

# Dandenong High's Great Record Reviewed At Memorable Speech Night

## Dr. Cunningham Gives Some New Slants On "Freedom"

**A** SPEECH NIGHT to me is something significant—something important," declared Mr F. A. Singleton, chairman of the annual Speech Night of the Dandenong High School last Wednesday night, and that parents and children shared his opinion was borne out by the huge crowd which packed the Boomerang Theatre to the doors for the occasion.

**O**NCE again the popular and talented headmaster, Mr J. L. Griffiths, B.A., D.Ed., had the satisfaction of presenting a report which reflected outstanding achievements in scholastic and sporting spheres.

**D**ANDENONG this year fell into line with other leading schools, and abolished the title of Dux of the School, but there were some fine individual performers in all classes and Dr. K. S. Cunningham, prominent educationist, had a word of praise for many of them as he handed out Honour Certificates. The Headmaster's review also served to emphasise Dandenong High's unique record in the realm of sport.

**I**N a thoughtful address, Dr. Cunningham, M.A., Ph.D., Senior Executive Officer of the Australian Council of Educational Research, touched on several pertinent aspects of this Freedom, which people valued so highly that they were prepared to fight for it.

Gathered on the stage with the eminent visitor were the staff, and members of the Advisory Council.

Mr Singleton, J.P., who presided, said that the speech night not only enabled the headmaster to give a resume of the school's activities for the year, but also gave the young people an opportunity of vindicating their ability. It was one of the proudest moments of their lives when they received the certificate which indicated the success they had achieved.

"We in Dandenong have a High School of which we are justly proud," he said, "and there are certain factors which contribute to the success of any school. First is a keen headmaster and staff—and we in Dandenong are richly blessed in the staff we have. Without any degree of flat-

we have. Without any degree of flattery I say that our headmaster, with his outstanding ability as a teacher, his keen vision for the welfare of his scholars, and his untiring and unflagging interest in the individual students under his care, is second to none in Victoria. (Loud Applause).

Under him, he went on, Mr Griffiths had a staff capable of rendering great service. He regretted very much that some of that staff would be leaving them this year — particularly Mr Henry, whom they held in such a high regard. They congratulated him on his promotion and wished him all the success possible as headmaster of the Maryborough High School.

Mr Singleton concluded by stressing the character building qualities of school, and impressed upon these pup-

school, and impressed upon these pupils who, were leaving this year, the importance of upholding the honor and traditions of their school as they went through life and shouldered its responsibilities.

#### HEADMASTER'S REPORT

Presenting the school's 22nd annual report, Mr J. L. Griffiths, B.A., Dip. Ed., again referred to the increasing school enrolment and the urgent need of increased accommodation. For the first time for some years, he went on, pupils have been able to continue to Leaving Certificate Honours, and 10 pupils returned to do work at this stage. In addition, pupils who had completed the course for the Proficiency Certificate in Home Arts and Crafts were able for the first time, to complete the Intermediate Certificate.

In 1939, 62 pupils gained the Intermediate Certificate, while 33 gained the Leaving Certificate, 31 of them qualifying for Matriculation.

The subject of Domestic Science has been added to those approved at the Intermediate Certificate stage, and Latin has been added at the Leaving Certificate stage.

#### PATRIOTIC WORK

During the year £140 has been raised for school purposes. In addition, £50 has been sent to the Education Department's War Relief Fund. This amount was realised by the school entertainment, together with money raised by the sale of waste paper.

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

Of the money raised for school improvements, £30 was spent in providing additional locker accommodation, £13 in purchasing original water colours for the Art Room, while nearly £50 was expended on improving the school oval. About £12 was spent in ploughing and grading the ground purchased by the Dandenong Shire Council for the use of the girls. It is proposed to put the fencing of

this ground in order at an early date, and it is hoped to make full use of it in the coming year.

Library expenditure has been considerably less this year, owing to the unusually large amount needed to improve sporting facilities, but it is hoped that extensive additions will be made next year. We have during the last four years spent nearly £200 in providing new books. The beneficial effect on the work of the school, particularly in the teaching of English, has been very marked.

The Dandenong, Berwick and Mulgrave Shire councils have continued their bursaries, and these have been of great benefit to pupils residing in these municipalities. It is to be regretted that other municipalities benefiting from the school have not yet seen fit to provide money to assist deserving pupils living within their boundaries.

#### FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' INTEREST

I am pleased to report that the Friendly Societies in Dandenong have decided to contribute £12 next year to provide further bursaries. The practical interest shown by these bodies, and by the three councils already mentioned, is very heartening to all who are interested in the school's welfare.

School sport is on a very sound basis. The hockey team again won the premiership without being defeated, and for the first time for some years the senior basket-ball and the girls' tennis team were also successful. The cricket and football teams were again undefeated.

Our success of last year in the competition for the various trophies awarded by the Royal Life Saving Society of Victoria was added to this year. Not only did the school retain all the trophies already held, but it won the only one remaining for competition, the Thomas Hurford Memorial Cup for Girl Guides and Boy Scouts. The total which won the premiership of Victoria last year was doubled this year. The results are a tribute to the enthusiasm of Miss

a tribute to the enthusiasm of Miss Broughton, ably assisted by Mr Miller.

The House sports held in October were again very successful. It is pleasing to note that an increasing number of parents are attending these meetings.

The Ladies' Welfare Club has had a very successful year. The Flower Show held in October was an outstanding success. The number and quality of the entries were a fine tribute to the energy and enthusiasm of those who organised the show, which resulted in a profit of nearly £10. It is hoped that next year many more of the ladies interested in the school will join the club, whose meetings provide an opportunity for having a common interest, the welfare of the school, to make one another's better acquaintance.

The excellent appearance of the school garden is again a tribute to the enthusiasm and interest of Mr C. Wines.

#### CHANGES IN STAFF

The school is again about to lose the services of teachers who can ill be spared. Mr Henry, who during his two years' association with the school, has proved himself an unusually competent organiser, and an outstanding teacher, is leaving us to become head master of Maryborough High School.

Miss Braithwaite will be greatly missed. Her skill and enthusiasm, both as a teacher of languages and as a hockey coach, are known and appreciated by all connected with the school. Her work in connection with the school library has been most valuable, and its success is largely the result of her untiring enthusiasm. Miss Braithwaite has obtained well-deserved promotion, and is to join the staff of Echuca High School.

Miss Hill, who has been on the staff for a number of years and who is one of the most highly qualified teachers of mathematics in the High Schools, has also won promotion, and is to go to Bairnsdale High School, while Miss Mitchell, who is an old pupil of the school, is to take up her

pupil of the school, is to take up her promotion at the Matthew Flinders Girls' School, Geelong. We wish all these teachers the continued success they so well deserve.

In conclusion, I wish to express by sincere appreciation of the loyal and efficient service rendered by the staff during the year, which has contributed so much to a very successful year's work, and I also thank the members of the Advisory Council of the school for the interest they have shown in all matters relating to the school's welfare.

Mr J. McAfee and Cr Ray Williams moved a vote of thanks to Dr. Cunningham for honoring the gathering with his presence.

In his response, Dr. Cunningham took for his subject, "Freedom," and its special significance today. People, he said, valued their freedom so highly that they were prepared to fight for it. They believed their Democratic state provided for a freer life for the individual than obtained under Dictatorship forms of government. They were inclined to think of freedom more in a negative sense—as a mere absence of restriction—but it was much more than that. If a parent refused to send his child to school, society said that he was not free to keep him away. Probably it would not be long before they in Victoria were compelled to send their children to school until they were 15. The best answer to the charge that this was curtailing their freedom was that it was not a true infringement of their liberties, because without education a child was not free to share in the cultural heritage to which all were born. He would not be free to vote intelligently, or compete for a job. In short, he could not become an adequate citizen in a free country. Freedom was something which must be won, and we had to work for all the freedom that mattered most.

The most serious encroachments on their freedom were the great tyrants that arose in their own mind. These were far more serious than anything conferred upon them outside. First

were far more serious than anything conferred upon them outside. First, there was the tyrant of ignorance.

It was astonishing the number of people in the community today who were controlled by beliefs that were nothing short of superstitions—people who would not attempt any important business on Friday 13th, who believed in tea-cup reading, or that their destiny was guided by the stars!

Other tyrants which restricted their freedom were their emotions and prejudices. School was the chief weapon in this fight for inner freedom, and unless they put up a more serious effort to achieve it it was a bad lookout for them. There was difficulty in securing the proper provision necessary for schooling—there was some reference to that in their own headmaster's report. Victorian standards were in some respects lower than they ought to be, and the general community should wake up to that shortcoming.

The forms of freedom which they should be prepared to fight for were: (1) Free access to information, which was really vital. They could obtain some realisation of that from what had happened in Germany. There, rigid control of information made it actually impossible to gain anything but one side of a particular issue.

Censorship, although necessary in war, was an extremely dangerous weapon, and at the close of the war they should be determined that they should not have any; that was a vital fundamental of democracy.

(2) Freedom of speech, which was the very basis of democracy;

(3) Freedom to determine their mode of government;

(4) Freedom of religious belief.

Dr. Cunningham also suggested that they should fight for freedom for each individual to develop his talents and to choose, within certain limits, the particular occupation he took up. The individual should also be free to develop the athletic side of his life.

to develop the athletic side of his life. They could not regard a man as free who was so completely occupied with earning a living that he was without time for anything else.

Finally, freedom of movement was desirable. There were, however, obvious limits to the freedom they sought for themselves. They could not have freedom if it restricted the freedom of someone else, and they should remember that freedom inevitably entailed a certain amount of responsibility.

In conclusion, Dr. Cunningham congratulated the school on its excellent year's record, and extended best wishes for the year that lies ahead, particularly to those who were leaving and stepping out into the world next year. (Applause).

An enjoyable concert by the pupils closed the night.