



HENDERSON HIGH SCHOOL PAST PUPILS and FRIENDS INC.

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NEWSLETTER – July 2007

Dear Members and Friends,

In June we had another very successful re-union dinner at the Croatian Centre.

Helen Medlyn our guest speaker was very entertaining and enjoyed by all who attended.

We are already planning the next dinner for June 7th 2008. We will give you more details closer to the time.

We also plan to have a get together later this year and are hoping to have this at Henderson High School to allow you all to relive your school days again.

Starting in this newsletter is a 'memoirs' section and first up John Watkins (a student from 1958) has contributed some memories. Please see over ->

If you would like to contribute to this section please send to The Secretary

Email pastpupils@hhs.school.nz

Or Snail Mail PO Box 121 344, Henderson

Maybe you would like to tell us what you are doing now or have you done an interesting trip recently. We would love to hear from you.

Our **AGM** will be held Wednesday 29 August 2007 at 7.30pm in the Staffroom at Henderson High School. Please come along. This Assoc is for all of you and we welcome more input and ideas. Light refreshments will be served following the meeting.

Please pass on our details to any past pupil or friend you think would like to become a member of our Assoc.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to meeting up with you all again soon.

Help us carry on the message of 'The Past, The Present and The Future'.

HENDERSON HIGH SCHOOL MEMOIRS ADDENDUM FILE.

This file contains the three stories, I told at the 50th. Jubilee, on the Sunday morning, in the School Assembly Hall. Plus one other I have remembered since.

[1] The case of mistaken identity. Or how I was called to the Headmaster's office on a serious disciplinary matter.

In 1958, when I had only been at HHS for about 3 months, one morning at Assembly, my name, Watkins, was called out by Mr Simpson. When I answered, I was told to report to the Headmaster's office immediately. I knocked on Mr Woolcott's door and was curtly asked to come in and sit down. Mr. Woolcott then informed me that this was a serious disciplinary matter. The Whenuapai Bus Co. had called the school about some larrikin behaviour on the Hobsonville bus, the previous afternoon. There had been some swearing, cap throwing and other stupid pranks, and Mr Woolcott was determined to get to the bottom of it and punish the culprits. He mentioned a list of names, including Moors, Winslow, Lendich and Barry Watkins. What did I have to say for myself? Plenty, as it turned out. I timidly explained to Mr Woolcott that my first name was John, not Barry, and I caught the Taupaki/ Kumeu bus, not the Hobsonville bus. As soon as Mr.W. realised he was talking to the wrong pupil, he was most apologetic, and said I was free to go to classes. When I said that I was glad that I was not mixed up in that sort of carry-on, he said that he was a little surprised when I walked into his office, he didn't think this sort of thing was my "kettle of fish" at all. I was most relieved not to have received "six of the best" for something I didn't do, and I realised then, that Mr.Woolcott was a very thorough and fair man.

[2] My breach of firearms discipline, during Barracks' Week 1958.

In the 1950's and 60's, boys at high school had to undergo a certain amount of military training. This consisted of, I think, two periods a week, and one week of full-time military training called, "Barracks' Week". I had chosen the Air Training Corps, because, as I explained in an earlier memoir, I was [am] an aeroplane nut. This Barracks' Week, part of our training, involved target shooting on the school rifle-range. The rifles were .22 calibre, fitted onto a standard WWII type .303 stock. That day, Mr Tarrant was Officer Commanding, rifle range and Viskovich was Senior NCO. We had all loaded our rifles and were lying prone in the firing position, waiting for Lieutenant Tarrant to give the order to fire at will. That is to say, everyone else waited for the order, except Muggins here, who accidentally let off a round before the order was given! Well, Capt. Tarrant was not a happy camper. He ordered me out of the Firing party and told me that I did not pay attention and talked too much. Viskovich also put in his six-pence worth, making me stand at attention at the rear of the butts, while the rest of the group had their little ping-off.

[3] The day Mr Paterson gave me a caning, I shall not forget.

I was not a badly behaved child, perhaps I tried too hard to do the right thing sometimes, so I didn't get into a lot of trouble at High School. However, I remember vividly, the one time I got the cane and it really stung. The year was 1959 and we had Mr Paterson for English in the Fourth form. That day, towards the end of the year, Mr P. was having a really bad hair day. He was late for class, we were all at our desks waiting, and talking vigorously, when Mr P. strode into the room and bellowed loudly for us to stop the talking. This we duly did, but Chapman, Chandler and I were the last to shut up and we got it! Chapman was called out front first and Mr P. gave him two hard cuts of the cane. He went back to his desk, hyperventilating with a scarlet face. Next was Chandler and he got the same. Then me. Boy, did that hurt. My backside was sore for a week, but there were no lasting effects, and we were soon laughing and joking about the day Mr Paterson really laid it in.(PS. Mr Paterson was a relieving teacher and, I believe, that day in late October, or early November, he was told he would not be returning to HHS. Next year, 1960. That would explain the foul mood he was in, and the fact that he took it out on us.)

[4] Mr Monds and the antics of Fred Inglis, alias “Noxious”, in the Fifth form.

In 1960, we had Mr Doug. Monds for English. Our room was A1, Miss Wernham’s Music room. He was a very fit, thick set man, and I am very glad I never received the cane from him. He seemed to tolerate more silly-beggars than Mr Paterson ever did, and some pupils tried to take advantage of that. One was Fred Inglis, who was a runty little guy, who clowned around a lot. One English class, Fred was late and he tried to sneak into class without Mr M. seeing him. He did this by crawling on all fours under the desks. We of course knew he was there and the giggling and laughing soon gave the show away. Mr.M. spotted him, shouting, “Noxious, I’m going to get you Noxious!” Then he proceeded to stalk Fred around the room, using a violin bow he had taken from the music cupboard, to hit Fred with. We, of course, were all in hysterics, by this time, we thought this was the funniest comedy show for a long time. Mr M. caught up with Fred, and gave him a whack with the violin bow, which of course, broke in half. Mr M was very red faced, and put the broken bow back in the cupboard where he had got it from, hoping Miss Wernham would not notice. Of course she would. I’m not a betting man, but I’ll wager that Mr Monds would have had to pay for a new violin bow. A fairly expensive exercise.

Footnote: I kept seeing Mr Monds on buses that travelled to Mission Bay, on numerous occasions throughout the 1960’s. I guess he lived out that way. He recognised me, even in the late 60’s, early 70’s, when I had grown a beard, and he always waved out to me.

Fred, I am told, now lives in Outback New South Wales, where he owns a garage/service station. His brother, Gordon and sister Elisabeth, were at the 50th.Jubilee.

John Watkins. 12th. January. 2007.