

Schoolboy's howler confuses Princess

By JOHN JOST

The voice, excited and strained and very loud, rang out through the Geelong Grammarian ranks: "HEY MARGARET!"

And Princess Anne turned pink. She swung around and looked at the source of the voice. The source was a terrified-looking 14-year-old chap with reddening face.

Imperiously, the Princess paused — and then, with a subdued laugh, she said: "I beg your pardon!"

It was just as the young Royal party left Timbertop. And as they moved away from the ranks of boys, the fellow guilty of the gaffe ran helter skelter up the hill — hotly pursued by the derisive shouts of his school mates.

Of course, his friends were quick to reveal his name to the curious press. But this reporter will not divulge any more than the young gentleman's christian name — Tony — because poor Tony has just

earned himself a chapter in Timbertop's history.

Earlier, that distinguished old Geelong Grammarian, Prince Charles, with Princess Anne, a phalanx of aides, a dozen police and 62 members of the press, had arrived at Timbertop on a sentimental journey.

They were met by the House-Master at Timbertop (Mr. Arthur Mitchell) and the Geelong Grammar Headmaster (Mr. T. R. Garnett), then taken to a large pond — where boys braved chilly conditions to swim in a relay race for the Royal pleasure.

The sentimental journey was not a long and lingering one.

Prince Charles showed no inclination to resume a skill — wood-chopping — which he had cultivated during his two terms at Timbertop four years ago.

Passing a pile of timber, he noticed a clean handled axe and a

brand new bushman's saw.

Mr. Garnett: (pointing to the axe) "Would you care to try it?"

Grinning, Prince Charles said: "I'd rather not."

Finally — after 20 minutes or so — they disappeared into a room for morning tea.

And then came Tony's mighty misnomer.

Stephen Downes reports that Mansfield, the town that was home to the student prince at Timbertop, was disillusioned and bitterly disappointed last night.

It had been cleaned up, with lawns mown, paths swept, fresh paint and red, white and blue bunting.

But the townspeople caught only a half-second glimpse of the visitors as their car swept past at 25 mph.

"We thought they would at least get out and talk to the kids. . . . In fact, we thought it would be a bit of a homecoming for Charles," the people said dejectedly.



Princess Anne was shown a Prince's pool at Timbertop yesteraay.