

The Annual General Frühstück

Breakfast was voted best ever, the coffee was delicious, and the support from the parent body was enthusiastic. Every year there are new and interesting parents to meet at this event, and this year was no exception. Many excellent cakes were sampled prompting calls for a bake off further in the year.

The Annual General Meeting

Robert Gruener was enthusiastically accepted as President of the Parent Committee for this year and new comer **Karen Green** was voted in as new Secretary. The Principal and President's reports tabled at the AGM are attached to this newsletter. Please note that **ALL** parents are welcome to sit in on and contribute to any Parents Committee meeting, we are in the staff room and we don't bite!

The final scorecard:

President - **Robert Gruener**
Vice President - **Ann Kemeny**
Treasurer - **Andre Mohr**
Grants Officer - **Ruth Wilson**
Cashier - **Doris Niesen-Baruta**
Public Officer - **Glenister Lamont**
Newsletter Editor - **Simone Parkes**
Secretary - **Karen Green**
Website Coordinator - **Bridgid Soames**
Payroll Officer - **Karen Murphy**
Contact List Database - **Martina Heinemann**

Urgent! Enrolments!

Thank you to the very many parents who have completed the enrolment process and made a payment towards your child or children's fees. This is the **absolute last call** for any parent whose child is old enough to be enrolled in a day school, and who has not returned the form which requires the stamp of the day school and the school principal's signature. If the form is not returned completed by **15th March**, the rebate from the Education Department will not be received. The German Saturday School will therefore have to charge the full fee to any such student, and that is \$550, and not the discounted \$450. Please ensure you are able to pay at the discounted rate!

Thanks to the outgoing...

We finish with a huge vote of thanks to the outgoing President **Ruth Wilson** and Secretary **Jocelyn Ng** for their tremendous dedication, hard work and many achievements over the past year.

Important Dates

Last Day of 1st Term **15th March 2008**
No school on **22nd** of March, Easter Saturday
Next committee meeting **15th March 2008**
First day of 2nd Term **12th of April 2008**

Issue 2 2008

The German Saturday School
(c/o Clifton Hill Primary School)
185 Gold St, Clifton Hill 3068 Melway Ref 44D2

President's Report – AGM 2008

The German Saturday School has had a great year in 2007. We had an enrolment of around 84 students in eight classes. The year was punctuated by highlights which included the annual parent's breakfast, success in the AGTV poetry competition, a wonderful excursion to Anakie Park, a great Open Day and a fantastic Christmas Concert.

At the 2007 AGM the parents elected the following office bearers;

- President: Ruth Wilson
- Vice President: Jill Ried (Doris Niesen-Baruta term 3 + 4)
- Treasurer : Andre Mohr
- Web site coordinator: Claudia Cepin
- Newsletter Editor: Barbara Moje
- Cashier: Anne Kemeny
- Secretary: Jocelyn Ng

Glenister Lamont remained the Public Officer

In term 3, Jill Reid took over the acceleration class from Maria Holweg and Doris Niesen-Baruta kindly took over the role as vice- president.

Teachers and Students

Sigrid Erdt continued as our hardworking principal, with great support from her dedicated band of teachers, including some enthusiastic newcomers to the school, the ever patient assistants and a variety of parent helpers. In 2008 we are experiencing a swelling of numbers; our current enrolment stands at 102. We have many younger children in the 4- 8 year old bracket. We have established two kindergarten classes this year and have 10 classes in total. In 2007 we established the acceleration class for students with little or no German. Maria Holweg initiated the class and, as already mentioned, Jill Reid taught the class in term 3 and 4. The class was a great success- so much in fact that the students are now integrated back into the other classes. In 2008, as another way of tailoring the classes to student and family needs, two 'Muttersprache' classes have been established. The first class for 6-9 year olds is taught by Franziska Richter, a qualified secondary German and Biology teacher who has joined the school this year having recently relocated from Germany. The second Muttersprache class is for secondary school children and is taught by Maria Wenzel. We recognise that as the school grows

we have more opportunity to diversify our teaching programmes to suit students' needs. In early 2007 the Parents' Committee increased the teachers' salaries in line with CPI. We believe it is important to properly support our teachers while maintaining financial rigor and viability as a small organisation.

The Parents' Committee

The Parents Committee worked hard this year – we met regularly, things generally ran smoothly and we achieved a couple of great outcomes. In the 'business-as-usual' category we were successful in obtaining the Department of Education and Training funding for Community Language Schools and also the Victorian Multicultural Commission's educational grant that we use to fund our teacher's annual programme of professional development. We helped the teachers organise the open day, the excursion and the Christmas Concert.

Continuing the committee's solid work on Policy and Procedures in 2006, we established a couple of new policies to cover fee payment, discipline and grievances thus further developing the 'master folder' containing all these documents. We have come to the realization that as our school grows and evolves, our development of policy and procedures will always be dynamic- the job of revising and updating these documents will never be finished!

Our new website

germansaturdayschool.org.au received a major make-over in 2007. Claudia Cepin took on the role of website co-ordinator and thanks to her enormous talent and commitment we now have a fantastic website which looks beautiful, contains a huge amount of useful information and is now the platform we use for all enquiries and committee correspondence. Claudia designed our new logo which gives all our documents and correspondence a very professional look.

Community links

The German Saturday School has worked hard to maintain good relations with our host school, Clifton Hill PS, despite the occasional minor issues, which although being somewhat repetitive in nature, prove to be extremely frustrating for our teachers. The committee has had to take a fairly active and at times creative role, in trying to both deal with, and reduce these issues to the satisfaction of teachers from both schools.



The opening of the new Deutsche Schule Melbourne in North Fitzroy is welcomed by our school. We fully support their endeavours and hope that stronger links between the schools may develop in the future.

Victorian Multicultural Commission Award

At Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence in November 2007, The German Saturday School Inc received an award for Service Delivery to Multicultural Victoria in LOTE Education.

Our school was cited as an exemplary community language school.

We are very proud and honoured to have received this recognition of our school community and our achievements.

2008 and beyond

As our school grows, the amount of time and energy required to ensure that things are running smoothly cannot be underestimated. All our teachers devote un-paid hours preparing for their classes, record keeping and in professional development. In particular our principal Sigrid has a wide range of responsibilities and obligations which extend well beyond the 5 hours a week for which she is paid. We rely heavily on the good will and dedication of our Principal and our teaching staff.

Similarly the responsibilities of the Parents' Committee are growing and becoming more time consuming. In 2008 we propose to create a couple of new roles to further share the work load. These new roles are Pay-role Officer (formally one of Treasurers' duties) and Grants Co-ordinator (formally one of president's duties). In order to share some of Sigrid's work load, Jill Reid, in an extension of her teaching duties, will prepare and submit our accreditation application for VELS (Victorian Essential Learning Standards).

The committee has already initiated a couple of new undertakings in 2008. We are trying to streamline the way we keep and record student details and the way we deal with new enquiries. We are planning to get in touch with local schools to see what alternate accommodation may be available that may better suit our needs. These initiatives are 'works in progress' and will be a couple of the main activities for the committee in 2008.

Thank you

Firstly I would like to acknowledge the great work undertaken by all parents that have been involved in the 25 years that the German Saturday School has existed. It is a huge achievement that the

school has been run successfully for so long and continues to grow. In particular I would like to thank past president Michele Springall who was extremely well organised and had everything ship-shape for me when I took on the role as president.

As out-going president I wish to sincerely thank all the committee members and office bearers for their hard work, co-operation, good humour and commitment. The committee is a diverse range of people from all walks of life, each bringing their skills and talents to the table. Our link is our connection to the German language and the commitment we have in teaching our children German. It has been a privilege to be able to help in this endeavour.

Ruth Wilson
President Parents Committee
German Saturday School

Principal's Report 26/02/08

Annual Report of school year 2007

It is with great pleasure and pride that I write this annual report as our Saturday School had again a successful year and achieved a lot.

At the beginning of the school year in 2007 we welcomed back most of our former students and many new ones. The number of enrolments rose to 85 students. We introduced a new class, the acceleration class for children who had no or very little knowledge of German and engaged a new teacher, Maria Hohlweg, who is highly qualified and has many years of experience teaching at Trinity Grammar. Maria could only commit herself to teach in term one and two. In term three Dr. Jill Reid took over and is now a permanent teacher at our school. Maria, Rita, and Sigrid Schweiger still remain our emergency teachers.

All teachers participated in professional development courses as offered by the Goethe Institut, the German Language Association and LMERC. This ensures that we are well informed about new teaching methods.

The State Community Languages School Conference was held on the 7th of July 2007 at RMIT. We were informed about a new law. By June 2008 all people who work with children have to have a WWC / Working with children check.

Over the last five years The Community Language Schools have made considerable progress in the areas of the curriculum, teaching methods, assessment and reporting. They have also gained increased recognition in society.

The AGTV Conference from the 16th -18th of November was held in Geelong. It provided again valuable information, interesting workshops and material.. Professor Klein emphasized that the teaching of German in

main stream schools and also at Universities suffers a decline.

On the 23rd of May The Goethe Institut invited me to attend the 3rd German Forum. The aim of the forum was to bring together all major partners who are concerned with the teaching and promotion of languages in Victoria German in particular. Representatives of the following Institutions attended:

- AGTV
- Department of Education& Training (DE&T) International Education
- DE&T Multicultural Programs Unit, Student Learning Division
- German Saturday School
- Modern Language Teachers' Association of Victoria (MLTAV)
- Monash University
- The University of Melbourne
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)
- Victorian School of Languages (VSL)

It was pointed out that Primary and Secondary schools are withdrawing from compulsory Lote from prep to year 10.

On our home ground quite a few events took place. On the 25th of July the annual poetry competition started with our internal selection followed by the Regional final on the 30th of July. On the 25th of August the State final took place at the Austrian Club in Heidelberg. Our school again achieved great results at both finals. Christina Castifolis, Andrea Ilag, and Hannah Merl received distinctions at the regional final, Jasper Johnson secured the third place, Lydia Skabar the second Alexander and Benjamin Neal the first. Alexander Neal also won the first prize in the State Final and Benjamin the second.



On the 12th of August the Family outing was on the agenda. We visited the Märchenpark in Anakie and enjoyed a wonderful day with some sunshine. After the hard work filling out

worksheets, the students had lots of fun in the Fairy Park play ground.

On the 9th of September on a bright Sunday we were given the opportunity to promote our school at the German Festival in the Immigration Museum with very professional posters and an activity "Hampelmänner basteln".

To be certain of a successful day many hours of preparations were involved. A special thanks to Leni and Stephanie who assisted all day. Two thousand six hundred people came to the biggest festival so far. To enjoy the Kartoffelpuffer or the Bratwurst mit Zwiebeln und Sauerkraut one had to join the long queues.

The next event was our Open Day at the School. The younger children sang and performed their items with great enthusiasm. The older students recited their poems. The purpose of the Open Day is to provide parents with an insight into our teaching strategies especially those parents who intend to enrol their children for the next school year.

On the 1st of December the Clifton Hill School had their annual fete, therefore we were unable to conduct our lessons in the normal building but had to move across the road into the "Organ Factory." There the Carrousel Theatre entertained the students and teachers with a puppet show Der gestiefelter Kater/ Puss In Boots which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

Our final event was the Christmas Concert at the Austrian Club on the 15th of December. This is always an excellent opportunity to witness what our students are able to achieve and at the same time meet with parents and friends. Before St. Nikolaus handed out the presents, he had a serious talk to the children and reminded them to help their parents and do their homework. The students received their school reports that have a new format to keep in line with the VELS program.

Ruth proudly announced that our school received an award for excellence from the Victorian Multicultural Commission. 2007 has not only been a successful year for the school but also a rewarding year for me. I have enjoyed my third year as principal and thank my colleagues and the parents' committee for their ongoing support and their cooperation.

Sigrid Erdt.

