include is the very community minded and great contributor “The Dettol Kid” Rodney Dearing who was always into everything in his St.John’s Ambulance uniform .

The WHS Badminton club had the resident 2nd generation school-caretaker Keith Grieve playing, initially in long pants. He was a good player. Parents who played included Leila and Lance Powley and the mother of Richard Evans.

My most memorable teachers included John O'Connor (best teacher with kids), John Howard, George Jones and Brian "Rowdy" Halloran who spent 18 years at the school. The latter was a doyen of British motor vehicles nicknamed "Jack" or "Happy Jack" among the students. He often had a visible 6 pack on the rear seat and when students made remarks to him about this his standard line was "no, no, there not mine, I'm minding them for Mr.Nilson."

"WHS always had its share of Students of Greek heritage. They were all highly motivated and an asset. Michael Barbayannis and Michael Piritides were prime examples – good athletes and good students. The Latter told me one day he was holidaying back in Greece for a few months. Ages later he presented me with a rare bottle of Ouzo. After one Navy versus WHS football matches some of the sailors returned to my home with a small block of Antarctic Ice their ship had picked up from a "Foreign" ship returning home from its base down south in the Antarctic. We did justice to the block of ice...and the Michael Piritides Oozo".

"Other students who come to mind include Stephen "Biggles" Bigger. One of the early HMAS 2A students and still a cherished and much admired friend. A man of many talents. Along with Sandy Black and Shaun O'Sullivan (Willy Tech) their band played at our 1972 wedding reception in the then newly built School hall. Both Biggles and Sandy's name are prefixed by the title Professor- one in plastic research, the other in Cardiac surgery. No wonder the music was good.

Keith Jobson was a student particularly prominent in the WHS Cadet Unit in my early days. He exhibited great leadership talent. Despite pleas from many of us for him to be appointed a Prefect our pleas to the "Decision Makers" fell upon deaf ears. Today, Keith Jobson is a retired, highly decorated General from the Australian Army.

Also notable are Michael Hegarty, Geoff Farrugia, Colin Stevenson, Peter and Angela Bruzezze, Joe Khoury, John Price and so on. John joined one of the nation's biggest law firms, became a Principal there, and is now a State Ombudsman. He married Sue Hall. Sue's brother, Trevor Hall, was also a very good sportsman and Wombat organiser."

Finally : The Phantom Queries.

1. The Phantom Bell..... There was a Ship's Bell for many years mounted in the centre Quadrangle. It simply disappeared sometime in the 1940/50's
2. The Phantom Signwriter..... Circa. 1969/70. Overnight well written, white paint messages would often appear on the Pasco Street footpath near the main school entrance. Obviously someone with some connection to the school but who ?
3. The Phantom Bike Rider.....Circa 1972. One youth who spoke no English would not come to classes at all. Instead, he used to ride his bike in the streets around the school. Whenever he rode past the front entrance of our school he used to shout very loudly "Heill Hitler !"

These days D.J. and wife Jenny live in Geelong and are enjoying life. They keep fit and active by going on long walks and enjoying the company of family and friends. They visit Williamstown regularly to meet old friends. A true Williamstown character is the great D.J.Nilson.

Moya Palmer was going through her photo collection and came up with a few from her years at WHS.

Here's a photo of the Girls Hockey team who were the 1948 Premiers after defeating Mac.Robertson Girls High in a play-off at University High.



Below is form 3B from 1947. Teacher is Mr Kent, Moya is front row on the left.



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