Prized Principal

With Australia Day now behind us, and most people back at work, the new year is definitely under way. But we still have a couple of stories from last year to catch up on, beginning with our congratulations to the ‘new’ school principal Donna Pearson, who ended 2015 on a high note.

We have commented before on how much we value the working relationship we have with Donna and her staff representative James Clarke. We were not surprised, therefore, to learn of her well deserved accolade coming from the younger set – the Byron Shire Youth Council Principal of the Year Award.

Commenting on her award, Ms Pearson paid tribute to the Youth Council. “They are a really dynamic group of kids and the council is a great opportunity for our local kids to get involved in the community,” she was reported.

We add our congratulations to Donna and extend our best wishes to her and her school for a great year ahead. We are pleased to be able to count ourselves part of it.
Tips from Treasurer Chris above

Thanks to those who have renewed their ($10) membership for 2016. It’s not too late for the slow coaches to retain voting status, as the deadline is the end of this month, February.

Some members have indicated they would be making a direct deposit with their subs. However, unless you add your name, we cannot know if you have done it. There is a DD from Rent-a-Space. If this is you, please let me or the secretary know.

Non financial members who want to become voting members can do it easily. Membership forms are on our page of the school www. If you were once financial but have lapsed, or if you want to be reminded of your status, contact me.

Payment for subs and donations can be made by

- **Direct deposit** at any branch of the Commonwealth Bank, in the MHS Ex-Students Assn Inc. account, BSB 062 578, A/N 1022 4915. Please note your name and add ‘sub’.

- **Post** cheques to the Treasurer, 1/19 Cassidy Crescent, Bogangar, 2488.

    c.wakely.boyd@gmail.com

**Azi’s UN trip**

Members made generous donations totalling $350 towards Azlan Currie’s Australian Youth Council participation in the Australian debating team at the UN in The Hague, see the photo below of Secretary Robyn handing over a cheque to Azlan. It took a while to catch up with this busy student, but the story was worth the wait.

The trip of five weeks included four weeks touring Europe and one at The Hague for the Youth Council. The tour included Germany, Serbia, France, Hungary and Poland where she met politicians, journalists and activists all of whom opened her eyes to some of the problems being faced in their countries. This was life changing for her and has helped to focus her tertiary education ambitions to study law, politics and economics.

The UN Youth council was also a significant event. “The Australian team did very well,” Azi said, “and my topic for consideration was about child soldiers. It was chosen to be debated so we had to frame a resolution and it was passed by the Council.”

Well done Azlan.

Many thanks to the members who supported her in this unforgettable experience. We will follow her progress with great interest through her final year of high school and beyond.
Claim the date - Ed Wilson opens
Ed Wilson has been mentioned numerous times in newsletters, for his art exhibitions, book launches and gallery talks. Here’s another one for his fans. The gallery talk is on April 10 at Lavender Bay at 2 p.m.

From May 1, The Royal Art Society retrospective painting exhibition, together with a beautifully lavish, hard back edition of the catalogue brings paintings and poems by Ed, to the Lavender Bay Gallery.

Congratulations Ed.

Claim the date - AGM 2016
The AGM this year will again be held in November at the school library. The date is Friday 11, and for those who want to meet afterwards, dinner will be at a time and place to be advised. Everyone is welcome to both events, but financial membership is required for voting rights at the AGM.

Two more things
Don’t forget to notify us if your contact details change, and find us on Facebook to stay in touch.

Condolences go to Barbara, wife of member Colin Tandy who passed away recently and we were also sorry to hear of the recent death of the mother of member Paulette Taylor. We offer our sympathy and condolences to both these grieving families.

AGM 2015 and Afters
Above, committee members take time to check the 2016 calendar which was sold out, providing a useful addition to the costs of the Sports Person of the Year Awards. Keith Wood, Neville Marks and Nerida Dean (Siwicki).

After the AGM, class mates from the past got together for dinner and chat. Clockwise from below right, Paulette Taylor and Elaine Hulbert (Roberts), Joe Thompson and Neville Marks; the group, Joe Thompson, Keith Wood, Elaine Hulbert (Roberts), Nevill Marks, Paulette Taylor, Robyn Gray (Harkness), Gill Lomath (Archer).
Giving generously

As our Association matures, we become more aware of the numbers of current MHS students who have talents and gifts that need support in practical ways. We have seen how the school plans for its own needs through the Chrysalis program for vulnerable girls and the literacy and numeracy program preparing students for employment in the LANDE project. Last year, two scholarships became available thanks to the generosity and foresight of families with deceased estates.

When we adopt a project to support each year, we are guided by advice from the school, but there is scope for much more to be done, and generous members could lead the way. We were assured by Donna Pearson there are gifted and talented students who could benefit from the kinds of scholarships already on offer, but who miss out because there are so few available. There are numerous ways members could take part in this, offering, say, a one year bursary of $250 per term, a total of $1000 which could make a huge difference to some students. They could be offered by a school cohort, for example the Year of XX when a reunion is organised. They could be offered by a family whose numerous children, set up for life by MHS, combine to provide a sum for one year. For those who have done well in life and whose families were important or influential in the community, a scholarship in their name would be a wonderful memorial recognising that contribution. There is no preference about the field of endeavour in school life, academic or otherwise. Students must apply, the competition is keen and their commitment to their own education is essential. Staff assessors take particular note of this, ensuring donations are not squandered. Contact the president or the secretary if you would like to discuss this opportunity further.