



House of Assembly

Extract from Hansard

**Thursday 12th July 2012
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Evanston Primary School

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:09): Today I wish to bring to the house's attention some details about Evanston Primary School, which is my old primary school. Evanston Primary School is searching for all of its old scholars in preparation for its celebrations to mark the school's 50th birthday this year, having opened in February 1962. Celebrations will also mark the closure of the school later this year when it merges with Gawler High School and Evanston Preschool to form the new Gawler and Districts College on the Gawler High School site.

Of course, over those 50 years a number of students and teachers have gone through the school, and there is a committee, comprising current teachers, parents and old scholars, to organise a range of activities to celebrate the success of the many students who have passed through the

school gates over those 50 years. Some of the alumni of the school would be known to members in this place, and they include Lisa Ondieki, who was Lisa O'Dea at the time. Darren Lehmann is also an old scholar of Evanston Primary School, as was successful businessman and former lord mayor Michael Harbison—another successful story from that school.

The school and organising committee are very keen to hear from people who have attended the school to ensure that every old scholar has an opportunity to attend the celebratory events and farewell their old school. An open day is scheduled for Sunday 30 September, which is the long weekend, and this will be the first of many events to mark the school's 50th birthday. It will be a walk down memory lane for many students who may not have actually visited the school since their graduation. The open day is not just for old scholars, since family and teachers are more than welcome. The organising committee, which I am part of, is hoping that many former teachers and other staff will attend, as they have all played an important part in the lives of students who have attended the school.

Talking about walking down memory lane, I advise the house that Olympic medallist Lisa Ondieki returned to the school last week. She now resides in Phoenix, Arizona, in America—

Mr Whetstone: What about Tony Riggs? Isn't he a champion from that school?

Mr PICCOLO: From Evanston school? I don't know every person who has gone to the school in the 50 years.

Mr Odenwalder: Every champion.

Mr PICCOLO: Every champion. I am more than happy to have names and we would like to get in touch with them. Lisa Ondieki went to the school last week, basically where her running career began, to celebrate the 50th anniversary and also to farewell the school. While Lisa was there, she had an opportunity to catch up with the new generation of Olympians at the school; these are the students who are part of the SAPSASA running team. She took time out to talk to the students at the school, particularly those who had been medal winners at the recent SAPSASA events, and provided them with some information on how they could be successful, how to go about it and what it is important to do.

Lisa also made the point that it took her quite a few years to be a success and that it was not a case of achieving it in one year; in fact, I think it took about 12 years from the time she started racing seriously for her to win a medal. She also spoke about the importance of diet, balance in life and making sure you get a good education because you can only run for so long before you need something else to do in life. That said, she is a special education teacher in the system in America at the moment. Lisa is one of the successful people from Gawler, and I wish her well.

In the time I have remaining, I would also like to mention the group of

students who are running. A group of cross-country runners from Evanston Primary School recently ran in the SAPSASA event at Oakbank, I believe. There were some medal winners amongst them, so the young students there did very well. However, like everything in life, you need the tools and the right support, and it is no secret that the school requires some financial support. The team at the school is looking for some sponsors so that the kids can have the right shoes and get the right training so that they can have a fair go and compete.

Almost all the students at the school finished higher than 100th place in the South Australian Primary Schools Amateur Sports Association cross-country race on 30 May; many of the students were in the top 10 and a couple won their races. I would like to pay my respects to those students who did very well.

TIME EXPIRED