

'Frank Jackson' makes appearance at school

TAKING time out of his busy schedule that includes modelling on cigarette packets, prominent Manning local 'Frank Jackson' aka comedian Andy Saunders, shared some wise words with students at Chatham High School last week, to perfectly depict the meaning of NAIDOC week.

"It's human to be different, but it's humane to accept the differences," he said, met with applause from the large crowd gathered for the school's special NAIDOC assembly.

It had been a beautiful day of celebrating the school's, and indeed the country's, rich cultural diversity, particularly that of our oldest people.

The morning had kicked off with the opening of a new garden at the school's entrance, symbolic of all clans coming together as one and paying tribute to our past and the future.

"It's a lovely way of welcoming people to the school and also a nice way of celebrating Aboriginal culture in our area," said CHS' Aboriginal Programs Coordinator, Jenny Fotheringham.

"It's our belief at the school that we need to embrace and celebrate Aboriginal culture, just as we expect them to embrace ours and we strive to expose our students to the beauty of this culture so that they have a better understanding of where we've come from."

The school has always endorsed the strong presence and ties of the Aboriginal people of the Manning and yesterday's activities were a reflection of this.

Guest speakers at the assembly included Biripi elder 'Aunty' Wilma Morcome, school acting principal Manfred Sonntag, Frank Jackson, and Andrew Snelgar.

Year 12 students at the school, together with student teacher Belinda Christensen, put together

a powerful presentation on the history of Aboriginal rights in Australia, right through to the most recent promise of a referendum, by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, that would see Aboriginal people recognised in the constitution.

No doubt a highlight of the assembly was the WhiteBlackAtcha boys, Andy and Jay, stealing the show. Frank was full of his usual

'pearlers' on the day, humorously sending a positive message about the importance of the day to the students, who were thoroughly entertained.

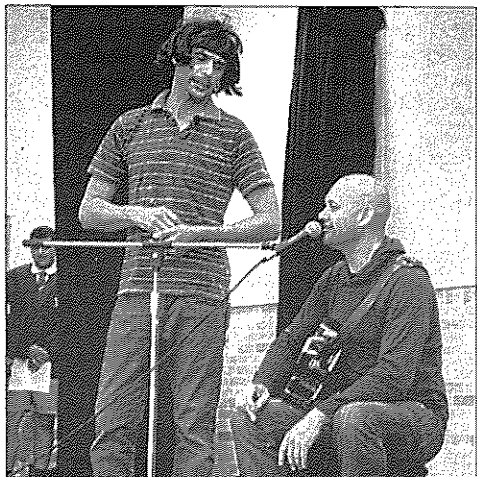
When asked what does NAIDOC mean he poignantly answered "It's just a lot of letters that mean some words, but to me, it's about us all coming together."



Dwarna Clarke, Hannah Cunningham, Gabrielle Ferguson and Angie Davis.



Ray Hurst, Chatham High's acting principal Manfred Sonntag and Wilma Morcome.



"Frank Jackson", aka Andrew Saunders and Jay

