

30 years of the NSW Department of Education's Saturday School of Community Languages

Another milestone in Languages' Education in NSW - 1978-2008

Thirty years and going strong... Teaching and administrative personnel in the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL) gathered in an emotionally charged atmosphere on Saturday 29 November 2008 to celebrate an important milestone in the teaching of Community Languages to secondary students.



Modern Greek: one of the first languages taught in the Saturday School in 1978

The three hour afternoon event took place in the School Hall of SSCL-Ashfield Boys' High School Campus with approximately 300 people in attendance watching a Power Point Presentation of highlights and various events of the SSCL during the last few years, of its teaching staff and its students. Long serving teachers and administrative staff were presented with 10 years, 20 years and 30 years' service certificates for contribution to the SSCL.

The 30 year SSCL celebration was indeed a special one, particularly in 2008 as it coincides with the United Nation' declaration of 2008 being the "International Year of Languages" and because the incumbent Principal Ms Marjory Ellsmore will be retiring at the end of the year.

Master of ceremonies, Mr Dimitrios Kametopoulos, Assistant Supervisor at the SSCL-Liverpool Boys' High School Campus greeted everyone in the 24 languages which are currently taught at various SSCL campuses or centres and briefly noted the significance of the day in this important

"International Year of Languages". During the official part of the program, Ms Marjory Ellsmore in her welcoming speech, expressed her deep appreciation of the SSCL teaching and administrative staff and their commitment to the provision and maintenance of languages to the student community. She emphasised that the SSCL had become a "beacon" in NSW in the delivery of languages' quality teaching to secondary students due to its dynamic, vibrant and professional staff. She stressed that it was the commitment of staff in the various SSCL campuses in NSW who have been playing a major role in the making of what the SSCL is all about. She also expressed her sorrowful sentiment of deciding to retire at the end of the year although, as she said, her lifestyle change would not stop her from con-

tinuing to maintain links with all the people she had lead under her position as the SSCL Principal. In conclusion, Ms Ellsmore stressed the success stories of the SSCL with students' gaining quality education in languages throughout Year 7 to Year 12 and with a special mention of the excellent HSC results numerous students had achieved throughout the years, underlining the message that languages do play an important role in a quality education overall.

Ms Ellsmore then proceeded with the presentation of 10 years', 20 years' and 30 years' service certificates for teaching and administrative personnel. In particular, the presentation of the 30 years' service certificates to five teachers did create an emotional mood as, back in 1978, it was these five teachers who were appointed at the inauguration of the SSCL to teach Modern Greek and Turkish ploughing the seeds for the growth of the SSCL to its current status. These teachers are: Mr Kyriakos Dimitriadis and Ms Kalliope Theocharous for Modern

Greek and Mr Adem Mustafa, Mr Selahattin Fil and Mr Irfan Yigit for Turkish. More than fifty teachers and administrative personnel were presented with 20 years' service certificates and more than one hundred were presented with 30 years' service.

A cocktail party followed with many delicacies and beverages served and staff socialised amongst themselves into the late afternoon.

The SSCL offers language programs in 24 languages, ranging from Arabic to Korean and Maltese to Vietnamese from Years 7 to Year 10 and in the senior years (Year 11 and 12) at Beginners', Continuers', Background Speakers' and Advanced levels. Classes for Years 7-10 operate generally from 8.30am-10.30am whilst Years 11 & 12 classes operate generally from 8.30am to 11.45am and for Extension courses till 12.45pm. Some Campuses may vary their times of operation to suit their students' needs. The SSCL operates 16 Campuses, 14 in Sydney, one in Newcastle and one in Wollongong.

In particular, Modern Greek is taught at these SSCL High School campuses: Arthur Phillip High (Parramatta), Ashfield Boys' High, Bankstown Girls' High, Chatswood High, Liverpool Boys' High, Merewether High (Broadmeadow, Newcastle), Smiths Hill High (Wollongong), St George Girls' High (Kogarah) and The Hills Sports High (Seven Hills).

Students seeking to study Modern Greek need to obtain a '2009 Saturday School of Community Languages Application Form' from their day school or TAFE and complete it accordingly. More information can be obtained by visiting the website www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/secondary/languages/sscl or



Eleni Bakola, Maria Faleta, Kalliope Theochaous, Arhontoula Kogos

