



■ The late Helen Houghton on one of her expeditions.

BY WENDY CREIGHTON

A SEA school based in the land-locked Fassifern would appear to be a paradox.

It's not, says Jono Goss, the man who established 'The Sea School' with 'more than a little help from his friends'.

Some of the skippers and

crew and Jono himself are based here, but their work with the school takes them all along the east coast of Australia.

"The Sea School is a volunteer training organisation operating under a constitution and a committed and hard working management committee," Jono explained.

"We have been assisting Bob Houghton conduct Duke of Edinburgh award expeditions for the Boonah State High School for the past 10 years, and we continue to do this with heavily subsidised charges for our local students."

"And now The Sea School is developing our own training system that recognises levels 1-4 in expedition, activity and group leadership competencies."

But the principal reason the school made the front page of the *Guardian* this week is the announcement of a scholarship in honour of former Boonah High School teacher, the late Helen Houghton.

"Helen was an exceptional educator and Duke of Edinburgh co-ordinator for the Boonah High School and with her husband, Bob, conducted expeditions for many years."

"They helped inspire the establishment of The Sea School."

The new scholarship will help subsidise the cost of the successful applicant who wants to complete their Duke of Edinburgh award or holds a Level 1 Sea School certificate and wants to complete Level 2.

Jono went on to explain the work of The Sea School.

"It delivers fun programs with a heightened sense of adventure by using real and imagined voyages of discovery."

"It involves activities such as sailing, snorkelling, paddling, bushwalking, island camping and sunset reflections to learn about the ocean and how we can use our strengths wisely."

One of the aspects of the school is a training program for 'sea leaders'.

"Blue Peter is the name of the program which focuses on skills development, group facilitation and personal growth through adventure education and expeditionary learning processes," Jono said.

Programs offered by the school range from family-focussed camps through to marine science and environmental education excursions.

"The Sea School provides a service to many community groups and offers the finest programs we can imagine," Jono said.

"Sailing an open boat to a new destination on the horizon is really enjoyable, and can also be

very challenging!"

"We believe there are great benefits from the physical, social and natural environment we encounter 'in the same boat' when we embark with the spirit of adventure and discovery; 'taking the helm' both inward and outward bound."

But just as important as the program are the people involved.

"We are blessed with great skippers, excellent helpers and so many encouraging supporters who are united in one interest - the education and personal development of young people," Jono said.

"Rob Wigginton has recently joined Sally McAdam, Ross Pollard and myself on the management committee, and I am so grateful for their personal commitment to service for the community."

Details on how to apply for the Helen Houghton Memorial Scholarship can be found on The Sea School's website.

- Jono Goss lives at Mt Alford. His background involves 23 years work as a science teacher and expedition leader. For the past 15 years he has been a staff trainer and offshore sailing master.



HELEN HONORED: A local volunteer training organization has announced that a scholarship has been established in memory of the late Helen Houghton. "She left a legacy for young people by helping to establish The Sea School," says Jono Goss, "and we are now making a scholarship available in her name for young people completing their Duke of Edinburgh awards or the Level 2 Sea School Certificate." Pictured getting ready to test sail a catamaran on Lake Moogerah after the scholarship was officially announced are, from left, Bob Houghton, Jono Goss, Alexina Johnson and Frankie Goss.

Photo PETER TRUER

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