

### 1966 Span Magazine – Principal’s Message . . .

It is only after leaving school that one really appreciates the feeling of having belonged to the school. This general feeling of “belonging”, of being wanted is so necessary to our happiness; but here at school – now – we seem to take it so much for granted, whether we are a part of a sports team, or class or club, or, yes, even a part of a family.

Just as every pupil gains something from school, so he or she gives something in return – either good or bad – depending on the giver. The tradition which grows up within our school is the “accumulated giving” of all pupils, present and past. So each should contribute in some way to the good name of the school.

Whitebridge High School is a young school and its traditions are being formed and developed. See that what you give to the school is worth giving – work hard, play hard, give your best at all times – do nothing which will harm your school’s good name. Establish your school in your hearts and in your minds as something of which you can be really proud.

### 1967 Span Magazine – Principal’s Message . . .

Whitebridge High School is now almost five years old, but is still laying the foundations of its future traditions, not yet having reached its full maturity. You too, are still at a stage of development where your future is being influenced by your present environment.

You can have knowledge, if you will take it. You can develop courage, decency and self confidence, together with a real tolerance of others. You can gain an appreciation of the lasting values of life and a realisation of those worthless things which should be discarded. Indeed, you can develop attributes in this, your present environment, which will make you into the finest character you are capable of being.

Be a leader, if you are capable of leading. If not be a loyal follower, but always discriminate between who is worth following and who is not. To your school motto “Viam Quaere Vitae” one could safely add “sid semper in meliora contende”, which could give you a good philosophy of life: “seek a way of life but strive always for the better things”.

### 1968 Span Magazine – Principal’s Message . . .

Many times I have heard that a school has reached maturity, when it has provided a full range of courses from First to Sixth Form. This, I feel, is a premature statement because the influence of one senior year surely forms only a basis for tradition to be established.

Our present sixth form has provided a good example to those following but much still remains to be done. It is only by a series of contributions by all that this school can attain that degree of maturity which will enable people in the Community to point with pride and say "that is a good school".

We look forward to active participation in school affairs by future senior pupils. Isolation must be guarded against because it is only by modification of existing attitudes that a fine and lasting tradition can evolve.

We wish our first senior students every success in their examination and trust that next year will give them that happiness and success they truly deserve.

### 1969 Span Magazine – Principal's Message . . .

A school cannot buy its spirit as it buys textbooks, nor can it have this spirit supplied as basic equipment. School spirit is built up within the school itself. The first leaders of the school and the first students play a vitally important part in so organising their actions, thoughts and aspirations that a school spirit emerges.

What are you contributing? Will the school be better for your being here or will you set a pattern that causes certain restrictions to be imposed on your fellow students, now and possibly for a long time? What is your conduct as an individual and as a member of a group – at school, at home, on visits and excursions, in public and in your community? Are you proud to be a member of this school or when asked do you shame-facedly mumble that you go to this school or that?

Your school is a good school. It enjoys a good reputation in your community. Does your community hold you in high regard? Your school is YOU: **your** reputation is **its** reputation. Shouldn't it therefore be a good one?

Not all of you have the same talents and so each of you will achieve differently. All that is asked of you is that you will do your best.

### 1970 Span Magazine – Principal's Message . . .

May I express my personal thanks and appreciation to all who have co-operated in helping the school in its many needs, so evident in the running of a big institution.

We have 1000 pupils, approximately 2000 parents and a total staff exceeding 70.

It has been so obvious that all have worked together, as a group concerned primarily with the welfare of the school. Pupils have, for the most part, given of their best and have not only maintained, but have enhanced the school's reputation. Mothers have willingly assisted in the canteen and by doing so have obtained finance, which has provided this school with a library and school equipment second to none in variety, quantity and quality. Teachers, too, have played their part. They have given of their best and we are most fortunate in having a staff of such high professional quality.

Now we have the fathers giving their valued services. Well over 150 parents have participated, for many days, in the construction of the shelter and covered way. For almost 20 week-ends, we have had marvellous support and the resulting structure is a tribute to their generous efforts.

My overall impression for 1970 has been one of co-operation by all, and to these I say thank you.

### **1971 Span Magazine – Principal's Message . . .**

A Principal's message always presents a problem to the writer. Should it be addressed to pupils, to parents or should it present an image to those outside the school?

A very wide spectrum of events, of persons, of personalities and reactions is available within any school community. On the one hand, we can consider the proud parent who can come to the school to see his son or daughter presented with a prize for special merit whilst on the other hand we can have a parent who broken-heartedly seeks advice about a teen-age child who comes home from parties affected by liquor. There is the girl who can say, "Why do you care about us, when our parents don't?" or the boy who complains that his parents "drive him up the wall" with their over-interest; there is the girl or boy active in school or community service, or the boy who was interviewed by police for stealing, truancy and other misdemeanours; there are members of the P.Y.E. Club who are concerned with

pollution control and protection of all that is good in the environment, or vandals who smash, destroy and ruin facilities provided for all.

Surely, within these extremes, there is a place for the large majority from whom we should expect social adjustment, controlled behaviour, good healthy living and a respect for those institutions which provide us with our way of life.

My message is a simple one. To all of you I say: "Participate in your school's activities. Use your talents to the full. Give good example – do your best, but know what your best is."

### **1972 Span Magazine – Principal's Message . . .**

My message, this year, urges an honest appraisal of ourselves and our actions. It is directed at you students, your parents and indeed at our own school policy.

The point I wish to make is that you young people are still moulding your future. To a large or lesser extent you come under the influence of parental and school authority. The development of your self-discipline and moral growth is the full responsibility of all of us, student, parent and school alike. We aim to give you as much of the desirable freedoms as we can, but the structure of our society is such that we must realise clearly that freedom does not mean licence to do what we want but requires responsible actions as well. I feel that we are not giving you sufficient and definite guidelines on which to base your judgements and to set your standards. All too often I am confronted by a student who is honestly bewildered at being reprimanded for some sin of omission or commission. He honestly does not realise that he has done wrong.

Let us all be quite definite about our standards, about what is right, what is wrong and what is just. You the students, on the whole, are a credit to your school and your parents. You have the potential to develop into happy, social beings, but this potential will never be realised if you are passive in your toleration of mediocrity. Be positive and do not, by your acquiescence, give tacit approval to those deviants amongst us, those petty thieves, rebels, vandals and the many who respect neither person nor property. Let us not hesitate, by our own continued good example, to set the basis for a future good and wholesome society. We can do this by behaving as positive human beings with a noble aim in life.

### **1973 Span Magazine – A Message from Mr Sievert**

One pleasing aspect of school life this year has been the magnificent response to charitable appeals. The senior students in sixth and fifth forms, with the help of some junior classes, have assisted in various door-knock appeals. Other charities to benefit have been the Meals on Wheels, Paraplegic and Quadriplegic, Stewart House, Legacy and others. Additionally, the school appeal for books for the "Sub-normal" school at Christo Road and the subsequent involvement by the school council and the Arts and Craft classes was a most pleasing feature.

However, I wonder just how many of our students become involved in this concern for others. Is the good example of the active ones sufficient to motivate other students and make them think – This obviously relates to group influence – is the influence for good? or is there an overriding group influence for frustrating authority?

Somehow, we seem more easily influenced for evil than for good. The few deviants seem to exercise their spell far beyond what one would expect. The thing that amazes me today is that students and young people want to "do their own thing", yet they are probably the most conformist group of young people in my experience. The group influence is so strong that real individuality seems non-existent.

My advice to you is to be your own self – think for your self – weigh up the pros and cons – retain your previous high standards – do not take the easy way out – Be proud of yourselves, your home and your school.

### **1974 Span Magazine – A Message from Mr Sievert**

This is a time of great change for Whitebridge High School. Building additions are being completed and, at this stage, foundations have been poured for the new Library complex which will contain additionally six classrooms and two science laboratories. This should solve our accommodation problems for the next decade.

Hopefully too, we look forward to the building of a multi purpose unit which serves as a gymnasium and assembly hall, so, perhaps 1974 might see us satisfied at last.

In Education too, we see great changes. Parents have become aware of the needs of their children and are becoming involved in the institution in their local community. We have increased monetary grants by government, plans for community involvement by parents and citizens, curriculum changes to make courses topical

and relevant, personal development programmes and the phasing out of the school certificate as such and its replacement by continuous assessment procedures.

All these suggest a dynamics in education which surely must include our students. Two major developments have been undertaken this year. You will be aware of our first production "Gilbert and Sullivan" together with a play for 1975 already being planned. The second innovation is the full production (including printing) of this magazine by the staff and students. Our appreciation and thanks must go to an enthusiastic team involving students, teachers and general staff.

### **1975 Span Magazine – Principal's Report**

Today's paradox is that whilst our youth and, indeed, much of our society is apparently non-conformist, it, in reality, is one of the most conformist in behaviour. Everybody claims to do his own thing, yet, peer and group influence is so great that we almost slavishly conform to the group mores and fashion.

The student today, as an individual, is a real person with feelings of self respect, sensitivity, responsibility and compassion, but in a group situation the individuality and the inherent traits may be submerged. Let us recognise, appreciate and applaud and foster those group activities which are directed to helping others in a real way – when groups associate themselves in various charity appeals for the Red Cross, the House with No Steps, Freedom from Hunger, the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, Legacy and many others – when daily assistance is given to "Meals on Wheels" and when the old and the sick are visited, their yards tidied and their lawns mown. – When tangible gifts are taken to people in homes and when entertainment is taken to the needy and the lonely.

May our students and our school always show concern and respect for others. May we recognise their problems and "give and serve". In this way will we achieve a full development and currently give ourselves that sense of self satisfaction.

### **1976 Span Magazine – The Principal's Message**

1976 has been a year of achievement. Academic progress has continued and sporting successes have been outstanding. The competition, the participation of students and the enthusiasm of the staff have all been responsible for the great upsurge in school tone and spirit.

The recent Appraisal of the school by a Departmental body of enquiry produced a most pleasing comment that "the appraising panel considered it a pleasure to visit Whitebridge High School", and that "this school was a friendly, happy place where personal relationships were held in high regard."

Charity work has continued and the students participated in Door-knock appeals; their assistance to the old and less privileged in the community merit commendation of the highest order. The vast amount of \$4,400 handed to the World Vision was excellence in itself and, whilst the school could not officially sponsor the appeal, the feeling of the students was such that they proceeded by personal decision with their parents' permission.

Notable events this year were the conducting of the Public Speaking Competition, the success of our debating teams, the Dramatic productions of "The Card" and "The Crucible", the introduction of a vocational night sponsored by the Charlestown Rotary Club and a job training scheme to embrace approximately 160 of our year 10 students – a progressive innovation. The continuance of the Personal Development Programme, and the new Remedial Reading Course assisted in the varied and continued educational experiences of this school.

### **1977 Span Magazine – Principal's Report**

No copy available at present

### **1978 Span Magazine – Principal's Report**

After twelve years in the school, I find that I am continually making comparisons of the present and the past.

The physical side of the school and its environs have changed little. The Library-Science Block has been constructed, but the school still lacks an Assembly Hall and covered walk ways are conspicuous by their absence. Students should not be expected to proceed from block to block without some form of shelter on wet days.

The school enrolment is still about 1150 and I can see little change in the future. The reduced size of the classes, with the same number enrolled, creates a need for more rooms, but accommodation remains adequate.

Looking at photographs of the school in 1963-64, one is struck by the uniform appearance of both boys and girls. Suits worn then are too expensive now; tunics have given place to dresses. Notwithstanding, parents and students have, for the most part, co-operated with the school in its uniform policy. Discipline by authority is being gradually replaced by a self discipline and whilst this works with most students, there are those who try to take advantage of the situation.

This school has a good reputation and presents a fine image to the community. This can only continue as long as we all do our best and have regard for others.

### **1979 Span Magazine – Principal's Report**

This report is not a report as such. Unfortunately Mr Sievert did not write his annual report for this year – but this report is direct quotes taken from an interview with Mr Sievert a few days before his death.

#### **Mr Sievert's Report**

When I came to this school, I intended to stay for five years. I thought that five years was long enough in any school. I could have gone to any school in Newcastle – but there's not one that I'd change to or one that would suit me better than Whitebridge. Without a doubt, we've got the best school in Newcastle – that's why I've been here for 14 years. Fourteen years is a long time to stay in one school.

I've worked in a lot of different professions. I've worked over at the B.H.P. in the open hearth, and under the open hearth. I've worked in a jam factory, in a paddock, on a farm, I've sown bags of wheat and I've even lumped bags of wheat. But these kind of physical labours are just nothing compared to the tension you're under in a classroom. And yet, I've had the greatest job satisfaction from teaching. I've taught for forty two years, and if it wasn't for my health, I would be going on until I'm sixty five. A school becomes part of you after 14 years, even the student body becomes part of you; you tend to look on them as your own kids; you're concerned with their welfare.

I think that Whitebridge High is the best of any school I know. Financially we're in a good position. There has never been anything in the way of equipment that's been wanted that we haven't been able to get. Where one school might have one of an item, we have 6 or 7 of that item. At this moment, there is nothing that the staff wants that they cannot get. The only thing that we lack is an assembly hall and

covered walkways. We could also do with improvements to the sports field and additional seating, but I still don't know of any other school in Newcastle in the same financial position as us.

There have been many changes in the school during the time I've been here. The biggest difference I can see is the importing from outside of social attitudes, many of which I dislike, into the school social system. The standards have slipped a lot in the school because of this. I feel that we should be leaders in setting of standards rather than accepting the standards from outside without questioning. Most students expect and take more freedoms than they used to. Class sizes have changed drastically since I've been here – when I started teaching we had 60 students to a class – now its down to 30 in Years 7and 8.

This school attains its eminence in the first place through its appearance – through its uniforms. The uniforms have since changed – we were one of the first schools to allow the slacks for girls. We were one of the first schools to allow shorts for boys and to eliminate ties in hot weather.

One of the characteristics of Whitebridge that has been commented on by people, who have come into the place, is that they get smiles, that the students look a happy group. I feel that most of you are happy. I know I've been happy here.

There's only one more thing I'd like to say about this school – I wish I was staying.

### **Vale Barry Sievert**

On 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1979, Whitebridge High School not only lost its long-serving Principal, but also one of its greatest advocates and supporters. In the early hours of that morning, Mr F.B. (Barry) Sievert passed away.

Although a Novocastrian, Barry Sievert was educated at St. Joseph's College, Sydney and Sydney University and Teachers' College, and then spent the next forty-two years of his life in the schools of the N.S.W. Education Department. Successfully he served at Parramatta Intermediate High School, Wellington Intermediate High School and Newcastle Boys' High School. He was then appointed as Science Master at Cessnock High School and Deputy Principal of Glen Innes High School and Gateshead High School. He was Principal of Cooks Hill Junior High School in 1964, Broadmeadow Junior High School in 1965 and Whitebridge High School from the beginning of 1966 until the time of his death.

Throughout his long career in education he was not only an outstanding teacher, but also an administrator whose opinions and knowledge were widely respected by his fellow teachers and superior officers.

Although as a Principal, he had been out of the classroom for sixteen years, he so loved teaching that until ill-health brought a stop to it, he still taught at the Newcastle technical College for many years of that time.

Barry Sievert had a great and abiding interest in all the pupils he taught, or who came under his control, but most of all he was vitally interested in the progress of Whitebridge High School and its pupils. Constantly his thoughts were directed into seeking ways in which he could improve the standing of the one and the welfare of the other. The depth of his feelings for both could not be better illustrated than by the report of the interview with him printed above.

Vale Barry Sievert

### **Relieving Principal's Report**

1979 has been a year which will long live in the minds of the people associated with Whitebridge High. The untimely death of the principal, Mr. Sievert, in July, shocked all members of the school and brought to an end an association that has lasted over 14 years. All members of the staff and pupils joined with me in expressing our sympathy to Mrs. Sievert and her family.

This year the soccer teams have been most successful. The Tasman Cup team reached the semi-finals. To finish fourth best team out of over 250 high schools is a most creditable performance and the team members and coaches are to be highly commended. Matching their performance was the under 15 team which finished second in their competition among 40 to 50 teams.

At the start of the year a training squad was formed. It seems to have had a beneficial effect on the sporting prowess of its members as most of our knock-out teams did well. In addition to the soccer, the Wales Cup hockey, 15 years Basketball and Open Cricket teams all reached the semi-finals of the region.

The Music and English Departments combined to produce "Oliver" and with the help of members of all other faculties, an outstanding production resulted. The one pity is that we lack our own hall in which to practise and produce such items. All

those concerned with the production should be proud of their efforts and we can certainly be proud of our pupils.

At the end of second term the Music Department produced "A Musical Extravaganza" that was a delight to those privileged to be present. Besides some outstanding individual performances, the Concert Band, Recorders and Choirs were a pleasure to listen to. An interesting feature was that pupils from one of our feeder schools, Dudley, provided an item and formed part of the Band and their standard was high indeed. All concerned helped to put the name of Whitebridge High in the musical world.

It is pleasing to note that while the cultural and sporting aspects of the school have reached such high standards, the academic side of the school has not been neglected and results have still been highly satisfactory. We expect this to be continued in this year's Higher School Certificate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff, and Mr. Allen in particular, for their efforts throughout the year and for their co-operation with me in this latter part of the year. I have greatly appreciated their help and under such circumstances, the pupils must benefit.

**R. D. Faraday – Relieving Principal**