NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

Parent Newsletter

April /May 2013
Issue 3

www.nhspa.nsw.edu.au
As first term draws to a close we look forward to a well-deserved break. We also look forward to term 2, traditionally a busy one for everyone, particularly our showcase performers. Given the up-coming holidays, this newsletter covers the months of April and May and therefore our next newsletter will be provided in early June.

**Showcase**

It's that time of the year again when our students’ talents are on display at our Showcase concert series. Early next term details of the program will be available on our website. Also early next term, tickets will be available for purchase either online (see our website), or via the school if no internet access available. I look forward to seeing you there.

**China Tour**

Our China tour featuring 70 students from years 8 to 12 leaves this coming Sunday 7 April. Highlights of the planned itinerary include:

- Visiting Beijing (performance workshops at local schools, visits to Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Great Wall of China, Summer Palace)
- Visiting Zhengzhou (performance workshop at our sister school, Shaolin Temple- martial arts)
- Qingyao Mountains of central China
- Visiting Xi’an and Lishan (Army of Terracotta Warriors, Big Goose Pagoda, Tang Dynasty Performance)

We look forward to sharing our China stories with you upon our return.

**Student Achievements**

Congratulations to Mia Carey from Year 11 who competed at the NSW Schoolgirls Head of River rowing regatta last month. It was over a month of organising to get to this regatta as the first rower to represent Newtown HSPA. As a result of Mia's work, NHSPA is now a registered school club with Rowing NSW and the "zootie" (rowing uniform) which Mia designed is also registered for the school. Mia spends many early mornings on the water every week and afternoons in the gym and is frequently racing on weekends for her club. She was in the final of the under 19 years four at the NSW state championships recently. However, I’m told that the chance to represent her school at the Head of the River was particularly special to Mia.

Congratulations also to the following students who have been accepted into the Sydney Youth Orchestras 2013 program: Newton Cheang, Ruth Kartika, Oliver Shermacher, Eve McEwen, Lauren Olofsson and Anna Latham.

I was pleased to hear from the mother of former student Ella Prince regarding Ella’s success at the Royal Academy (RADA) in London. Last month she performed the title role in RADA’s production of “Yerma”. It’s great to be able to share achievements of our alumni.
Similarly, I was thrilled to attend the Sydney Dance Company production “De Novo” in March. Our own Holly Doyle, 2011 Graduate, featured in this, her first production for SDC. Holly has been identified by Sydney Dance Company Artistic Director Rafael Bonachela as a young dancer with enormous potential. To help Holly realise her potential, Rafael and SDC have invited Holly to rehearse, perform and tour with SDC for twelve months, however, she needs your support. “A Year on the Wharf” aims to raise $100,000 to provide the financial support for an emerging creative talent to join SDC for one year. During this time, the recipient will work with Australia’s leading contemporary dance talent as well as collaborating with local and international designers, musicians and artists.

By supporting A Year on the Wharf you are helping create the opportunity for Holly to realise her dream. If you would like to support Holly, you can donate at www.ayearonthewharf.com

Parent teacher nights
Our three Parent-Teacher nights will conclude with our Years 7 and 10 night on Tuesday 7 May. Details will be provided to you before the end of term and bookings can be made through the link on our website. As always we seek to improve these important events and are in the process of evaluation. If you have suggestions we would appreciate your feedback at upcoming P&C meetings.

Thank you to out-going P&C Executive.
As you are probably aware, Darren Mitchell has agreed to stay on as our P&C President for the first part of this year, also many new parents have joined the P&C Executive. The nature of schools allows for this type of positive generational change and constant renewal. I am very much looking forward to working with the new team.

Many thanks go to Donna Huggart, who has stepped down as one of our Vice-Presidents after many years of service on the executive. I know the whole school community has greatly appreciated Donna’s commitment to the school during this time.

School reports
Term 2 is the term of reports. Year 12 reports are currently being written and will be distributed to students on Monday 20 May. All Year 12 students will have interviews with their curriculum advisers who will assist them in setting goals for the remainder of their HSC year. A reminder that the school provides a mentor program and the after school study centre to assist students to achieve their best.

2012 Annual School Report
Our 2012 Annual School Report will be available soon on our school website. If you are unable to access the internet and would like a printed copy, please contact me. We will devote some time at a P&C meeting in term 3 to discuss aspects of the report and answer any questions you may have.

Stephen Gray
Principal
In the final weeks of this term, there will be a China tour farewell concert at 6pm on 4th April with the touring party leaving for Beijing, Zhengzhou, Louyang and Xi’an on 7th April and returning on 18th April.

The Year 12 assessment week commences from 5th April until the end of term with no timetabled lessons. Students have received their timetables and have arranged their appointments for orals and practicals. It is important students follow the illness/misadventure process if ill or if any unforeseen circumstances arise. Contact the Year 12 Deputy Principal, Mrs Rajwar on the morning of the exam and provide supporting documentation when applying for illness/misadventure.

On 11th April, the annual school cross-country carnival will be held at Sydney Park. Term 2 marks the beginning of the autumn and winter seasons. It is most important our students are prepared for the colder weather and are appropriately dressed in full school uniform. This school has high uniform standards and it is an expectation that all students wear the correct school uniform, including school jumpers, jackets and coats as well as black, fully enclosed leather shoes to comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements. If there is a genuine reason for your child to be out of uniform, please write a note explaining the situation and encourage them to submit the note to the office at 8.30am where they will be granted a uniform pass. If your child has lost items of uniform please contact lost property in the Office. The Uniform Shop is open every Thursday from 8.30am.

Attendance is a concern with some students who regularly arrive late to school. It is most important students leave home with sufficient time to reach the school by 8.45am. When students persistently miss parts of lessons, or whole lessons, it impacts negatively on their academic success. We want all of our students to successfully fulfil their course requirements in all subjects. When your child is absent, either for a partial or whole day, a written explanation is required within one week of their return to school. This is a Department of Education and Community requirement. After that period, absences remain unexplained.

The Year 11 Half Yearly examinations will be held from 3rd till 10th May inclusive. It is important students arrive at school at least fifteen minutes before the timetabled start to the exam and have prepared sufficiently to do their best. If a student is ill or suffers any form of misadventure on the day of the scheduled exam, they must call me, as the Deputy responsible for Year 11 to arrange for the missed exam to be rescheduled. When the student returns to school they must complete the illness/misadventure form and provide documentation to support the application.

Year 7 will be given the second vaccination of HPV as well as Hepatitis B on 3rd May. Consent forms have already been submitted and are the responsibility of the nurses.

The annual Athletics Carnival will be held on Thursday 9th May from 9am at Olympic Park warm-up track and attendance is compulsory for all students. Students should be in full PE uniform for the day and when travelling to and from the venue. They can make their own way, or catch a bus from the school to and from the venue. The carnival will proceed unless severe weather conditions cause its postponement. Should the carnival be called off, a message will be posted on the school’s website from 7am or you can telephone the school from 7am.

NAPLAN tests for students in Years 7 and 9 will be conducted on 14th-16th May in the Gym. Students will be given written information regarding these tests, including the exam timetable to bring home. It is most important students arrive at school well before the commencement of the tests and are fully prepared with the necessary equipment, including a scientific calculator, ruler, protractor, pencil and pens. If you have any questions about NAPLAN, contact Mr Taylor.
There will be a working bee on 18th May from 9am to improve the condition of the school grounds. It is organised by the P&C and managed by the Environment Co-ordinator, John Caley. If you have a few spare hours for this event, please come along and assist.

Year 12 will be issued with their half yearly reports in a meeting with Curriculum Advisers on 20th May. This meeting is an opportunity for students to reflect on their achievements, perhaps set some new goals and devise a modified plan for the upcoming assessments, including trial HSC.

Our Showcase season begins this month. The program looks fabulous and we extend invitations for you to attend as many concerts as you can. Tickets in advance are available from the front office, can be booked on line or can be purchased on the night subject to availability. I look forward to seeing you there.

If you have any welfare concerns about your child, particularly for Years 7, 9 and 11 do not hesitate to call me.

Peter Shields
Deputy Principal
The school will be hosting the next two rounds of **parent teacher interviews**, with Years 8 and 11 on Wednesday 3rd April and Years 7 and 10 on Tuesday 7th May. Both evenings will run between 4-7pm. Appointments are essential for these evenings and as you may know this year we are trialling an online booking system for parents. Parents will be able to access the online booking link on the school’s website [www.newtownh.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.newtownh.schools.nsw.edu.au) and follow the prompts. This is a great opportunity for parents of new Year 7 and 11 students to come and meet the teachers of their child.

The **2013 Expanding Horizons China tour**, with 72 students participating, leaves for Beijing and Zhengzhou, on Sunday 7th April. Our Drama, Dance and Music students in Years 7 to 12 will be showcasing their skills to schools and community groups during their stay in China. We wish them good luck and look forward to their return. It is sure to be a wonderful experience.

The **China Tour Farewell concert** will be held in the Studio Theatre on Thursday 4th April at 6pm. Tickets will be available for purchase at the door.

The **Year 12 Half Yearly Assessment Week** commences on Friday 5th April and will run until Friday of Term 1 Week 11. I would like to wish the cohort all the very best. During the assessment period Year 12 students will not have regular classes and they are to be at school only on the day and time of their assessment tasks. If a student believes they have a case for illness/misadventure they must report to the Deputy immediately upon their arrival to school.

Year 12 will be the first year group to be issued their **semester one reports** on Monday 20th May. Students will be issued with an interview time to meet with their curriculum advisor and it will be at this meeting where reports will be distributed and goals and strategies for improvement discussed and set for implementation over the next few terms. It is important for students to reflect on the feedback received from their teachers and seek to act on this advice as they approach their next round of assessment tasks.

The **school cross country carnival** will be held on Thursday 11th April. The carnival is compulsory for all Year 7 students and optional for Year 8 to 12 students. The carnival will form the basis of the school team selection for the Bligh Zone Cross Country Carnival to be held in Term 2.

**School development days** occur on day one of Terms 1, 2 and 3 as well as the last two days of Term 4 every year. This year the government has allocated an additional school development day, on Day Two of Term 2 (**Tuesday 30 April**) to give teachers time to prepare for the implementation of the new Australian Curriculum in 2014. Students will resume school after the school holidays on Wednesday 1st May.

The **Year 11 half yearly assessment week** will commence on Friday 3rd May. I would like to wish this cohort all the very best as they sit for their first round of formal assessments under exam conditions. We are anticipating that the Year 11 students will approach this assessment period very seriously and follow the expectations the school sets in terms of appropriate behaviour and procedures that will be communicated to the students. It is important that all students arrive in full school uniform and on time for each task. Students who arrive late to a task will not be given extra time to complete the task, therefore it is vital that students allow enough travel time to ensure that they arrive on time. If a student has a case for illness/misadventure they are required to report to the Deputy immediately upon their arrival to school.
The **Athletics Carnival** will be held on Monday 9th May at Homebush. All students should be aware of their House groupings for 2013 and House meetings will be held on Thursday 2nd May to communicate key information to students. We are anticipating a beautiful day for the carnival however; in the case of extreme wet weather and electrical activity please check the school website where it will be communicated if the carnival is going ahead or not. If parents are unable to access the Internet from home, please call the school from 7:30am for confirmation. I would like to thank our sport organisers Laura Bivona and Sam Byrne, who have made all the necessary arrangements to ensure that our athletics carnival is a successful and enjoyable day.

The **NAPLAN tests for Years 7 and 9** shall take place in Week 3 from Tuesday 14th May to Thursday 16th May. These national tests will be run in the school gymnasium and the organisation for the three days will be distributed to staff and students involved. I would like to wish the Year 7 and 9 groups good luck and the school is again anticipating very positive student achievement in these tests.

Our **semester one showcase season** also commences in Week 4 of Term 2. The showcase program looks fantastic and features a very comprehensive display of what our students and their teachers have been working on over the past term as part of the co curricula program. I would encourage you all to attend the evening performances over the next few weeks, particularly the new members of our school community. The showcase concerts are a true testament to the opportunities this school provides for our students and are always a very enjoyable evening out. The showcase booking sheets will be available shortly on the website for parents and all tickets will be able to be purchased through the online booking system, which will allow parents to choose their seats, pay and print their own tickets online.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any concerns. I am available to assist our Years 8, 10 and 12 parents with any specific welfare or school matters. Hope you have a wonderful break and I look forward to seeing you at the showcase concerts in Term 2.

Nilaufer Rajwar  
Relieving Deputy Principal
The next P&C Meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 April at 6pm in the school common room. Everyone is invited to come along, meet other parents and play an active role in the school community.

The AGM on 12 March re-elected Darren Mitchell as interim president and elected Katie Mann and Terry Bail as vice presidents.

Ross Moffat and Kelly Burke were re-elected as treasurer and secretary respectively.

Many thanks to Donna Huggart who after eight years tireless service on the P & C is stepping down from the executive.

NHSPA P&C Proudly Presents...Afternoon Tea with the Agents
The Performing and Visual Arts Subcommittee of the NHSPA P&C will be hosting a series of afternoon teas with professional arts practitioners this year in order to give NHSPA students greater exposure to the range of careers available in the creative arts and the opportunity to hear how different arts professionals "got there", what they do, and to pick their brains about "how you get there". The first of these will be on Tuesday 14 May at 5.30pm in the Studio Theatre, and will be an Afternoon Tea with the Agents.

Natasha Harrison and Trish McAskill are from United Management, a Sydney-based actors’ agency. They both have extensive experience working inside theatre companies, as artist agents and in developing young artists and managing established artists’ careers across theatre, TV and film.

So come along to the Studio Theatre and chew the fat with Natasha and Trish - refreshments will be available and parents are welcome. A P&C meeting will follow at 7pm.

Please note this is **not** a casting call...!

What: Afternoon Tea with the Agents  
When: 5.30-6.45pm, Tuesday 14 May  
Where: Studio Theatre, NHSPA

**GROUNDS WORKING BEE - SATURDAY 18 MAY 2013 9AM**
The next parent and student working bee to maintain and improve the school grounds is planned for Saturday 18th May 9am.
Projects planned include: putting in a hundred new plants, building a tool shed, raising the water tank beside the vege garden and maintaining the rainwater system.
To make a suggestion or volunteer some particular skill (including coordinating an area of work) email John Caley at j.m.caley@gmail.com No particular skills? Don't worry, there will be plenty of general stuff to do.

**NHSPA School Website** - follow the link below:  
http://web1.newtown-h.schools.nsw.edu.au/  
The school website has a calendar and also links for the P&C, contacts, minutes etc.

**Parent Email Network (Google Groups)**
We encourage all parents to subscribe to our parent email network. This is a great way to receive information from the P&C and stay in touch with other parents (including getting questions answered and sharing information). To subscribe send a blank email to:  
nhspa+subscribe@googlegroups.com  
There is a google groups fact sheet on the P&C page of the school website

**NHSPA Parents Contact Message Board**
Follow this link for posting requests and ads for second hand uniform, instruments and equipment etc.  
http://nhspasecondhand.proboards.com/index.cgi?
MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Showcase
Music is in Week 4 and Week 6 of Term 2. We hope to see a “full house” supporting our students in their co-curricular work. More information will be placed on the website.

Gemma Thomas
Head Teacher Music

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WORLD EARTH DAY

Newtown High School of the Performing Arts held their World Earth Day festival on Friday the 8\textsuperscript{th} of March. We supported Greenfleet. Greenfleet is a not for profit organisation dedicated to helping the community reduce the environmental impact of travel, business and lifestyle, but in order for Greenfleet to put that into action they need donations from different schools and businesses around Australia. For every three dollars we raised, Greenfleet would plant a tree, slowly moving towards the goal of “removing carbon and restoring forests”. Our objectives with Greenfleet were “more trees and less carbon dioxide”.

Yet World Earth day wasn’t all about raising money, it was also about showcasing some of our school’s talent. Numerous companies performed at the festival including dance companies, and the percussion ensemble. Also there were some independent performances from students in our school body.

There were also some great stalls and activities available on the day, including hair braiding, apple bobbing, the second hand clothing stall, cupcakes for sale, sausage sizzle, gelato stall, bin painting, Ping-Pong and of course henna decorating, which is the most popular stall to date, just a little bit in front of the gelato stall which had a massive queue.

Overall the day was spectacular, all teachers and students had a great time and we raised heaps of money for Greenfleet.

By Chloe Breitkreuz and Lilli Khalil
The end of term one is almost upon us and the Science Faculty wish all students a safe and happy holiday after what has been a busy term for all.

Term One has seen Year 7 complete a practical test which checked student’s understanding of Science Laboratory equipment, their use as well as general skills that are needed during practical investigation.

Year 8 have completed their Experimental Report, investigating a question that was of interest to them. The variety of topics that students chose was great to see. Investigations ranged from ‘Does high humidity make your hair frizz?’ to determining ‘how much sugar really is in soft drinks?’ The thought, time and planning many students put into this task is to be commended.

Year 9 undertook an energy and water audit of their houses as well as coming up with recommendations to reduce or improve the use of electricity and water in the home. Many students and parents have reportedly found this eye-opening experience and so we hope that this may help their family reduce their energy and water bills as a result as well as lessen their environmental impact.

Over the past few weeks Year 9 parents should have received information about the progress of their child in last year’s statewide Science assessment (ESSA) indicating student strengths and areas for further development. The faculty will use these results to inform our teaching practice to recognise strengths in our teaching programs and to further develop areas which students may have had some difficulty with.

Year 10 is currently presenting an Oral task using PowerPoint to explain different biotechnologies, such as cloning and gene therapy, as well as put forward their own personal stance on the use of these technologies. An area that we will continue to assist students in developing is a strong evaluation which is based on evidence both for and against an idea to arrive at their own well-reasoned opinion. This skill is one which we believe is important to master in an information saturated society that we are currently living in.

Year 11 have undertaken Biological Field reports which, it is clearly apparent, many students have spent significant time compiling and writing. Students are to be commended for the effort they have put into these after going on their excursion to a rock pool ecosystem. Physics completed a magazine article to explain a communication technology and evaluate its likely future and Chemistry a research task.

Year 12 will be busily entering their exam block where Biology students undertake an oral presentation, Chemistry a practical task and Physics a written examination. We ask that students clarify any questions they may have as soon as possible to afford them more time in learning the required concepts.

Early in term 2 students in Years 7-11 will be having Half-Yearly examinations. We ask that students spend part of their break reviewing and revising the topics they have studied this term and then seek assistance from their teachers upon their return to clarify any concepts they may have difficulty with. Early term 2 is often a time where there are lots of assessment tasks across a range of subjects so we remind students that fortune favours the well-prepared (and it can help with the stress levels too!)

Should you like to discuss anything relating to your child’s Science education please don’t hesitate to give me a call.

Brett Stone
Head Teacher Science
Alexander the Great
Year 11 and 12 Ancient History students recently attended the Alexander the Great exhibition at The Australian Museum. This is the largest exhibition ever to come to Australia from The State Hermitage, Russia. The exhibition examines the myths surrounding Alexander, his background, Alexander’s Eastern Campaign and the Hellenistic cultural legacy left by Alexander’s empire, which brought Alexander to life and proved a most engaging experience for our senior students. Thanks to Ms Kyriacos and Ms Ansoul for organising this.

Year 12 Business Studies visit to IKEA
Year 12 Business Studies students visited the IKEA Tempe store in Week 9, to examine the operations functions and links with the other key business functions at IKEA. This experience gave students special insight into the various issues involved in managing a large retail outlet like IKEA, giving students many tangible insights into business operations, and will assist them immensely in incorporating case study material into their assessments and HSC exam. Thank you to Mr Cole for assisting me with the organisation and running of this excursion, as well as Marketing Manager Francesca Heatley from IKEA Tempe for addressing the students.

Upcoming Events
In Week 11, Year 8 will attend the Medieval Show presented by James Adams, and the next round of the Mock Trial competition will be occurring soon. Term 2 will see Year 7 students attending the Ancient History Show.

Ms Rachel Mules
Head Teacher HSIE
Parent Teacher Nights and the fast approaching end of term are both synonymous with assessment heavy weeks for all students and certainly this is the case in English.

- Year 7 have just submitted their poetry anthologies and first impressions are that the quality is very high. Congratulations to all students on completing their first assessment task for English with such diligence and enthusiasm. Your teachers have been very impressed!

- Year 8 have completed their *Rabbit Proof Fence* viewing task with little fuss.

- Year 9 have worked busily in recent weeks on their short story assessments and their new DER laptops have had a terrific baptism of fire. Teachers are currently marking these and are keen to see how the concept of *time* has been employed; (we may publish some in the next edition of this newsletter).

- Year 10 have completed their in class essays on either *Macbeth* or *Romeo and Juliet* and these too are being marked as we speak.

- Year 11 this week begin their Area of Study speeches and we wish them all the very best for these: speaking to an audience of some 35 students and two teacher assessors is never an easy task.

- Year 12 begin a week of school assessments at the end of Week 10 and students in English will be writing an essay, under exam conditions, on their Module B text. Extension One students will also complete an exam based on their *After the Bomb* elective.

We wish all students the very best and remind them that English teachers are always available to assist students in their preparations for these tasks. Just ask!

Year 12 Standard students recently visited the Jewish Museum as part of their work on Jane Yolen’s novel *Briar Rose* and found the experience very moving. The holocaust survivors spoke to the students and walked them through the display. Pleasingly the museum curators complimented our students on their excellent behaviour as did Mr Woolley and Mr Taylor.

Mr Taylor and Mr Fischer have been delighted with the response to their invitation for debating auditions and already it is apparent that we will again field very strong teams. The teams for the Years 9/10 competition and the Year 11 competition in the Premier’s Debating Competition should be announced by term’s end.

Any student wishing to develop their debating skills might like to attend a debating and public speaking workshop at St Catherine’s, Waverley during the coming holidays. This is open for students in Years 3-9 and is being organised by Speak Out Education. If interested, go to [www.speakouteducation.com.au](http://www.speakouteducation.com.au)

Finally we take this opportunity to wish all students a safe and restful April vacation.

Michael Fischer
Head Teacher English
Dear Parents and Carers

As you are aware, students at Newtown High School of the Performing Arts in years 9 through to 12 have been allocated a DER laptop device for educational use.

As part of our ongoing commitment to the project, the school is required to perform a stocktake of all allocated devices to report on the health & physical condition of each device. This process has been recognised as extremely labour intensive and may impact on the day to day operation of the DER program at the school. Teaching and learning outcomes in a school would also be impacted during this period as all DER devices in that school would need to be collected.

It has therefore been agreed that the physical sighting of devices would not be mandatory. As a consequence, in 2013 a stocktake is being used that will significantly reduce the amount of time that’s required to complete the process. This new process comprises of 2 major changes from previously held DER stocktakes:

- Availability of electronic sighting – A DER device checks in via the school network and its status is automatically updated to indicate the device has been electronically sighted, this device does not need to be collected.

- Reduced detail required for devices requiring physical sighting – If a device is not electronically sighted (for whatever reason) it will require physical sighting, although during the physical sighting process only the security features will need to be checked for correct operation.

Only devices that have not checked in for electronic sighting or have reported security issues will need to be collected for a physical stocktake. This will substantially reduce the number of devices that would need to be collected and therefore also reduce the workload required to complete the stocktake process at school.

As a result of this change, the school will be performing its electronic stocktake as follows:

- eSight Stocktake Starts Monday, 29 April 2013
- eSight Stocktake ends: Friday, 28 June 2013

Stocktake for this year will be for all devices allocated to students in Years 10, 11 and 12. It will therefore be a requirement for all Year 10, 11 and 12 students to bring their laptops to school and login using the @detnsw suffix on their userID during this period.

During the electronic sighting period devices that are logged on at the school and left on the network for at least half an hour should register with the network and the stocktake status for that device will be updated accordingly.

In addition to the stocktake exercise, students who undertake the electronic sighting will be eligible to have the operating system on their device upgraded to 64-bit processing, but only if the system has detected their device during the sighting period. There is no cost involved for any of these upgrades.

Students will be required to hand in their device to the school Technical Support Officer once the e-sighting process has been undertaken, to validate if the device is eligible to receive the upgrade. Students should ensure all data on the device is secured on an EXTERNAL media device, as the laptop will be refreshed during this process and ALL STUDENT DATA WILL BE DELETED.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions concerning this process.

N. Rajwar
Relieving Deputy Principal