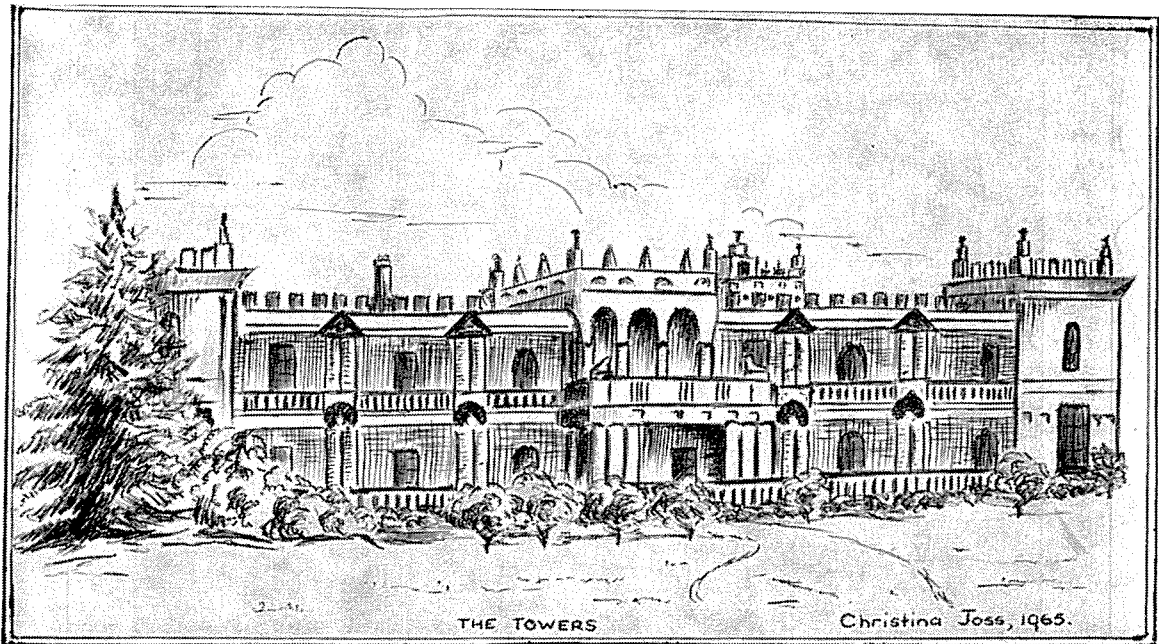




The Towers

MAGAZINE
of
Penrith High School
1966

THE TOWERS



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HEADMASTER'S MESSAGE

This is the last time I will be writing for "The Towers" Magazine and I would like to review some of the changes during my nine years at Penrith High School.

The Wyndham Plan with its core of subjects has eliminated "streaming" in schools. Formerly 1A was the Latin class, 1B the French class and 1C the Commerce class. A pupil placed in 1C could never be promoted to 1A.

Now all First Form pupils study the same subjects and placement is on merit only. There are numerous cases of pupils being promoted from 1C to 1B or to 1A.

The same policy continues right through the school. Subjects are studied at various levels appropriate to the ability of the pupils concerned.

The text book subsidy introduced this year will result in an ample supply of text books to pupils without any cost to parents. No pupil will be handicapped because of inability to buy text books.

The introduction of a large number of Scholarships by the State and Commonwealth Governments for students in Forms V and VI has eased the financial burden on parents.

The demands of industry and commerce for successful High School students continue to grow, and so students receive rewards for their efforts at school.

Our expanding economy is giving greater rewards for students who continue at school during the Fifth and Sixth Forms.

I could summarise these changes by saying that schools are more democratic; there are more opportunities for children and more prizes to be won.

There is no barrier to any pupil making the greatest use of his talents. There is no barrier to any student with sufficient ability and determination attaining the highest position in the country.

TRIBUTE TO MR. SHARPE

Mr. J. P. Sharpe, B.Sc. (Hons.), A.S.T.C., Dip.Ed., Principal of our Penrith High School for the past nine years, will retire at the close of this year, after 43 years' service with the Department of Education.

Mr. Sharpe gained his Leaving Certificate at Orange High School, at that time one of the very few Country High Schools (High Schools were found mainly, yet sparsely, in Sydney, Maitland and Newcastle areas). He graduated B.Sc. from Sydney University and commenced teaching at Cleveland Street School in 1924.

After service in a number of Country High Schools, he enlisted from the Staff of Fort Street Boys' High School and served overseas with the 2nd Fifth Field Regiment. On return from active service he advanced to Armidale as Master of Science, to Wollongong also as Science Master, to Taree as Deputy Principal, and then opened the new High School at Kurri Kurri as Principal, and finally came to Penrith High School in 1958.

What were his outstanding experiences and thoughts during these years? No, there did not appear to be any basic change in the Schools themselves, or in actual classroom procedures and atmosphere. The one definite significant revolution has been the opportunities, increasing to near universality, for boys and girls. At one time, a few selected children attended a High School. Now, Secondary Education at adjusted levels and choice is offered freely to every child. At one time it was rare indeed for a High School student to enter the prized professions, e.g. Medicine or Law. Doors to all these are now open to every boy and girl.

There is, too, an increase in degree in the freedom permitted to children — more self-expression and greater call for self-discipline.

Every child may attend a High School. The egalitarian principle is dominant — the democratic policy has been extended to cover the educational system. Many children in earlier days would not have been promoted to a High School to receive its social, moral and academic benefits.

Mr. R. Foote, who was on the Staff when Mr.

Sharpe arrived to take charge, records his impressions — a delightful summation which may refer to no one in general, but does refer to one in particular. "In every organization where men and women are gathered together to perform a job of work, the pace and sanity, the ease and effectiveness of their labours, receive tone and rhythm from its Head. There are few who, in the discharge of their duty to a thousand other human beings, can plan their welfare, evoke their energies, and link the ordered world of school to the tumultuous demands from beyond its borders, all this with gentleness, tolerance, understanding, a clear vision of the present urgency, and a rare insight into the hearts of men, women and children".

Hear what Mr. R. Docherty, B.A., the Deputy-Principal has to say — "The most outstanding impression is of Mr. Sharpe's depth of wisdom and his ability to solve quickly and efficiently any intricate problems which arise, whether they be concerned with people or with administration work, e.g. the directives from Head Office on new courses, class structures, scholarships, Departmental policy. He is renowned for his in-service training of staff and numerous promotions have been gained by teachers whilst serving with him at Penrith. The Staff members have great respect for him because they realise how well the school is conducted".

The benefits from Mr. Sharpe's leadership have been aptly summarised by the Area Director of Secondary Schools, Mr. R. W. Hundt, B.Sc., M.Ed. at the Speech Day ceremony 1964: "The continuing high standard of achievement of examination candidates . . .", "The good behaviour of pupils and their readiness to participate in classroom discussions . . .", "The pleasing team spirit which was made evident by the high level of co-operation among teachers . . ."

Both Mr. and Mrs. Sharpe carry away with them the deep respect of Staff and pupils, and the very best wishes for their health and happiness.

R. FAIRBAIRN, B.A.

SCHOOL CAPTAINS' MESSAGE

As Fifth Formers this year, we have the distinction of being the School's first captains under the new Wyndham Scheme. We and our fellow Fifth Formers are the first year in a new adventure in education. However, we are by no means alone in this adventure as our whole school is now operating under the Wyndham Scheme. One cannot help but think of the similarity between our school motto, *ALTIORA PETO* (I seek the higher things), and the aims of the new system. Six years may well seem a long time and there will be many obstacles in your path to the "higher things", but, as Mr. Sharpe frequently reminds us, we must work hard to attain this goal. We are extremely fortunate in having teachers as devoted

and helpful as ours at Penrith High and we all express sincere gratitude to them for their tireless efforts.

We wish to thank our Prefect Master, Mr. Howland, for his guidance and assistance throughout the year and also our fellow prefects for their conscientious work. Moreover, we wish to thank you, the people who have placed your confidence in us and co-operated with us in every aspect of school life. We sincerely hope that we have served you well and set for you a good example in the finest traditions of Penrith High School.

Your Captains,
CHRISTINE BOREC, IAN COLEMAN.

FAREWELL TO MR. SHARPE

1966 marks the end of an era at Penrith High. At the end of the year our Headmaster, Mr. Sharpe, will be leaving us.

Mr. Sharpe came to Penrith High as Headmaster in 1958 and since then the school has enjoyed the premier position in both academic and sporting fields. Mr. Sharpe will long be remembered at Penrith High for many things, one of which is undoubtedly his continual advice to

students that they must work for promotion at school and in their careers.

Mr. Sharpe's example of leadership has been responsible for the high standards attained by our school, and we feel certain that the best wishes and thanks of all Penrith High students, present and past, will go with him when he retires at the end of the year.

—CHRISTINE BOREC, IAN COLEMAN.