

May 2013

## From the Principal



### Principal's Message

After 6 weeks in a European spring with temperatures of 4 C London, it's good to return to our pre-winter temperatures in the mid 20's. I now have an even greater appreciation for this wonderful country we live in.

The economic recession in many European countries is so dire. Youth unemployment rates in 18-25 year olds are 47% in France, 59% in Spain and 64% in Greece. I met the most amazing young people who have worked so hard at school and university and now find themselves with no job prospects. An interesting fact:-80% of the people who work on Stop/Go signs at road construction sites in NSW are Irish females with degrees. I am heartened that in Australia when we encourage students to work hard at school and that job prospects are positive.

### 'N' Warning Letters

Unfortunately every year 40-50 students do not receive their Year 11 Preliminary HSC or HSC. This means they have not met the course requirements and worked with sustained effort and diligence (all terms of the course).

Warning letters are sent to parents and 2 warning letters may result in a non-award in the subject. When a student is at the 2nd warning stage, a bright yellow label is attached to the letter requesting a parent interview. At this stage, many students tell their parents, "Everything is OK. I have fixed it."

The letter has been sent because the missed work has not been fixed. Making appointments at the end of the course when the final 'N' determination is given is too late. Promising to catch up on the missed work at the end of the course is too late. Sustained effort and diligence is working throughout the whole course.

Please, if you get an 'N' Warning letter it is serious.

### SRC

Congratulations to the SRC for a very successful SRC week. Activities included trivia competitions, sport games and cake stalls. The students showed outstanding leadership and organisation skills.

Being on the SRC is not always easy. The SRC arrange the Year 12 jersey's and formal, and with over 450 students in the year it is impossible to please all students. Decisions are

based on what the majority decide. Thank you to SRC for their commitment to so many areas of the school.

### ASSESSMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

I encourage all students, especially Year 12, to access the Assessment Resource Centre (ARC) found on the Board of Studies website. The ARC is a valuable reference for past HSC multiple choice questions (instant marking), past papers with examples of student answers in every band e.g. Band 5/6 marking guidelines syllabus and performance band descriptors.

### WEBSITE

The new GRC website will be launched very soon. The Website has a wealth of information for students and parents and links to other valuable sites.

### SCHOOL UNIFORMS

GRC is a uniform school and students are required to wear a GRC jumper or jacket. White undergarments can be worn to increase warmth. Hoodies are banned from the school.

A reminder black leather shoes are required. Canvas shoes do not meet safety requirements.

### PERFORMING ARTS

Congratulations to Britney Trevithick and Fely Lumapac and who have both been short listed as featured artists in this year's Schools Spectacular.



Congratulations also to Claudia Butters and Rebecca Hart who joined students from Danebank and Trinity College to perform at a charity concert featuring Roger Woodward. Rebecca sang Summertime by Gershwin and Claudia Butters played a very complicated piano item by Sir M. Williamson-Theatres from 5 Preludes.



Good luck to Year 11 students for their half-yearly exams.

**Deidrei Bedwell**  
**Principal**

## Support Unit News

Life in the *Georges River Senior College* Support Unit is never dull. The students have been experiencing a wide variety of activities this term, all designed to help their understanding of life in a community and improve their living skills in that community.



*Surf Awareness*

With the help of the Cronulla Beaches Lifeguards, the students have begun a surf awareness course at *North Cronulla SLSC*. Not only are the boys taught about beach safety and survival, they learn practical water skills in the heated pool. All of the students have memorised safety procedures and can re-enact them in the water. The eight week course promises to be a highlight this year.

## Work Placement



Through the Enclave Program, our students have also begun work experience at *Coles Kareela* on Thursdays. The students dress in appropriate retail clothing and complete tasks in the store, including shelf stocking and face-up, back dock procedures and stock take. The *Coles* staff really enjoy having the class there and make a fuss over the winner of our *Worker of the Week*

award. It is quite beneficial for the students to experience this type of environment and interact with the public, especially as they consider what careers they may take on after school finishes.

## Farm Visit

As part of our ongoing study of food and its origins, the class recently visited the excellent farm at *Menai High School*. The boys were shown around by Agriculture students and had the opportunity to pat and feed a variety of animals including sheep, ducks, rabbits, llamas and chickens.

While some were a little nervous, they all appreciated the skills the Menai students had developed in looking after such a large facility and learnt a lot about caring for animals.



*Support unit students enjoying the farmstay*

## Free Graduated Licensing Scheme Workshops for Learner Driver Parents in the Hurstville City area

Young drivers are three times more likely to be involved in casualty crashes. That's why the Roads and Maritime Services has introduced a new licensing scheme, with more supervised driving practice for learner drivers.

To help parents in supervising learner drivers, the Roads and Maritime Services has set up a FREE 2 hour workshop for parents that offers practical advice on how to help learner drivers become safer drivers.

A FREE parents' workshop will be conducted by David Riches on Wednesday June 12th at South Hurstville RSL from 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm.

Numbers are limited so early bookings are essential on 0434 964 764 or at [parentworkshop@optusnet.com.au](mailto:parentworkshop@optusnet.com.au)

## Affordable Education Courses

Held at Hurstville & Jannali Centre

St George and Sutherland Community College, a not for profit organisation, run affordable education courses in the following areas:

### Years 7-10

- English - spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Essay Writing Skills
- Maths
- Homework Lab

### Specialist HSC Classes

- Essay Writing Skills
- Creative Writing
- Maths Coaching
- Public Speaking
- Cover Letter & Resume Writing

**Classes commence week of May 6**

**For more details please ring**

**St. George & Sutherland Community College**

**Tel: 9528-3344 or visit our website [www.sgsgcc.edu.au](http://www.sgsgcc.edu.au)**

## ANZAC report

On the 25th April, Australians commemorate an important event in Australian history. This day is known as ANZAC Day. On ANZAC day we pay our respects to fallen soldiers who served Australia in wartimes. Many brave Australians gave up their lives to defend Australia for future generations. They fought on foreign territory to protect our country, and for this we thank them.



As a part of the community, GRC Oatley Senior Campus participated in ANZAC ceremonies held at Penshurst, Mortdale and Oatley.

Thankyou to student representatives who paid respects and placed wreaths at these ceremonies on behalf of all GRC students and staff. Thankyou to school captains Danny Ly and Isabel Byrnes, for a recital of remembrance poetry, and to Joyce Man, Isabella Stojceviski, Sabrina Mansour and other students who attended local ANZAC ceremonies.

Lest we forget.

**Captain: Danny Ly and Isabel Byrnes**  
**Written by Danny Ly and Isabel Byrnes**  
**School Captains**

## Julius Caesar Excursion

In preparation for studying Julius Caesar as part of the 'Conflicting Perspectives' module for Advanced English, year twelve students visited the Seymour centre for a symposium on the play, followed by selected scenes from the play, performed by professionals and discussed afterwards. The bus trip to the theatre was enhanced by a group reading of the play in preparation for the symposium- my rendition of Portia's speech to Caesar drawing much praise from class-mates such as 'I'm sitting next to someone else on the way back'. On arrival all students were ushered into the theatre to be seated with minimum delay and the lecture section of the symposium began.

<http://vimeo.com/66538751>

The speaker jumped straight into analysis of the play under the impression that all students had read it- although our cohort has yet to begin covering Julius Caesar, the presentation was organised in such a way that we were all able to follow along. The presenter delivered the information in an animated and engaging way, and had a genuine enthusiasm for the play which showed in his informed and in depth analysis. There are so many advantages to actors performing and analysing plays for educational purposes: they offer their personal insights into characters they have invested themselves in; the conflicting perspectives created by characterisation are made clear and it becomes easier to understand the premise of the module.

By the end of the symposium, which flew by considering the length of time we spent in the theatre simply listening to people, I think everyone came out with a deeper understanding of exactly what was expected of us, and what to expect of the

module when we begin it. Many thanks to *Sport for Jove Theatre Company*, for creating an insightful and entertaining look into Shakespeare which engaged and educated its teenage audience.

**Caitlin McHugh**

## News from the Gifted and Talented Desk

Our Year 12 Gifted and Talented students enjoyed an Easter breakfast in recognition of their efforts in teaching computer gaming software to the Year 11 Hurstville boys. This was an integration course and was well received by the Hurstville students. The course involved developing skills in a game-building program KODU. Our year 12 students were the facilitators and mentors of the course, which was a huge success. KODU enables students to develop skills to support their learning across the curriculum. For the year 12 GAT students, it continues to develop their leadership skills and their creativity.

We would like to extend a big thank you to our dedicated students. They have not only given of their time and energy in KODU, they are now taking it a step further with the more sophisticated and even more demanding MINECRAFT, led by Brandon Scott.



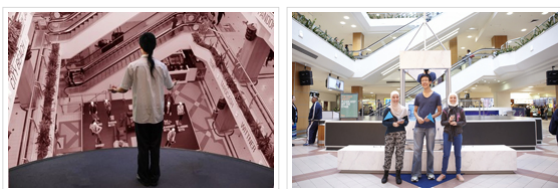
A small group of G&T students went to the Q&A Schools Spectacular on Monday 6/05/13. Bethany Pankhurst was lucky enough to be able to ask her question to Julia Gillard. The students were impressed with the quality of Julia Gillard's responses and found the evening enlightening and thought-provoking.

**Sarah Wood**  
**English Teacher and Gifted and Talented**  
**Co-coordinator**

## Ultimate Vision – Monuments To Us

GRC Oatley's Gifted and Talented Group has continued to collaborate with the Ultimate Visions – Monuments To Us project. Kevin Jin and Alan Karac have been involved in writing the script for the Ultimate Vision short film. The film features many of our Gifted and Talented students and by the look of those performances we have some future Oscar winners in the making. The premiere was on 4th April 2013, and now can be seen on most screens in many shop windows at Westfield Hurstville. It was amazing to see enormous and multiple images on numerous TV screens of Kevin, Claudia Butters, Caitlin McHugh and Alan Karac. It is certainly worth a visit.





**Sarah Wood**  
**English Teacher and Gifted and Talented**  
**Co-coordinator**

## GRC OATLEY OPEN NIGHT

I would like to extend a big thank you to our Year 11 Gifted and Talented students who gave up their time on Open Night (5/3/13) to promote our extra-curricular programs. The students showcased some of our debating and gifted activities demonstrating impressive leadership skills.

## A HEROIC EDUCATION (an opinion piece)

Adults can choose to emigrate: children are largely denied this choice. This is especially so in traditional, conservative cultures, where parental authority remains largely unquestioned and it is the family, not the individual that is most valued. Coupled with this is the belief in the primacy of an education which will set the child on a high-status career path, to the admiration, and hopefully envy, of friends and family. So, with the child's future happiness firmly at heart, the difficult and expensive decision is made to uproot the reluctant adolescent from familiar faces and mother tongue and to transplant them into a foreign system where it is perceived the advantage of an education in English, the linguistic currency of the world, will surely be worth the price of the emotional 'adjustment' required.



*Relaxed and contented students at Oatley*

Doubtless a level of elitism exists, to a greater or lesser extent, in all societies. But the education regimes servicing the aspirational needs of Asian society - the origin of the majority of overseas students - are more competitive and unforgiving than any of us raised in the relatively benign, supportive Australian system can easily imagine. This is, of course, a relief for many new arrivals to our schools since the reduced workload of our curriculum at least allows them time to grapple with their most daunting challenge - rapidly acquiring a new language, often utterly unrelated to their mother tongue, to a degree sufficient to comprehend and critically analyse academic texts! Little wonder that so many ESL students struggle, especially the 'international' students who are often here without their

families. Even those who have emigrated and have family support commence their senior years at a clear disadvantage to their Australian-born peers.

And so, ideally having settled in to a suitable home and school environment, our brave cohort is faced with the inescapable fact of the HSC - the brutal sum of 13 years of formal education. Unlike native speakers, however, ESL students are burdened with interpreting the curriculum in a second language learnt, not with the transparent ease of children, but through the distorting lens of their first language compounded by the brain's progressive inability to learn another language after the age of 12. We all know exceptional people with a talent for languages; and we also know, perhaps with some personal experience, how the sweet enthusiasm at the prospect of learning a language *of our choice* can quickly turn sour as we plateau at a stubbornly intermediate level, unable to reach a satisfying conversational, let alone a rigorous academic, fluency.

Given the obvious trials imposed on ESL students then, their successes in complex, language-dense subjects are all the more remarkable. Certainly some sink under the load, as many Australian-born students will. But for the majority who do go on to further education and a meaningful career, it is the firm hand of care-givers and teachers that guides the students' own, sometimes tentative, aspirations. There may be at times a confused mix of gratitude, (suppressed) resentment and simple incomprehension in their attitude, but ESL students rarely take the privilege of a good education, delivered by supportive teachers, for granted; they've simply sacrificed too much to the collective ambition of their family and society.

**Peter Chapman**  
**ESL Teacher**

## Student Representative Council

The hardworking GRC Oatley SRC has been making progress on a number of key projects including:

### Year 12 Jersey Committee

You may have noticed that our Year 12 look even smarter than usual!!!! The jerseys have arrived and were distributed recently. The Year 12 Jersey Committee did an outstanding job of consulting, researching, and facilitating a design for both Jerseys and Jackets. Well done Joshua Foon for your great design! Year 12 Jerseys/Jackets can be worn in lieu of the regular school jumper for daily school wear, but a school shirt/blouse must be worn underneath. Well done to the SRC Jersey Committee for their hard work.

### Year 12 Formal Committee

One of the highlights of the Year 12 calendar will be the Formal. The Year 12 Formal will be held at Doltone House, Jones Bay Wharf, Pyrmont on Monday 16th September. Details regarding ticket sales will be released soon.

### SRC Week - Term 2, Week 3

Congratulations to the SRC for their efforts in organising our inaugural SRC week. Monday saw the launch of the week-long trivia competition, 4 pics one word and name the musical bells. Winners were:

**Year 12:** Christopher Du, Bibek Belbase, Shannon The, Esther Omatade, Emma McDonagh, Phoebe Zuo, Eliza Thornton, Michael Vitale, Sunil Chandra

**Year 11:** Lachlan Richardson, Sasha Simic, Roy Fang, Lisa Cai, Angela Chen, Natasha Nikoloska, Ayden Dinclik

Tuesday's mufti-day was enthusiastically embraced by all students. Thank you to all for your support and for wearing appropriate attire.

Wednesday was a highly successful Gelato Day with the SRC selling over 50 litres of gelato.

The Students vs Teachers Oz Tag game was a highlight on Thursday. Sport was the winner on the day that saw many students come to the oval during Break 1 to witness what could only be described as a sporting spectacle (see separate match report). Break 2 saw the Year 11's take on the Year 12's and win. Congratulations to all who participated and Ali Matar for volunteering to referee (great job!).

Friday was Cake Day and Tug of War day. Thank you to the SRC and their families for baking to supply the cakes – much appreciated.

While the goal for the SRC Week was to create a week of fun activities for the school, the SRC has also been successful in raising funds for charity. They will be deciding how this money will be distributed over coming weeks.

**Narelle Straney**  
**HSIE Teacher – SRC Coordinator**

## SRC Week Oz Tag Challenge – Match Report

The smell of Dencorub (and possibly fear) filled the air as a courageous squad of teachers took the field to face a combined squad of fine student athletes for the SRC Week Oz Tag challenge. A strong crowd gathered ready to witness a sporting spectacle.

The teachers numbers were bolstered by some student volunteers – Khaled Alfas, Aiden and Aaron Richardson, Nick Pappas and Daniel Straney (thanks guys, we really couldn't have done it without you!!!!). They faced a team consisting of both Year 11 and 12 boys and girls.

While it's fair to say that OzTag was the winner on the day, both teams did score 3 tries each. A rule technicality that female tries are worth 2 tries saw Ms Williams' early try be the deciding factor for a teacher team win

Break Two saw the Year 11 squad take on the Year 12 team with the Year 11's comprehensively winning.

Our thanks to

- Mr Butler and the PDHPE staff for their support,
- Ali Matar for great refereeing (although I believe the staff team had to keep 10 metres back but the students only 5!!!!)
- Mr Butler, Ms Williams, Ms Good, Mr Smithard, Mr Gardiner and Mrs Straney for forming a staff team
- All the students who played and also those who came to the oval to enjoy the event.

**Narelle Straney**

## Boys Knockout Hockey

It was a cold wet May day when the boys ventured out to play SSC Blackwattle Bay. We played a strong hockey school which had excellent links to the Glebe Hockey club and some of their team played hockey on the weekends. However our team was made up of classy cricket players and part timers who had only mostly played at junior school.

That didn't take away from our performance, the boys played with heart and passion in the pouring rain. A lot of our players, including Taylor Preece, went flying in the rain.



We quickly scored a goal to go one up then Blackwattle scored the next four and it looked all over at half time. Then we came back in the second half, the boys lifted, they ran, tackled and we dominated the play. Danny Ly scored a goal. Then with time running out Tristan King scored a fantastic goal. But at full time we lost 4-3 to Blackwattle bay.

The team played hard and fairly and were great ambassadors for this school – Well Done boys.

**Alex Gardiner**  
**Hockey Coach**

## Concert performance: Rebecca and Claudia

Please note below a letter from Mr Alan Watson AM to Mrs Bedwell about our students performance at the Roger Woodward Concert for the Katoke Trust.

*Dear Ms Bedwell*

*The performance of the two Georges River College girls, Rebecca Hart and Claudia Butters, at the Roger Woodward Concert for the Katoke Trust on Friday night was excellent. The concert and their input in particular was received with glowing appreciation by the audience and our international guest pianist, Roger Woodward, was lavish in his praise of the students.*

*Please convey my gratitude as you acknowledge the performance to the school and congratulate the girls and their teachers , Angela Pryce and Annette Lynch.*

*On behalf of the children at Katoke-Lweru Secondary School in Tanzania, who are the beneficiaries of this concert and whose life opportunities are being transformed by receiving secondary education, please receive my warm thanks.*

**Alan**

**Associate Professor Alan Watson AMThe Katoke Trust for Overseas Aid**

**President**

## Helpful Website

Stress is a major issue for any hard working HSC student. To help parents and students click on the below link which will take you directly to Reachout.com a site dedicated to “figure things out and make life better”

<http://www.reachout.com/Wellbeing/School-Uni-and-study/Exams-and-study-stress>