NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

Parent Newsletter
The last month has continued to be particularly busy for everyone at the school. Showcase concerts, Presentation Day, two Orientation Days, reports, Year 7 swim school, and HSC assessment tasks, are just some of the activities occurring in the school.

**Showcase: The Summer Series**
Once again it has been a real pleasure to experience the outstanding talents of our students. The series culminated with three nights at the Seymour Centre which gave us an opportunity to celebrate another wonderful year of performance. It has been great to see so many of you attend this season and I know you support me in thanking and congratulating all involved.

**Schools Spectacular**
Last month, many of our staff had the great fortune to attend this year’s Schools Spectacular at the Sydney Entertainment Centre. Once again, I am in awe of the talents of all of the students involved. Staff attending were particularly impressed by the level of sophistication shown in the performances of our dance, music and drama students. It is no coincidence that many of these outstanding segments were directed, devised and/or choreographed by our talented staff. Well done to all involved.

**Presentation Day**
Presentation Day will be held on Thursday 12 December at the Seymour Centre and will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate individual and school achievements from 2013. Many thanks to the team of staff who formed this year’s organising committee. Students received notes regarding the event last week. Copies of these notes can also be found on our website. I look forward to seeing you there.

**Orientation Days**
We also took the opportunity this month to welcome our new students for 2014 and their families at two Orientation Days. On Monday 2nd December our new Year 11 students joined us, followed by the new Year 7 on Wednesday 4th. Again, these events are successful because of the support of the staff and P&C volunteers.

Finally, as the year comes to a close, I thank you again for the way you have supported me and the school this year. I continue to be amazed by the talents and commitment of students, staff and parents and feel very privileged to lead such a school.

I wish you all an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season and look forward to working with you in 2014.

Stephen Gray
Principal

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A reminder that school resumes for Years 7 on Wednesday 29 January commencing at 1pm, Years 11 and 12 on Wednesday 29 January 2014, and Years 8, 9 and 10 on Thursday 30 January 2014.
It’s the last month of 2013 already and the school continues along its busy course until 20th December.

Our Showcase “Summer Series” culminated with three concerts at the Seymour Centre, a Dance Showcase, a Music/Drama Showcase and a Showcase Finale on 3rd, 5th and 6th December. The entire “Summer Series” season, has been highly entertaining with very professional performances. I extend my congratulations to our student performers, the technical production team, staff and parent volunteers for their contributions in making our concerts such a success.

Year 11 will be busy studying for several assessments scheduled from 11th to 18th December. Timetables for the final assessment week of the year have been issued to students with no formal lessons taking place during the week. Students are expected to arrive at their scheduled assessment tasks at least fifteen minutes before time to minimise any unforeseen circumstances. In the event of illness or misadventure, students must follow the procedures described in the assessment booklet. On the day of the exam, if the student were to suffer an illness or misadventure, they must inform the school of their absence. On the day of their return, they must complete an illness/misadventure form and submit documented evidence to support their application to me. The assessment task can then be rescheduled. If this process is not followed it may result in the student receiving zero for the task.

Year 10 will finish their junior schooling on 18th December when they are eligible for the Record of School Achievement (ROSA). Students are expected to attend until that date and are currently working on skills that will prepare them for the senior school. Part of their work involves completing a mandatory set of modules from the Board of Studies titled ‘All My Own Work’. The students intending to study the HSC Preliminary have selected their courses for 2014 including the incoming new audition students who attended an Orientation Day on 2nd December where information about the school and their course patterns of study was distributed.

Years 8 and 9 2014 have also chosen their electives and most students will study the electives of first choice. In some cases, students have been advised to choose again as some elective classes either did not run or the class size had reached maximum. Any written request for a change to your child’s pattern of study will be considered in the first few weeks of 2014.

The Year 7 Orientation Day was held on 4th December where the Student Advisers Brenton Fletcher and Ellie Reynolds were introduced to the incoming students. The day was very well organised with our new Year 7 students informed of school organisation.

The annual Presentation day will be at the Seymour Centre on 12th December to celebrate the achievements of our wonderful students.

Finally, I would like to wish all members of our school community a safe, relaxing holiday and look forward to working with you again in 2014. School commences for Years 7, 11 and 12 on Wednesday 29th January and for Years 8, 9 and 10 on Thursday 30th January.

Peter Shields
Deputy Principal
We are nearly at the end of another great school year. It has been a year filled with outstanding performances and many great achievements.

Our new look Semester 2 showcase season concludes this week with three final concerts at the Seymour Centre. The showcase season has been excellent and the quality and standard of each of the evening performances has been outstanding. I would like to recognise the commitment and professionalism of our performing arts staff, who continue to work so tirelessly at this time of year to ensure our students, have such performance opportunities.

I would also like to thank the P&C for their continued support during each showcase season.

During Week 9 we had the opportunity to welcome to the school our new intake of audition students for Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 2014 and our entire Year 7 cohort for 2014 over the two Orientation Days. It is always a pleasure to meet the parents, carers and students who have chosen Newtown High School of the Performing Arts.

The end of term 4 is also our semester 2 reporting period. Year 11 have already been issued with their Preliminary Course Reports on the 30th October and all Year 10 and 9 students will be reconnecting with their curriculum advisors on Friday 6th December and Wednesday 11th December respectively to reflect upon their progress towards the personal best goals that were set in semester 1. It is hoped that many of the goals set by the students will be realised in their yearly reports. All Years 7-10 reports will be sent home to parents by the end of term, late in week 11. All junior report subjects are graded from A-E with individual teacher comments for each subject. If parents/carers have any questions regarding the reports please contact the Head Teacher responsible for that subject for clarification.

I would like to congratulate Hayden Sip who has secured the Co-Operative Scholarship for engineering at the University of Technology, Sydney. We are really proud of Hayden and wish him all the very best in his future endeavours. I would also like to congratulate Keira Bellifemine in Year 7 and Jayme Massoud in Year 8 who successfully auditioned for a role in a huge production of Annie, starring theatre favourite Amanda Muggleton, showing at Riverside Theatres in Parramatta, February 2014. Well done, Keira and Jayme.

The last week of term 4 is also an assessment week, commencing on Tuesday 11 December for our Year 11 students. Year 11 are not expected to be at school during the assessment week, however all students must familiarise themselves with the timetable for this week and ensure that they arrive at school in time for each of their scheduled tasks in full school uniform.

Presentation Day is the final whole school event for 2013. This will be held at the Seymour Centre on Thursday 12 December. We are looking forward to formally celebrating the achievements to the 2013 academic year. I would also like to recognise the work of the Presentation Day team under the leadership of Ula George and David Cole, who have been very busy preparing and organising this special school event.

The last day of school for students is Wednesday 18 December, as the staff will be participating in two school development days on Thursday 19 December and Friday 20 December.

Finally I would like to wish our school community a very happy and safe festive season and relaxing break.

Nilaufer Rajwar
Relieving Deputy Principal
It has been an exciting and busy year for the NHSPA P&C. The refurbishment of the Studio Theatre foyer is almost complete and special thanks must go Terry Bail who has given so much of his time to project manage the upgrade.

The P&C’s Afternoon Tea With… sessions with performing arts professionals were an enormous success. The first event featured United Management agents Natasha Harrison and Trish McAskill, the second featured actor Philip Quast and lighting designer Nick Schlieper as guest speakers. The P&C hopes to stage one of these events in each term in 2014, with thanks going to Lisa Penlington for her initiative and ongoing organisation.

Outgoing Vice-President Donna Huggart once more did an excellent job organising the World Earth Festival. The P&C is now urgently seeking a new co-ordinator for the 2014 event, which is already at the planning stage. Volunteers can contact the P&C secretary Kelly Burke at kelly.burke100@gmail.com

John Caley led a dedicated team of helpers who gave up part of their weekend at two working bees during the year.

For the second year running the P&C was a proud supporter of master classes conducted by US choreographer Garfield Lemonius. P&C funds of almost $35,000 were also provided to 10 non-performing arts faculties, to assist in various activities and projects.

Throughout the year the P&C maintained its strong presence during Showcase performances, audition season and orientation days. Thanks to Mark Rolfe and Dennis Dumlao who co-ordinated the parent rosters for these events.

Finally, we farewell our long-serving P&C President Darren Mitchell, who has given so much of his time over the years. Darren hopes to hand over the reins at the P&C’s annual general meeting in March, so if you are considering playing an active role in the school community, filling the post of P&C President is an excellent way to achieve this.

Congratulations to all students who have distinguished themselves at Showcase and in the classroom. The P&C wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday.

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 group 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?
The Sax Quartet will be performing at the launch of the National Children’s Commissioner’s First Report to Federal Parliament, as part of the Human Rights Commission. This will take place on the last day of school for 2013. We congratulate Sam Weller, Emma Jefferson, Payge Eminovski and Rowan Scott for their commitment over the year to this ensemble. Earlier last month they played at the Haematology Unit of Concord Hospital’s annual fundraiser to a large crowd including the Mayor of Canada Bay. They were well received with a robust ovation.

We would like to congratulate all our students who have recently passed their AMEB exams including Lauren Oleffson and Hazel MacKenzie Peterson 7th grade Cello, Rowan Scott and Sam Weller both were awarded the Certificate of Performance for saxophone, Isabelle Hans Rosenbaum 8th Grade Flute, Greer Gardener 7th Grade Piano, Rosie Weller 4th Grade Oboe, Olivia Hans Rosenbaum 8th Grade Clarinet and Stephanie Jaunzemis 6th Grade saxophone. Well done to all of you.

December is a busy time for the music faculty and it’s students due to the final showcase season. This year, with changes to the format, saw excellent performance in multiple venues including St George’s Hall, the Studio Theatre, outside in the Quadrangle and the Seymour Centre. Music representing an enormous range of styles from early classical orchestral music and Choral works through to multicultural percussion works and contemporary soloists. The final combined (Drama, Dance and Music) concert on Friday the 6th is shaping up to be a truly fabulous night of entertainment.

Many of our ensembles and soloist performed for both the new year 11 and year 7 orientation days. We thank the hard work of Gemma Thomas, Chris Miller and Candice Boyd with their Ensembles – Junior Choir and Year 10 Jazz Band. Alistair Hayes and Matthew Druery joined forces with Adam Kelly and Lewis Mosley to create a jazz trio that certainly entertained the new year 7 parents.

We wish to remind all students, both new and old that music ensemble auditions are in the first few weeks of 2014. Keep your eye out in student news and the School web site calendar for the schedule. Instrumentalist should come with a prepared piece (that demonstrates their technical and musical ability), a scale and expect a small amount of sight-reading. Vocalists should come prepared to learn a new song and workshop that song during the audition. Use the holidays for a good rest but remember you also have more time to get in that extra bit of practise.

As this is the last newsletter for 2014, the music faculty would like to thank David Ferguson and his Technical Company for all their hard work and tireless commitment to the Music faculty throughout the year. You have made us look great and sound fabulous. It’s been inspiring working with you all.

Hot news, just off the press: Georgia Melville, Jaime Di Laudo, Milan Monk, Oliver Schumacher, Olivia Arnold and Thomas Edwards were awarded HSC Encore nominations for their compositions in Music Course 2 and Extension.

We hope everyone has a great Christmas break and we look forward to seeing you all again, fresh and reenergised in the New Year.

The Music Faculty
As the school year draws to an end, it gives me great pleasure to reflect on the many successes enjoyed by the English Faculty at Newtown High School of the Performing Arts. A plethora of impressive achievements (far too many to mention here) have defined 2013 as a year of excellence and success, and a year where all English staff should be proud of the curricular and co-curricular results achieved by our students and the Faculty.

I will start by acknowledging our Debating success. Of particular note was the victory of our Year 11 team who out-shone Sydney Boys High School in a debate about the merits of the Arts versus the Sciences at the Hordern Pavillion – a debate held at a Science Exhibition run by the Bayer Company and the CSIRO. Our astute, well-prepared and cohesive team convincingly defeated Sydney Boys High and are to be congratulated for their outstanding representation of the school. I take this opportunity to thank Mr Brenton Fletcher for coaching and taking the team for this debate. This followed the successes of our other school teams, particularly our Year 7 team who made it to the Regional Semi-Finals against Caringbah High School earlier this term. Thank you to Miss Leotta and Ms Hoddinott for your efforts with these students!

In other exciting news, in week 7 we were fortunate enough to have a visit from renowned Australian poet Peter Skryznecki, where he spoke to 100 of the new Year 12 students studying his poetry for Belonging. It was indeed an honour to have Peter in the school, and by all accounts, his talk on his own body of work was an inspiring, informative, and engaging real-life learning experience for our students. I thank Mr Vic Woolley for his organisation of this wonderful opportunity for our students.

A group of Year 12 Advanced English students also recently viewed a live performance of Shakespeare’s tragedy Hamlet at the Belvoir Street Theatre in Surry Hills. I have heard from both staff and students that it was a remarkable adaptation of the play. Again, thank you to staff for their organisation and chaperoning of the students – Mr Vic Woolley and Mr Jack Taylor gave freely of their evening to allow this excursion to take place.

On the academic front, we are very happy to reflect on some excellent Literacy results in NAPLAN this year. Significant value-adding occurred in all areas of NAPLAN Literacy, which has proved to staff and students that teaching and learning in English at Newtown High School is indeed first-rate! The English staff are to be congratulated for their role in this NAPLAN success. I feel it is also important to acknowledge the efforts of all staff across the school in addressing student literacy, as literacy is indeed a cross-curricular, school-wide responsibility and priority.
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT continued….

In other academic news, the Faculty eagerly await some outstanding HSC results from this year’s Year 12 cohort. These results will reflect the professionalism and commitment of the English staff, and of course, the conscientious application of students. Hard work, dedication and commitment are sure to have paid off when subject results and ATARs are released in the last week of term. Watch this space early next year for highlights of English course results!

In staffing news, we farewell Ms Lindsay Clarke from the English Faculty, as she takes on a permanent position at St Catherine’s Anglican School in Waverley. We thank Ms Clarke for her invaluable contribution to the Faculty this year, and we wish her every success in her new, permanent teaching position.

To conclude, I wish to recognise and thank both staff and students for their hard work in English this year. Many exciting changes await us in 2014, with the introduction of the new Australian Curriculum in Years 7 and 9, preparation for Years 8 and 10 curriculum changes in 2015, and planning for the new Area of Study (Discovery) and the HSC English Prescriptions in 2015 and beyond. Exciting times await the English staff and students of Newtown High School of the Performing Arts!

Have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year. We look forward to working with you and for you in 2014.

Kirk Thomas
Head Teacher English

SHOWCASE JOURNALISM CLASS

On Tuesday 19th of November at 7pm in the studio theatre, the Flowers company performed their play, Chat room. This told a story of six teenage girls in a Chat room having conversations ranging in subject from Britney spears, to depression and suicide. This was a Multi modal presentation incorporating drama, film and dance.

This was a serious play that included issues such as cyber bullying, and social manipulation. The themes were relevant to adults and teenagers in the audience. Although this play was serious, there were a few funny comments and actions. Some funny moments were when all the girls danced, and the views and attitudes some girls displayed.

Overall, Chat room was great. The students performed enthusiastically, which was evident from the audience’s reaction during and after the play. It was clear that the play was practiced thoroughly and the film crew did a wonderful job with the lighting that was critical during the play.

Anastasia Spathis
Showcase Journalism Class

Showcase Review THURSDAY NOV 21ST

On the evening of Thursday November 21st, the year 9 showcase electives Up in Lights and Create Your Own Musical, plus a range of amazing 10th & 11th grade musical soloists, performed at Newtown’s Showcase: The Summer Series.

First up was Create Your Own Musical, which was a series of TV shows including a final showdown on a cooking show, a beauty contest with a very eccentric host Javier, and finally, a comedic and thrilling murder mystery about the conflict between a dairy-free household and a milkman.
The second act was year 9’s *Up in Lights* with their rendition of *Wicked*. Rose Shannon-Duhigg, who played the main character, showed off her amazing vocal skills which had the audience applauding the whole way through.

Year 10 and 11 musical performances played through the second half of the night which featured some bongos, a few broken guitar strings and a very enthusiastic and supportive response from the audience. To finish off the spectacular night, a very talented, recently graduated student of NHSPA, Andrew Charalambous, joined a group of students. They enthusiastically performed Ed Sheeran’s *You Need Me, I Don't Need You*.

Mia Brown

**Showcase Journalism Class**

The Summer music Showcase continues with a Bang!

Thursday 14th of November was an extravaganza of music showcase. It started off with a performance of "First Suit" by the concert band. Then there was a solo performance by a year 11 student, Rory Hocknell, who played the flute. After that was the year 8/9 ensemble performing an Acappella version of "This Love". Shortly after that was the Sax Quartet vibrantly performing "Ulla in Africa". Davies Conyngham. He played a song called "Angelina" by Tommy Emmanuel on the guitar.

The 5th act of the night was a performance by Jonty Davies Conyngham. He played a song called "Angelina" by Tommy Emmanuel, an Australian guitarist best known for his complex finger style technique. This particular song is difficult to play yet Jonty played it flawlessly and confidently showing little nervousness.

The very last act was the Senior Percussion Ensemble which skilfully performed "Bang", conducted by Chris Miller. It was a polished performance; one, because of the music and, two, because it looked like they were simply having fun.

Overall the night was a success and was well supported by the NHSPA community.

KJ Shergill

**Showcase Journalism Class**

Showcase Report

Opening Night of Showcase

Tuesday 12 November 2013

I entered the dark St Georges Hall with the stream of patriots, proud parents and grumbling younger siblings attending the opening night of the summer showcase. I picked a seat and, as my available cash had been low (nil), I found I had no idea what to expect. The lights dimmed and I settled back for the show.

The St Georges hall show was a combination of amazing dance and music, with one short, humorous drama piece with some amazing make-up at the end. I enjoyed ‘Swing Baby’ by the year 9 classical ballet group. It was a nice break from the classical style that the school more commonly showcases. With its catchy beat and ‘twenties theme, it was hard not to dance along. The year 7 choir sang ‘Twilight and Shadow’, a song with high notes worthy of ‘Lord of the Rings’ that the group met seemingly effortlessly.

Herded out of the hall by oddly dressed senior students, my eye was instantly caught by the lines of drums on chairs, the characteristic style of WOMP. After a short period of chatting and eating cupcakes (courtesy of hospitality), WOMP began to play their normal percussion piece. Following this was a hilarious drama performance by Hudson Company, in which students, too many of which I knew, dressed as aliens and interacted with each other and the audience, while exploring themes of stereotypes, racism and ostracism. ‘Merchant of Venice’ was next in the Studio Theatre. While the acting was good, I struggled to understand the plot and language and even to tell apart characters. Maybe this was simple ignorance of the play, I’m not sure.
And so my night of Showcase ended. The general opinion I felt as I left the school was that it was an amazing show of talent, and I sorely wished I had taken an interest earlier. I will definitely be coming back for more.

Stephanie Oppen-Riley
Year 9 Journalism

Dancing Disaster
Written from the eyes of a dancer
Chelsea-lea Reid

It was the night of our semester two showcase when it all happened. Shocked we were it was a true dancing disaster.

We started the day at 11 am; thinking we were late was our first worry, only to arrive and find out technical rehearsals were running about an hour late, with the time increasing as the dance faculty worried.

We waited for hours after our arrival to make our presence on the stage and mistakes were ever so many for our small intermediate ballet company. These disastrous mistakes included collisions, choreography eras and timing faults, but our very professional ballet company took these as constructive criticism and were determined to fix them.

Our costume was simple, a navy blue leotard and black sheer stockings, stockings which were meant to go to our ankles, stocking which we hadn’t tried on as they were so sheer they may rip. We had to try them on to see if they were a perfect fit… which they weren’t. A dancer’s biggest fear a costume malfunction. This was exactly what had struck our company. Luckily our company, as professional as we are had come prepared for anything! We had spare black tights easily accessible for our convenience. They were the correct fit but were not as sheer as our choreographer had wanted and we were hoping she could not tell the difference from the audience. We have not spoken to her to this very day our minds are going crazy to know her verdict.

After our technical rehearsal the dreaded news reached our ears. Our performers’ performance, which we look forward to each year to see the hard work of our fellow performers, had been cancelled. As devastated as we all were, we had to have dinner to prepare us for the physical side to our performance.

It was time, time for all our hard work and after school rehearsals to pay off. It’s show time! Our worries from earlier that day had left our minds and we were totally focussed on doing a brilliant performance. The energy from the audience lifted our spirits and our company felt more like a family as we enjoyed doing what we love and what our school gives us the opportunity to do.

In the end those dancing disasters didn’t mean anything we had done what we had gone there to do and enjoyed it in every aspect!
NHSPA will be represented in this year’s ARTEXPRESS by Xanthe Murphy’s sophisticated oil paintings ‘6:56 am’ and Alex Jasprizza’s series of photographs and photo-book ‘Shadows’. We congratulate both students for the recognition of their outstanding art-making. As art-educators, it is very gratifying to hear of so many students this year applying to further their art studies at tertiary level; we wish them well in their studies and future creative pursuits.

The artworks of Year 8 students Joseph Christie-Evans and Ella Clancy have been included in the works to represent Sydney in the Nagoya Sister-city Art Exhibition.

Aliaska McKeon’s pastel drawing of an injured digger was submitted for the RSL competition ‘Faces of Anzac’.

The Summer Series of Showcase this year also included a large exhibition in St Georges Hall of artworks from Year 7–12 students. It was great to see the school community enjoying the fruits of the performing and creative arts. As the school grounds were utilised as performance areas we decorated A and B Blocks with some fun ‘paint-drips’.

2013 has seen Ula George move to the Careers Advisor’s position and Daniel Fischer taking her Visual Arts and Production classes; their efforts have been greatly appreciated.

After 23 years at NHSPA Ian Carrick will be retiring this year. It has been my pleasure working very closely with Ian since the school began and I know his enthusiasm, skills and passion for our subject will be enormously missed.

I have been awarded a NSW Premier’s Teacher Scholarship which is sponsored by Jean Sherman Gallery and the Nelson Meares Foundation. For the first 5 weeks of 2014 I will be travelling to investigate contemporary Asian artists and curators and Ian Carrick will be returning to head the faculty in my absence.

We wish everybody and a happy and safe holiday and look forward to a very creative 2015.
On the Monday and Tuesday of Week 11 (16 and 17 December), all Year 7 students will partake in our annual 'Swim School' held at the Annette Kellerman Aquatic Centre, Enmore. Through this program students will learn water rescue techniques, stroke correction, survival swimming, basic first aid and resuscitation. Swim School is compulsory for all Year 7 students as it is a part of the Stage 4 PDHPE program and there will be no regular Year 7 classes running during the two days.

Students need to ensure that they have brought their permission note back to the PE staff room by Friday 13 December.

Each student must wear their full PE/Sport uniform to and from venue and bring appropriate swimming attire (including swimming costume, goggles and towel). Clothing such as long pyjamas or tracksuits will be needed on the Tuesday for the clothed swim rescue (a plastic bag is also recommended). Expensive personal items such as iPods and mobile phones should not be taken to the venue in case of theft and/or damage as no responsibility will be taken for these items.

We look forward to another great 'Swim School' and if you have any questions please contact the PDHPE faculty.

Bran Lazendic
Head Teacher PDHPE & Sport

From The Staff of Newtown High School of the Performing Arts

Season’s Greetings