



PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008/09

I am pleased to present my President's Report for 2008/2009.

The Association has hosted a number of functions and activities during the past financial year.

TOGA's year commenced in July 2008.

Tara students celebrated the schools 111th birthday on Tuesday 29th July by way of a full school assembly. I had the honour of talking to the students in a very different way this year. I was asked a number of questions by Natasha, Head Girl and Harriet, Deputy HG for 2008. The questions asked were "How long have I been with the Association", "How does the Association contribute to life at Tara and why this contribution important".

Building student's awareness of the Old Girls Association is a consistent recurring business that requires patience and constant repetition of information on our part. Every year there are always new faces joining Tara and the need to spread the word remains. The way we deliver our message can vary but the message should remain consistent. Of course I'm never bored as there is always the cutting of the Birthday Cake with the youngest student of Tara, which is my favourite part. The Kindergarten girls seem to be getting younger and younger very year, am I just getting older!

August saw Tara Celebrate its 111th Year and TOGA celebrated this milestone by hosting our Celebration Luncheon and our 51st AGM on Sunday 3rd of August at Eggleton House. With **48** people in attendance Old Girls, ex-staff and some partners. We all had a wonderful day and especially enjoyed our guest speaker, the 2006 Joan Waugh Scholarship recipient, Katherine Riley.

We had a number of the 40 year reunion ladies attend the luncheon as they had celebrated their reunion the night before. The reunion coordinator surprised us on the day with a cheque for \$300 as this was monies left over after expenses had been paid from their reunion. The 1968 Alumni year requested the money to be put towards future Bursaries.

At our **AGM** we acknowledged the services to Tara by the following people by awarding them with Honorary Life Memberships; Pamela Wilson, Rev Barry McGarth, Kaye Marr, Lorraine Le Claire, and Davinia Feggans. Also on the day, Bruce Smith - Tara's School Architect for 45 years - was honoured with Associate Membership and he returned the honour by saying a few words on his experiences with Tara during those 45 years. All were presented with a Certificate and a small gift as a token of our appreciation.

Reunions for 2008 were held during the latter part of year.

The 5 year reunion (2003 Alumni) was held on Sunday 30th November at the Pennant Hills Golf Club for afternoon tea. I would like to thank Shenuka Jayasuriya for all her hard work in organising their successful reunion.

The 10 year reunion (1998 Alumni) was held on Saturday 22nd November at The 3 Weeds Hotel “Wine Room” in Rozelle with approximately **30** old girls and Dr Ruth Shatford in attendance. Everyone enjoyed sharing memorable times about School and renewing old school friendships. I would like to thank Felicity Millner for all her hard work in organising their successful reunion.

The 20 year reunion (1988 Alumni) was held on Saturday 27th September at a quaint pub in the city with **43** old girls in attendance. The evening was a buzz of chatter and laughter as the girls exchanged stories about motherhood, careers and most of all, reminisced about the wonderful times they spent at Tara. Thank you to Anthea Afaras for her hard work in organising their reunion.

The 30 year reunion (1978 Alumni) was held on Sunday 30th November at Woolwich Hotel with over **40** old girls in attendance. Thank you to Rebecca Hopper, Megan Board and Sally Copper for all their hard work on their reunion.

The 40 year reunion (1968 Alumni) was held on the 2nd August at the home of Fliss Fay Coles in Hunters Hill with **29** old girls in attendance. It was an intimate and very enjoyable night for all whom attended. Thank you to Jacquie Baker for her hard work in organising their reunion.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our marvellous Reunion Coordinator, Janice Lee. She has been wonderful in helping the 2008 reunion co-ordinators by providing essential assistance and valuable advice and we are truly appreciative of her efforts.

Other Events during the year were as follows;

During the month of August the Tara & Kings Past Students presented the play “Venetian Twins”. It was a cleverly written, humorous and masterfully performed production showcasing the amazing skills of our Old Girls, Emma Gordon (2004 leaver), Lucinda Beck (2002 leaver), & Philippa Hawkes (2007 leaver).

On the 17th September the **Year 12 Luncheon** was held under the TOGA marquee on the lawn outside the Multipurpose Hall, with approximately **112** current students in attendance. I spoke to the girls about how the Association plays an important part in their future connections with the school and wished them well with their upcoming HSC. I also congratulated them on becoming the Alumni of 2008 and welcomed them as future Old Girls.

On Friday 17th October over **240** guests farewelled Mrs Carol Bower at the Epping Club. I was privileged to be one of a select few who paid tribute to this gracious and exceptional Principal of Tara.

On Tuesday 2nd December at Tara’s weekly whole school assembly, I was honoured to present the Joan Waugh Scholarship for 2009 to Long Seng To, a 2000 leaver. The \$5000 Scholarship awarded enables Long Seng to travel for 2 – 3 months with an interpreter/guide to remote communities in China. This will form part of her PhD fieldwork on “renewable energy” particularly on the implementation of solar power systems in Asia.

On the 8th December Tara celebrated the end of another school year by way of the Celebration 2008 Final Assembly which was held at the Baulkham Hills Shire Council auditorium. TOGA awarded **8** students who had attended Tara from Kindergarten to Year 12 by presenting them with a TOGA white Bible with a silver embossed Tara crest on the cover. This year was the first year in which it was not compulsory for Year 12 students to attend this event. Our normal presentation of the Valedictory gift of a silver bookmark with the inscribed words TOGA 2008 and the Tara Crest engraved could not proceed. Therefore, the Valedictory gifts were posted to the **108** Year 12 students. To avoid this in the future the Valedictory gifts will be presented at the Year 12's Valedictory Dinner on the 30th September, 2009.

On Sunday 8th February, 2009 the 2007 Alumni celebrated their first year reunion held at Eggleton House's Bower Room and was attended by **17** students. It was a very beautiful sunny day and we were honoured when Mrs Susan Middlebrook dropped in the say hello to the girls. The group were having such enjoyable conversations with Susan, she decided to stay for lunch.

On Tuesday 24th February, Mrs Susan Middlebrook's Commissioning Service was held. I was very honoured to present Susan with the Centenary Brooch on behalf of the Tara Community and personally delighted in welcome Susan as Tara's 10th Principal. We look forward to Susan adding her own thread into Tara's magnificent tapestry.

On Saturday 17th March The King's/Tara Production of "The Gondoliers" Gala Theatre Night was organised in conjunction with the Friends of Tara Music and Tara Old girls. It was a wonderful and enjoyable evening.

On the 20th June the Tara Community farewelled Mrs Claire Redfearn, Boarding House Mistress of Tara who is a well loved and respected. We wish her all the best in retirement.

REMEMBRANCES

We note with sadness the passing of the following members or members' family over the past 12 months.

- Joy Parker, Principal of Tara 1973 – 1979. After declining health and then surgery for a broken femur Joy died in Wollongong Hospital on 19th November, 2008.
- Mrs Beth Radford, Art Teacher from 1973 – 1991 who taught generations of Tara Junior & Senior School girls. Mrs Radford designed and made the Tara House Banners – a permanent memorial at the school showing her beautiful hand craft skills and creativity.
- Phil Hodges, old girl Jill Atley's husband passed away from cancer. Phil was the chef at Tara for many years. The Committee have wonderful memories of past wonderfully catered Old Girls Luncheons, those hectic Craft Days, with Phil's glorious scones, making it worthwhile and Phil's dry sense humour to keep us going. He will be sorely missed.

Flowers and condolences were sent to all on TOGA behalf.

On a lighter note we give the warmest congratulations & best wishes to Elizabeth Hinchon, Committee Member & her husband Andrew on the birth of their beautiful baby daughter Emily on 24th Oct, 2008. Also, congratulations to Alex Johnston, Committee member and her husband Richard on the recent birth of their beautiful baby daughter, Chloe on 7th July, 2009.

No Market Day was held this year due to the construction of two key additions to Tara. The first is the Senior Learning Centre which is nearing completion. This magnificent building is designed to assist the Senior girls with transition from secondary to Tertiary education, as well as a much needed staff room extension and beautiful new entrance. The newest addition is the Tara Telescope situated on the Mouleric Field - opening is still to be confirmed. Due to these major constructions the Tara Fair was postponed until next year. TOGA looks forward to 2010 to host our Market Day in conjunction with the school.

I would like to acknowledge the kind contributions from Tara Old Girls towards the capital appeal for the Senior Learning Centre.

I would also, like to welcome all our **178** new members to Tara for 2008/2009.

TOGA provided financial support to current students through the following ways:

- Year 7 Bursary and Book Voucher
In 2009 **3** daughters of Old Girls entering Year 7 received a Textbook Voucher to the value of \$150, plus a School Fees Bursary of \$500 each.
- Junior School Clothing Shop Vouchers
In 2009 **1** Clothing Shop voucher to the value of \$150 was given to a daughter of an old girl commencing in Junior School.
- Boarder Bursary for 2008
A Bursary was awarded in retrospect to a very grateful Year 11 student and her parents.
- TOGA gave support to Tara students who travelled in the July school holidays to the remote community of Numbulwar, by way of paying the \$500 per student extra charge required to subsidize the teacher travel costs.

TOGA also provided support to school by providing the following:

Heads of House - Honour Board, completing the last of the missing dates 1953 – 1981. This was produced with generous assistance of the Payne Family and can now be seen hanging in the Multi Purpose Hall Foyer.

Tara Old Girls' Association future projects are;

- to donate the cost of providing a glass airtight cabinet made for the sole purpose of displaying Tara's Tapestry to its full potential.
- to bring back the George Street columns to Tara. It was discovered this year when Emma Rose was conducting her updating of Old Girl details she spoke to a Barbara Napier (Waugh) a close relative of Joan Waugh. She indicated that when they had pulled down the old George Street site being one of Tara's homes, a relative had rescued 6 of the columns. Two are currently at Tara; you would recognise them just near the Tara car park near the Old School Assembly Hall. The other two are at a home on Pennant Hills Rd and Barbara Napier has the other two. Barbara is willing to donate these to TOGA and Tara though they would require restoration. TOGA are keen to make funds available to have these columns restored and would be keen on them installed at an appropriate place in Tara.

These columns hold such a significant part of Tara's history and it would be a shame not to act on an important opportunity to bring them back home to Tara where they belong. I hope some day we will have all 6 columns we can proudly display.

I would like to acknowledge and thank; Mrs Carol Bown and Mrs Susan Middlebrook and their staff for their continued assistance and support given to the Association over the past year. I would especially like to acknowledge Peta Black, the Community Liaison Officer of Tara, for her support, guidance and encouragement. Peta retired in 2008 and we have missed ever since.

Thank you to the current TOGA committee, I especially like to acknowledge the dedicated members of the TOGA executive team; Barbara Edge (Secretary), Jane Noller (Treasurer), Janice Lee (Reunion Coordinator) and Emma Rose (Market Day Coordinator) for their continued friendship, commitment to and support of TOGA.

Thank you to the TOGA Committee for their support and generosity as it's very much appreciated. Especially their attendance at our meetings as I realize we are all time poor and what time you contribute to the Association is invaluable. Keep attending the meetings as it's essential for TOGA's future growth. I especially would like to welcome and thank our latest committee member who joined us in early 2009 Laura Hooke (Chatfield).

On closing, your TOGA Committee is always looking for ways to help Tara's current and past students whilst preserving our proud history. We are always looking for and wish to welcome any members to join the committee as active members of your TOGA.

I look forward to another prosperous and rewarding financial year for 2008/2009.

Thank you

ALISON LILLYMAN (Spring)
2008/09 President