

Love this. Betty Hall  
74 SIMPSON ST

# Will power in the class

## School's \$400,000 windfall

WES HOSKING

A COUNTRY high school has been listed among Victoria's most cashed up, thanks to a former student who left it \$400,000 in her will.

Nobody at Dimboola Memorial Secondary College knew former dux Elizabeth Hall planned to leave the bequest.

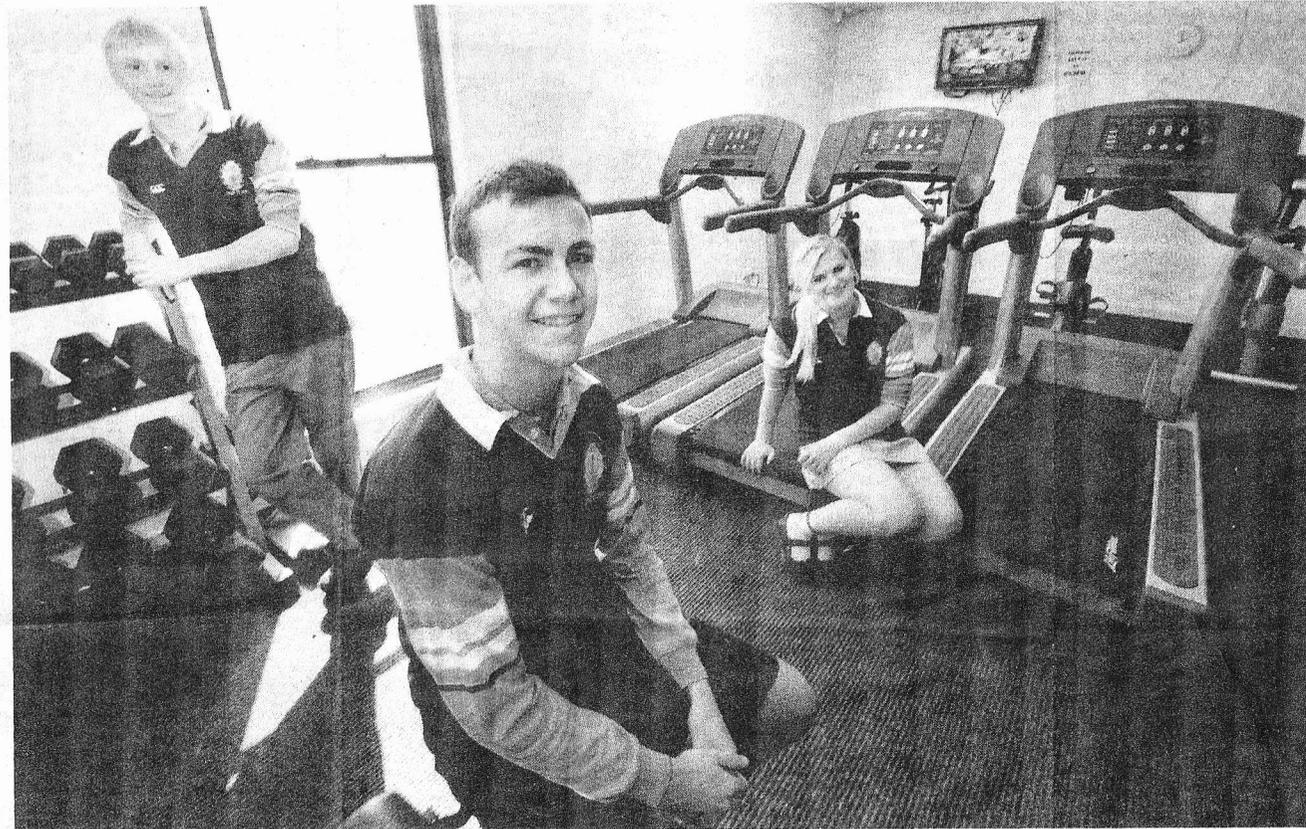
Her only previous donation had been an annual arts prize worth about \$100.

The 180-student college, 330km west of Melbourne in the Wimmera now ranks, financially at least, alongside prestigious Melbourne and University high schools.

Principal Rob Pyers said he initially feared the worst when a lawyer's letter arrived.

"It was totally out of the blue," he said.

"My background was schools in Melbourne so when I saw it was from the lawyer I thought I was either being sued or chased up for a court case. It



Year 12 students Jason Pietsch, Michael Pohlner and Stephanie Miller take advantage of the school's gymnasium.

was a very nice surprise." Ms Hall, who topped the class of 1951 and forged a successful legal career in Melbourne, died in late 2011.

Settlement of her estate, which included \$400,000 for

the University of Melbourne, was made this year.

Dimboola Memorial, built with community cash raised after World War I, has used the money to build a health and fitness centre complete

with a synthetic hockey pitch and 12 tennis courts, which is open to the community.

It banked the remaining \$200,000 and uses the interest for scholarships which promote the arts and VCAL.

"It's a really powerful statement and it just reinforces that whole notion of people giving back to the community which for us is a really important thing," Mr Pyers said.

Education Department fig-

### TOP VOLUNTARY DONATIONS

University High School \$1,267,778  
Melbourne High School \$907,156



Canterbury Girls' Secondary College \$592,474

Elizabeth Hall

Brentwood Secondary College \$486,954  
Dimboola Memorial Secondary College \$432,413

ures show Dimboola received the fifth most donations of any state primary or secondary school last year, equating to about \$2400 for each student.

University High School topped the list with a total \$1.3 million, while Melbourne High received \$907,000 and Canterbury Girls' Secondary College \$592,000.

More than 50 schools didn't receive any donations.

Department spokesman Liam Carter said schools attracted the money in a variety of ways such as direct approaches to businesses.

Donations make up 0.4 per cent of schools' total funding.