

in this issue

Educating Girls for their Future Annual Conference 2006

**The Alliance
of Girls' Schools**

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**in Alliance 2006
Editorial Deadlines**

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*The Editor would be grateful for
any articles or photographs for
forthcoming editions. Please
forward these to Jan Butler at
jan.butler@internode.on.net*

From the President...

Beth Blackwood



Firstly, I extend my appreciation and thanks to our Queensland members who organised this year's annual Alliance Conference, *Girls to Women: Links for Life*. Thank you particularly to Amanda Bell and her staff for their leadership and generous hospitality at Brisbane Girls Grammar School. Florence Kearney (Ipswich Girls' Grammar School) and Karen Spiller (St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School) were also instrumental in planning and shaping the stimulating and varied program. I also valued and enjoyed Mrs Carolyn Hauff's (Clayfield College) powerful and perceptive summary of the Conference's themes and challenges as they relate to the education of young women.

Our organisation is dependent on the generosity, time and experience of its members to assist with the administration and organisation of our annual Conference. Such big-heartedness and commitment strengthen the collegiality of the group. Thank you.

I am delighted and grateful that Meg Hansen, Principal of Lauriston Girls' School, Melbourne, has accepted the invitation to co-ordinate our 2007 Conference to be held 15 – 17 June.

I am presently thoroughly enjoying reading Marie White's book, *Closing the Leadership Gap* which was delivered to me by Emily O'Keeffe, the Western Australian student representative at the NCGS Conference in Boston. Emily certainly found Marie White to be an inspiring speaker and has been

propelled to establish a local DIGS (Delegates of International Girls' Schools) group to increase the general understanding of women's issues amongst girls at our schools. DIGS emerged from the Girls' Forum as a means to pass on the knowledge they learnt at the Conference and also to inspire other girls to become the kind of leaders they know women can be – principled leaders. Their vision is to educate girls across the world for future leadership. I hope you hear more of DIGS across the next year for its objectives certainly mirror what we seek to educate for in our Schools – a future of equal opportunities, international understanding, integrity and citizenship.

I leave you with a quote from Marie Wilson:

"Women populate half the democracy; we should occupy half the positions of leadership – both for gender equity and because women, a natural resource, should be mined for energy... When I look at the issues we face [war, greed, terrorism, education, health, violence etc] and when I think of the changes we need, I am as convinced as I have ever been that our future depends on the leadership of women – not to replace men, but to transform our options alongside them."

Beth Blackwood

Marie C. Wilson 2004, *Closing the Leadership Gap*, Penguin, USA, pp ix-x

From the Editor...

Jan Butler



In this issue we focus on *Educating Girls for their Future*. Don't we always? An article from St Mary's College, in Hobart, shows us how we can use the Arts as an exciting focus for making a difference. The annual Alliance Conference hosted by Brisbane Girls Grammar School in June, attended by 164 delegates, presented us with challenges and insights, some of which will be mentioned on the following pages. Susan Buckland, an 'Old Girl' of Auckland's Diocesan School for Girls, has written about their scheme for recognising 'Alumnae Meritae'.

The NCGS conference in Boston at the end of June gave delegates a wealth of ideas relevant to this theme. The Girls' Forum, in particular, was a brilliant example of how successful girls' schools are, as these girls from schools in Australia, South Africa, Canada and the US were wonderful ambassadors for their schools and gave one tremendous hope for the future.

They were articulate, intelligent and determined, yet also humble, and aware of the huge responsibility they have been given to make a difference to the world. They absorbed enthusiastically all the words of wisdom from the outstanding women who were keynote speakers at the conference. I was going to write a summary of some aspects of the conference but Ali Thompson of Walford, SA and Emily O'Keeffe of Presbyterian Ladies' College, WA, our two ambassadors, have done it brilliantly for me.

Our 'new' Alliance school featured in this issue is Frensham, in the southern Highlands of NSW, and "only 75 minutes and one traffic light from the Sydney CBD".

I hope you enjoy this issue of *in Alliance*.

Jan Butler

Why Gender Matters: The Emerging Science of Gender Difference

Brian Lamb, Director, Lauriston Institute

In May this year, Lauriston Girls' School in Armadale, Melbourne hosted a ten day visit by Dr Leonard Sax, a passionate advocate of single sex education in the USA and founding president of the National Association for Single Sex Public Education. Here are some of the highlights from his time in Australia.

"Girls and boys hear differently, see differently, and smell differently. The rate and sequence of skills development is quite distinct in males and females. All of this is physiological rather than socially constructed and it means that there is a great deal to be gained by educating boys and girls in single sex classrooms."

This was the key message delivered by Dr Leonard Sax. Dr Sax is a psychologist and medical practitioner who has had his work featured in a *Time* magazine cover article. He shared some of the most recent findings from what he calls the emerging science of gender difference. These included learning that girls' eyes are constructed so that they respond to warm colours and to the texture of objects while boys' eyes detect silver, black, and blue and are more attuned to action and movement. This is just one simple example of how teachers can use gender science to plan work that will appeal to the different genders.

Dr Sax is aware of Australia's long history of successful single sex education and was keen to observe and talk to teachers here. He was extremely impressed with what he saw in our classrooms. Perhaps the most striking experience was the two days spent at Howqua, Lauriston's residential campus for Year 9 girls. The community values, the learning, the extended remote experience and the carefully controlled risk-taking capture everything that gender science is telling us is good for girls. Dr Sax immediately used this in his presentation to parents, and plans to refer to it as an example of best practice in the seminars he presents in the USA and Canada. The positive, supportive relationships in the dining room, the six-day hike, abseiling, the teaching of maths through environmental calculations, and humanities via the Ned Kelly experience were all

examples of learning that is seen all too rarely in classrooms.

More than six hundred people attended the evening public seminars at three different schools. Many of them were current parents but there were also educators from other schools and prospective parents. The response was overwhelmingly positive with many staying behind after the two-hour presentations to talk and buy a copy of Dr Sax's book. Parents commented particularly on the value of having a speaker not just cover educational topics but go beyond that to give helpful information about general parenting concerns. One of Dr Sax's strong messages is that the biggest sociological change in the past fifty years is the transferring of authority from parents to children. "Children do not have the ability to make informed choices about whether

broccoli or fast food is best for their supper tonight. In the same way if you ask them what kind of school they want to attend, they will judge purely on whether they like or hate their current school. Parents have a job to do and it is to raise children well, not to be their friends and ensure constant happiness." Dr Sax's book contains a great deal more specific advice on gender differences in discipline for different age groups.

Lauriston Girls' School has been committed to providing the best education for girls for over one hundred years. It is also committed to constantly

re-examining its performance and looking for continuous improvement. The ability to analyse brain activity far more accurately in the last ten years has led to research findings that largely reinforce our current practice. Dr Sax's visit gives us even more justification for single-sex girls' education. He says you cannot cater easily for the variations in optimum lighting, noise volume, and temperature that seem best for boys and girls. You should also be preparing separate lessons, tasks, and assessments for each sex and that is not practical in co-educational settings.

You can find out more about Leonard Sax's work at www.nasspe.org or www.singlesexschools.org

"Girls and boys hear differently, see differently, and smell differently. The rate and sequence of skills development is quite distinct in males and females."



Dr Sax with Year 9 Lauriston girls at Howqua

September 2006	Registrations open for 2007 Student Leadership Conference in Perth, Western Australia (17-21 January 2007)
17-21 January 2007	Student Leadership Conference 2007, Penrhos College, Perth, WA, Australia
15-17 June 2007	Annual Alliance Conference, Lauriston Girls' School, Armadale, Victoria, Australia
26-29 June, 2007	2007 NCGS Annual Conference, Roland Park Country School, Baltimore, Maryland, USA

St Mary's College Arts Festival, 17-19 October 2005

Sally Haig, Head of English, St Mary's College, Hobart

This was our third Arts Festival, the first being in 2001, the second in 2003. Originally we planned to hold an Arts Festival once every 4-5 years, so that all our students would have the opportunity of participating at least once in their school lives. What we found was that the students loved the first one so much that we really didn't have any choice but to hold one at least every second year. And yes, the organisation required is huge, but the students' overwhelmingly positive response makes us silly enough to want to do it again. This year's Festival was our most successful, so I thought we'd share some aspects of it with you so that if you are considering holding an Arts Festival you might find that it's not as hard as you imagine.

At our first Festival in 2001 we were still locked in to the idea that we needed "celebrities". We're lucky, situated as we are in the centre of Hobart with its thriving arts community, so that prominent practitioners across the various arts fields were accessible and keen to run workshops, and galleries and our local art film cinema are all within walking distance. The Long Lunch, an important part of the first day of our Festival, initially involved inviting arts "identities" – bureaucrats as well as other dignitaries – to launch the three days of arts activities. It was terrific, but always involved a certain element of stress, not least on our catering staff and students. This year we decided on a stress-free, much more communal picnic-style long lunch which was more fun. This more relaxed approach characterised all aspects of the 2005 Festival. We had one artist-in-residence, Jamin, a musician, designer, artist and thinker, who guided our girls in the creation of a most impressive graffiti wall. Local artists, many of whom were back by popular request after participating in our previous Festivals, did run workshops which our students loved, but now, after two festivals, we had the confidence to run so many more workshops ourselves, using the skills of current and former students, staff and parents. We believe strongly in paying artists professional fees for their services, but having fewer big names meant that we had more in

our budget to spend on other aspects of the Festival, so we "Karaoked Till We Croakied", "Danced Like Nobody's Watching", made "Dangly Bits", "Funky Bits" and "Handbag Bling" and went on our evening adults only "What an Ugly City Double Decker Bus Tour".

"From the start we involve students in the Festival planning. They bring lots of their own ideas to the planning process, being specially inventive in the creation of merchandise to market, which helps cover costs."

Because this was our third Arts Festival it has now become an accepted part of our College culture that everything else in the school stops for three days. We no longer have to accommodate those who used to insist that Grade 11/12 lessons must continue. Holding the Festival during a three day working week (because of Show Day and a holiday) also assists in establishing it as an event with its own regular time slot.

From the start we involve students in the Festival planning. They bring lots of their own ideas to the planning process, being specially inventive in the creation of merchandise to market, which helps cover costs. Student involvement also gives them a strong sense of ownership in the Festival. Celebrities, students and staff decorated white Bonds singlets which we auctioned at our closing cocktail party – another way of raising funds and enabling people to have some wearable art.

Each of our Festivals has had a theme which we have incorporated into our logo. This year we decided on "seven" because we were struck by the frequency with which "seven" occurs in so many aspects of our lives, to wit the seven deadly sins, Seven Ages of Man, seven years' bad luck, seven notes in the musical scale, seven colours of the rainbow, seventh heaven, seven dwarfs and Seven Little Australians.. We even decided on seven senses by adding two – sense of humour and ESP. Our

students, ever ingenious, came up with their very own seven holes in your face! Each class was given seven dollars with which to purchase lollies to use in a cooperative sculpture made totally of lollies and with the motif of "seven". There were some spectacular results which made a truly original sculpture display.





We had to include old favourites from previous festivals – our Shoutfest and Kick Arts (which includes the Battle of the Bands) are always a great hit. Our Balinese flags add to the visual excitement and convey to the world that we really know how to have a good time. As part of the Arts Festival ritual, these flags are signed by each student. One of the loveliest moments in the Festival occurred when music, laughter and some funny commentary from an event being staged outside could be heard down the street in the city. It would have warmed the hearts of passers-by to hear the fun and hilarity being enjoyed by the girls at St Mary's.

You don't need to run an Arts Festival over three days. Just one day can make a difference to our students' lives in all sorts of ways that we couldn't even begin to imagine. To quote our marvellous Festival Directors, Mrs Sue Hall and Mrs Penni Castellana, "We've had the best fun organising this and hope that the school community just loves it." Well, we did, and we might even go mad and do it all again in 2007.



Alliance Annual Conference, Girls to Women: Links for Life

GIRLS TO WOMEN: *Links for Life*

School Tour Program

Four Heads generously offered their staff and their schools for visits by the delegates. The Alliance is grateful to the following schools for sharing their schools and their programs.

St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School

St Aidan's is a Prep to Year 12 Anglican day school for girls located in suburban Brisbane. The school's population is around 800 students. St Aidan's was established in 1929 by the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent, an Anglican religious order. In Years 5, 8 and 11, all students are tested in order to determine their individual learning styles. St Aidan's uses the Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles Model. In order to maximise the effectiveness of the learning experiences in the classroom and to increase students' understanding of their own learning style, this information is made known to both teachers and students. The Dunn and Dunn model identifies 21 elements which impact on a student's learning style. Introducing any number of these elements in the classroom will have a positive effect on student achievement.



Stuartholme School

Stuartholme School, overlooking the city of Brisbane from the heights of the Mount Coot-tha, is home to 702 students of whom 140 are Boarders. Founded as a Catholic girls' school in 1920 by the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Stuartholme is one of only four Sacred Heart Schools in Australasia. Proud of its holistic approach to the education of its students, and in accordance with the Five Goals of Sacred Heart Education – a tradition over 200 years old – its aim, in the words of Mother Janet Erskine Stuart, after whom Stuartholme is named, is “not meant to turn the children out small and finished, but seriously begun on a wide basis.”



Clayfield College

Established in 1931 by the Presbyterian and Methodist Schools' Association, Clayfield College celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2006. Clayfield College caters for girls from Prep to Year 12 and boys from Prep to Year 5, allowing them to strive for personal excellence in a positive Christian learning environment. An innovative Thinking Program has been in place for a number of years and encompasses a whole school philosophy and involves a number of strategies including de Bono CoRT thinking system, multiple intelligences and the use of graphic organisers. Clayfield College also operates a highly successful Excellence in Sport program.



Somerville House

Somerville House is an inner-city school located next to Southbank. It is a P-12 school, with a student population of 1200 students, 100 of whom are boarders. The school facilities include three significant heritage buildings, the most recent acquisition being the (former) South Brisbane Municipal Chambers. Recent buildings include a Performing Arts Centre built in 2000, with a multi-use auditorium, purpose-built Music School and Middle School. Somerville House embarked on an innovative technology program for students in 2003, with students from Year 6 using laptops as a mandatory part of their school program. The rollout has progressed so that in 2006, all students from Year 6 to 9 have laptops.



Brisbane Girls Grammar School, 9-11 June 2006

Principals' Dinners

A new initiative this year, these dinners, each for a table of ten, were hosted by six local principals to allow delegates to meet informally on the first evening and experience the best of Brisbane's fine dining. They were very popular and filled quickly. The Alliance is grateful to the six principals who offered to host these dinners: Ms Amanda Bell of Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Mrs Florence Kearney of Ipswich Girls' Grammar School, Mrs Karen Spiller of St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, Mrs Carolyn Hauff AM of Clayfield College, Mrs Helen Sinclair of Stuartholme School and Mrs Vicki Waters of St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School.

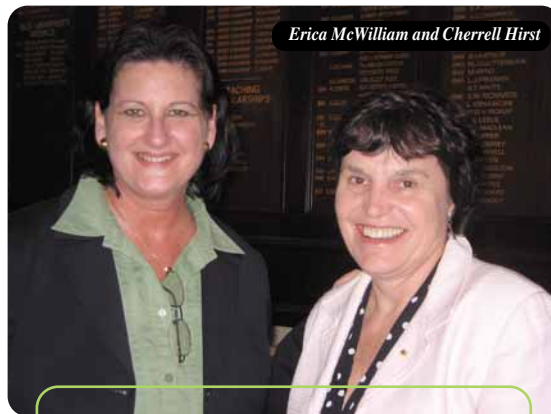
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

The Governor of Queensland, Ms Quentin Bryce AC

The conference was opened by the Governor of Queensland, Ms Quentin Bryce AC, a valued Patron of the Alliance. With fascinating and alarming anecdotes from the world of the media, she reminded delegates of the huge responsibility and challenges that they face daily in their work with young women, admiring "your professional endeavour, your intellect, your insight, your commitment, and your resilience in an environment that, by virtue of the sheer humanness of its participants, presents unparalleled challenges for you every day."

The Governor made sure she emphasised the positive aspects of the work of educators of young women: "...for all the complexity, negativity, and lack of sincerity that at times overshadow young women's unfettered participation in the world, you must surely cherish the very special opportunity you have to inspire freedom from constraint." She reminded us of "the exquisite joy of being in the company of young women, witnessing their intelligence and ambition, their infectious wit and boundless generosity, their marvellous progression to adulthood."

The Governor's speech can be found on her website at http://www.govhouse.qld.gov.au/the_governor/Alliance.htm



Erica McWilliam and Cherrell Hirst

"...for all the complexity, negativity, and lack of sincerity that at times overshadow young women's unfettered participation in the world, you must surely cherish the very special opportunity you have to inspire freedom from constraint."



Conference Committee: Flo Kearney, Karen Spiller and Amanda Bell

Professor Erica McWilliam

Erica McWilliam followed with an outstanding address which has been captured in some notes by Susan Just, Principal of Canberra Girls' Grammar School.

Erica McWilliam is Professor of Education and Assistant Dean of Research in the Faculty of Education, Queensland University of Technology. Her keynote presentation was: *Looking over the Horizon: Creative Futures and Young Women.*

She offered the following statistics:

- The median age of new mothers: 30.5 (2003)
- The number of babies to be born in 2010: 1.6
- The number of childless women: 24% (2004)
- Couples who choose not to have children: 2.4%
- The median age for women who marry for the first time: 27
- The median age for divorce: 39.9
- Couples who live together before marriage: 75%
- The median duration of marriage to divorce: 12.2 years
- Women who participate in the labour force during the peak child bearing years: 71.5%

We were told that young people from 15 to 24 years account for 40% of casual employees. Females account for 72% of the workforce in the areas of clerical, sales and service positions. It seems that employment in events management, business communications, human services and retailing are of most interest to young

women. Ms McWilliam suggested that females continued to take the 'hand maiden' roles.

"If you look good, you feel good. If you feel good, you can do anything". Ms McWilliam suggested that the promise of a bright future through physical looks is more prevalent than ever, but it is not a passport to a productive future for young women. She further suggested that style was triumphing over substance.

Ms McWilliam refers to our young women and men as the Yuk/Wow Generation: here and now experience is what matters;



Chris Jenkins (Korowa) and Ann Mildenhall (Diocesan School for Girls, NZ), Members of the Alliance Executive



Madonna King (Journalist and after-dinner speaker)



Julie Shaw (Abbotsleigh) and Gemma McDermott (Ravenswood School)



Jennifer Haynes (Moreton Bay College) and Gillian de Araugo (Chilton St James School, NZ)



Rebecca Cody (Woodford House) and Graham Rixon (Penrhos College)

choice, speed and chance; just in time, just enough, just down the hall; many are churners, parkers and drifters; life-style, image and being entertained; screen-centred, not book-centred; a different notion of career.

By 2020 25% of individuals will be doing 'collarless' work. They will live and work in a digitally enhanced environment which is not bounded by place. Learning will not be transferable and it will be just as important to unlearn as much as it is to learn. There will be multiple paths and no linear transition from school to work. It has been suggested that young people should have one good qualification, plus edgy know-how.

Good schools build capacity to try things, not deliver content; provide value-added networks; work with students to create the curriculum; care enough for young people to challenge them; welcome error and explain less; teach students not to be thrown by having to find a strategy to meet a challenge; teach students that it is all right to fail and that there is no shame in doing so. Failure simply means that one has to re-think strategy.

In our modern female student we need to protect their capacity to think.

Cherrell Hirst and Toni Thornton

A bold initiative of the conference planning committee was to have a panel of two women in a conversation-style chat session entitled "The Boys' Club". Cherrell Hirst is a medical researcher and board member, among other things, and Toni Thornton is State Manager of Goldman Sachs JBWere. They shared their experiences and made some valuable suggestions.

Joanna Mendelssohn, Associate Professor, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales

(This is an edited version of Joanna's talk)

The title of this paper, "The End of Education", came to me, as with much of my writing, in a flash of sudden irritation. Yet again I had seen a government document that indicated the word "education" was to be seen as a synonym for "training". All of us here know that the actual connection between "education" and "training" is best

described as an occasional intersection. I train my dog. I educate my students. Any teacher at any level whose students merely imitate her steps has failed, and failed badly. But a well-trained dog will sit, roll over and beg for a biscuit on command.

Is government policy concerning education at an end? It wasn't mentioned at all in this year's budget speech. Sometimes the growing mounds of paperwork make me hope that government will stop thinking about education at all. I work for a university that, as with other Australian universities, receives far less government support in real terms than it did a decade ago. But still the trainers and crackers of whips appear to make us all jump through hoops and sit up and beg for our dollars. And schools are in the same boat when it comes to compliance. I suspect we are living in Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* and policy is now run by that novel's Mr Gradgrind. You know, the man

with a rule and a pair of scales, and the multiplication table always in his pocket, sir, ready to weigh and measure any parcel of human nature, and tell you exactly what it comes to.

The phrase, "The End of Education", is also a pun. What is the end of education? What is its purpose? Why does it matter so much to the long-term health of both individuals and to society that people, especially women, be educated?

A good teacher has passion for their subject and passes that passion on to their students so that they see what we see. A great teacher moves hell and high water to free their students to travel their own path, even if the direction is completely different to the one they have chosen for themselves.

Ashton was an illustrator, a fair average quality artist, and nowhere in the league of many of those he taught or nurtured. But when he taught drawing, and told his students that "draughtsmanship is accurate perception beautifully recorded", he freed them to transcend his own abilities. I would suggest that without Ashton's active encouragement of women art students in the 1880s and 90s we would not have seen the incredible flowering of female talent in Sydney in the 1920s and 30s — no Margaret Preston, no Thea Proctor. He changed the climate so that Australia, unlike other parts of the western world, became a place where women artists were taken seriously. This meant that when new wave feminism emerged

in the late 1960s, the feminism that most of the women in this room are participants in, or beneficiaries of, the next generation of Australian women artists didn't have the burden of being pioneers alone. They were walking where others had already trod, and although the marks were faint, their presence helped reassure many young women who would be artists.

It's worth remembering that the sweet freedom of opportunity represented here today, with so many women principals of schools that teach young women to be future leaders, are not so well established that they may never be taken away. The women artists of the 1920s and 30s faded from public view in the 1940s and became invisible in the 1950s and '60s.

So what is the end of education? Why do we bother to teach the young? At the same time that Henry Parkes was agitating to create the giant monolith that became the NSW Department of Education, and enforce teaching and standards across the land, another revolution on what it means to be educated was in place on the other side of the world. In particular this revolution was concerned with why education is both more and less than Shakespeare's "a little Latin and less Greek". And although this took place most famously in boys' schools, the ideas that underpin these changes have had some of their finest flowering in our countries in schools for girls.

Education is not just about UAIs, TERs or whatever acronym Canberra decides to foist on us when they're next in the mood. Nor is it about the number of girls with maximum marks at matriculation. And, great heresy this is, it's not even about how many students get into a prestige University. A good girls' school is one that takes a child and delivers a woman; that teaches compassion as well as ambition; that enables our girls to see beyond their own immediate needs (or wants) and to have a sense of how they can make the world a better place. And a good school principal is the one who knows every girl by name, and who will by strategic intervention, make apparently small decisions that give their students the freedom to be what they can.

Charities and health workers in third world countries have caught on to the essential truth. The more women are educated, the more societies prosper, for succeeding generations as well as in the short term. Educated women make decisions that will protect their grandchildren.

The end of education, its purpose, will be as you choose to make it.



Joanna Mendelsohn

"A great teacher moves bell and high water to free their students to travel their own path, even if the direction is completely different to the one they have chosen for themselves."

It is a terrible burden being a school principal today, with politicians and media shock jocks attempting to force changes on what is taught and how it may be taught. It seems that you can't fight politicians. If you vote them out another one will take their place. While I'm not suggesting that you should leave your schools and take your places in parliament house, a good dose of the kind of commonsense we find in the best school principals would not go astray.

On a more immediate level, there is a need for schools to stand firm for real quality in education. Our children deserve no less. Education should be broadening visions, not narrowing them into a number greater than 50 and less than 99.9. This ranking does not measure understanding, wisdom, compassion, or the ability to research or write anything that isn't an essay. Yet these are the very qualities we value in an educated person and unless we ensure that they are passed on to our future citizens then the world will be a very bleak place indeed.

Workshops

Conference delegates were able to choose from presentations on a variety of topics. Language learning featured as a 'passport to life' and the trio of Lorraine Thornquist, Marion Bryant and Wendy Parkinson discussed Brisbane Girls Grammar School's programs in the French, German and Latin departments. They received a Special Project grant from federal funds to create what they called a DVD textbook, using primary television sources, French and German, as the learning context for senior classes. The aim was to show how the learning curve could be pushed through genuine communication modes rather than a reliance on textbook based learning modes. Their Affiliate School Program, by connecting with sister-schools over a long term, provides both challenging and enriching opportunities for the students and equips them with far more than language skills. Marion's description of her Latin classes' responses to surveys was both entertaining and enlightening, and certainly conveyed how a 'dead' language can be used to educate girls for the future.

Conference presentations can be found at www.agsa.org.au. Email jan.butler@internode.on.net for the username and password to access the documents.



Noeline O'Connor (Wellington Girls' College) and Janet Maher (Melbourne Girls Grammar School)



Maryanne Davis (St Hilda's School, Qld), Fran Reddan (Mentone Girls' Grammar School) and Carolyn Anderson (Ruyton)



NZ delegates

Conference Closing Address

Carolyn Hauff AM, Principal, Clayfield College

Some of Carolyn's wisdom from her closing address is captured here. The Alliance is indebted to Carolyn for her support and although we say farewell to her as a Head of a girls' school at the end of this year, we hope she will still remain in contact so we can continue to benefit from her advice and knowledge.

Reasons for attending a girls' school

They have a singular, uncompromising focus on the delivery of a high quality education using learning styles and strategies capitalising on the strengths of young women; they specialise in doing what works well – inside and outside the classrooms; they offer a non-distracting learning environment where there is a balance between collaboration and competition and a safe place to take risks and learn from both the successes and failures. Girls' schools have a culture of high expectations and work ethic with strong female role modelling and they reinforce confidence and positive realistic self esteem.



Women can make a difference

Surveys have shown that only 1/3 of young women recognise that success in business provides an important vehicle for helping others. Women need to help themselves and to put themselves forward for promotion alongside men. Negotiating skills are a very important aspect of this and very intelligent young women are needed in education as well as other careers. Girls' schools can train women and show them how they can be part of the decision-making process. An essential aspect of change within the world is change to the social conscience of big business and this will happen as more women develop these skills.

Carolyn finished her address by saying how important this conference was for bringing together great schools in a network of power. In a position of educating young women and reminding them that anything worthwhile does require more than talent, we are privileged to be part of that future. She paid tribute to Beth Blackwood, the President of the Alliance, and the Executive for continuing to give of their time for the benefit of all girls in girls' schools, although they are all busy women.

We express to all our sponsors our gratitude for their support for this conference and therefore for our schools and for girls' education in general.

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Congratulations to Carolyn Hauff AM

We congratulate Carolyn for being awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day honours list in January this year. Carolyn was a member of the Executive of the Alliance from 2001 to 2004. She is currently President of the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland and has represented the independent schooling sector on many prominent committees and working parties including, the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal and the Queensland Drug Education Strategy Committee.

She is actively involved in many educational organisations, some of which include; The Australian College of Education, the Australian Council of Educational Leaders, World Leadership Fellowship, Association of Heads of Independent School Australia, the Australian Institute of Management, The Australian Federation of University Women, and the Australian Women's Network.

She was an inaugural member of the Institute of Business Leaders in 2002, and has recently completed The Owners/Presidents Management Course (OPM) at Harvard Business School. Carolyn has been Principal of Clayfield College, a P-12 girls school (Co-educational P-5) since 1991. Prior to that she was Deputy Principal at Kambala Girls School in Sydney from 1986-1990 following a career in State education spanning twenty years.



Frensham Boarding: a 21st Century Educational Model

Julie Gillick, Head of Frensham

Frensham is a secondary boarding and day school located in the picturesque Southern Highlands of New South Wales, where all students are considered 'boarders' – Full, Weekly or Day boarders (those who 'all but sleep here!') We have a student population of just over 300 girls and a parent community comprising: those for whom boarding as an educational model has been part of a family tradition; those who prior to their daughter's enrolment at Frensham had 'no experience of boarding' within their immediate family; and those for whom Frensham Boarding has strong links across several generations.

Six years ago when I joined Frensham, my perception of Boarding School had been shaped by what by my mother, a wartime boarder for two years in Melbourne, talked about: Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* plus St Trinian's, the fictional girls' school created by British cartoonist Ronald Searle, where wicked, well-armed pupils dressed in gym-slip style dresses were ill-managed by disreputable mistresses.

I can now speak with certainty that these perceptions, together with

the Harry Potter versions of boarding school have nothing in common with what is offered at Frensham in 2006 – though secret tunnels and *quidditch* have a certain appeal!

In articulating Frensham's commitment to a 21st century model of boarding education, we have spent much time considering what is happening for families and young people today. In our cities there is the emergence of what some have labelled the 'bubble-wrap generation' - children who are unable to go anywhere outside the home without parent supervision or parent transport, whose parents fear for their safety. In general, the notion of 'helicopter parenting' - so named because it is the style of parenting marked by parents hovering just above their children to ensure that nothing goes wrong for them, and maintaining this bond of dependence for as long as

possible, threatens to stifle the personal growth and resilience of young people.

So, if 'old-fashioned' boarding was oppressive, yet undisciplined, I suggest that there are many for whom modern boarding, Frensham-style, could mean an escape from oppression to immersion in a challenging, socially stimulating environment, and for others, every advantage of a city-based education, without the disadvantages - and all in a magnificent rural setting.

Frensham was founded in 1913 by

Continued overleaf...



"In our cities there is the emergence of what some have labelled the 'bubble-wrap generation' - children who are unable to go anywhere outside the home without parent supervision or parent transport..."



FRENSHAM BOARDING *continued...*



Winifred West, an inspirational educator. And, whilst the fabric of the School has changed dramatically over the past 93 years, the philosophical position from which we work has not, and is strongly embedded in our daily life. Frensham aims to inspire: the pursuit of excellence; emotional and intellectual maturity; respect, support and celebration of gifts differing; passionate engagement with school life; responsibility to develop and share one's talents; and willingness and confidence to contribute to the wider world.

Our values framework emphasises the unselfish pursuit of excellence and the need to discern what is good and reject what is second rate. We believe that the best education occurs when students sense the imperative of contribution, involvement and responsibility, where the relationship between teacher and student is positive and where girls' needs and differences are recognised and celebrated.

Every day at Frensham we urge students to respect reasonable and balanced limits for responsible behaviour whilst being adventuresome and dreaming about achievements of the highest order. The development of a 'scholars-in-residence' program is proving to be a powerful way of offering inspiration – from a scholar of English to an artist, a concert pianist, designer and architect – the chance to live and work alongside inspirational mentors for up to a full year is highly valued by senior students.

At Frensham change has been constant, often spontaneous, mostly deliberate, sometimes in response to opportunities or crises that have arisen and sometimes because the scope for change is inherent in our way of thinking. The fact that we are situated in the most magnificent setting, covering 194 hectares, yet only 75 minutes and one traffic light from the Sydney CBD does make a difference to the way we live and work...

As a new member of the Alliance I would be keen to welcome visitors to the School!



NCGS Girls' Forum

From 24 - 27 June, two Australian students of Alliance member schools were given the opportunity to attend the Annual Conference of the National Coalition of Girls' Schools in Boston, USA. We managed to travel halfway across the world independently to attend the conference along with eleven other girls from South Africa, Canada and the USA. Together, we grew personally and intellectually, exploring the conference theme of *The Right Stuff: Girls and Women as Pioneers and Pacesetters*.

Our timetable was as diverse as it was rewarding, including activities and talks on a wide range of topics led by some talented and inspiring speakers. Diana Cutaia is one such young woman. Passionate about sport, in her SOAR (Sports Offer Amazing Results) program she uses the skills needed and history involved to encourage girls to be leaders. We learnt how sport has been used as a medium throughout history in the battle for women's rights. It seems that men seemed inclined to respect women more if they travelled around in a hot air balloon before them or beat them in a game of tennis. We also developed team skills and experienced different roles when being taught new sports. The program led us to realise that passions and talents in fields such as sports can help us achieve our goals in other areas.

We also heard Marie Wilson speak. Currently Head of the White House Project, aimed at getting as many women as possible into powerful political positions, Ms Wilson is a captivating and passionate speaker. For us, she was a spark, a jolt of energy that left us inspired and impatient - impatient to achieve the goals and dreams which we now know are possible. Marie Wilson made us feel like there is a world of women out there, ready to support and educate us. Her book, *Closing the Leadership Gap: Why Women Can and Must Help Run the World*, has recently been released.

Another amazing woman was Dr Gloria White-Hammond, who spoke on her work in *Freeing the Forgotten Girls in the USA and Africa*. She opened our eyes to the plight of many women in Sudan, a country torn apart by civil war; yet also in our own 'back yard', young women in the USA. She taught us how important it is to be informed about issues affecting women across the world. We realised that the lack of general knowledge on current affairs amongst us needs to change. We could see how important it is for these women that the world is informed and they are not 'forgotten.' We also learnt something for our teachers: role models for women need to be present in mind, body and spirit in our schools and communities - we can tell when they are 'functionally' absent and this affects our learning.

Neal Brown, Assistant Head of Nashoba Brooks School in Concord, Massachusetts described his school's program of 'service learning' which incorporates service into the curriculum; Dr Kurt Fischer, Bigelow Professor, Harvard University, and Director of the Mind, Brain and Education Program at Harvard School of Education, discussed girls' education from a neurological perspective. We were very receptive to a woman who had certainly harnessed her brain power – Ms Cary Grace, who presented *Women, Work and Wealth: A New Paradigm* and elucidated the four keys to financial literacy: saving, spending, donating and investing, and how women can utilise these to promote females in the workplace and to help the less fortunate.

Each lecture and activity appealed to the very qualities that define women: our empathy and humanity, our sense of justice and equity, our inquisitiveness and creativity, our courageous determination. Exposure to such inspiring speakers and their ideas electrified the young international delegates and we were irresistibly motivated to make use of our newfound awareness. As young female ambassadors, our ultimate role within the

Emily O’Keeffe, Presbyterian Ladies’ College, WA and Ali Thompson, Walford Anglican Schools for Girls, SA

conference was to present a panel presentation on a topic of interest to the attendees.

Interacting with our fellow delegates in advance was exhilarating – and their unique focuses and concerns regarding feminism (and beyond!) manifested passionately during our preparation and the forum itself. Each girl contributed a distinctive perspective to the conference, yet all shared an incredible aptitude for leadership with which to drive their ideas. A single event epitomised the remarkable initiative and ingenuity of the 2006 team of girls – an unexpectedly epiphanic lunch. Dr White-Hammond’s empowering speech had sparked enthusiastic and characteristically ambitious conversation amongst the delegates, and independent of allocated discussion time, we not only arrived at a theme for our presentation – but at an entire global scheme. Instead of reserving the lessons we learnt at the conference for private reflection, it was decided that the team would collaborate permanently, to invent ways of broadcasting this fresh brand of feminism to a greater audience of girls. After all, a great leader is one who can inspire others to lead.

This initiative is called DIGS (Delegates of International Girls’ Schools). With the motto *Breaking new ground*, the sub-phrase *We dig change* and the prospective emblem bearing a well-used shovel, the organisation already breaks the male stereotype of hard labour and revolutionary toil. The DIGS clubs throughout the world will present an opportunity for girls to have a support network of like-minded students within their local, national and international communities. Through our panel presentation we expounded a mission statement and goals: this organisation aims to educate.

The goals include:

- obtaining an adult mentor within each participating school
- establishing current events clubs within schools (filtered through a feminist lens where applicable)
- arranging public speakers (of varying calibres – from public figures and high achievers to students and parents)
- attending regular meetings to discuss interests and issues encountered by girls
- setting up an Internet forum – on which all global DIGS members can unite and debate their recent current events, or simply muse on more individual diversions.



The panel presentation elicited an overwhelmingly encouraging response – especially with regard to the realism of our proposed policies. DIGS recognises the traps of teenage idealistic naivety and plans to limit its goals to fairly domestic ones at this embryonic stage.

Throughout the presentation delegates were also able to respond to individual questions. The opportunity for a young girl to voice her opinions in front of hundreds of supporters is rarely available – and for it we are infinitely grateful. Every girl spoke with compelling zeal and intelligence on a diversity of subjects. These included our South African fellow’s articulate illustration of feminism’s relative neglect in a society that has barely vivified democracy, one American girl’s discussion of the benefits of all-girls’ education on her self-esteem and confidence and the Canadian delegate’s depiction of how passion and motivation are so prevalent in all-girls’ schools. We discussed the importance of extra-curricular activities in instigating a sense of community in girls, that seemingly mythical creature called ‘balance’ we girls constantly hunt for, and what we perceive as the risks involved in single-sex private schools, in terms of socioeconomic sheltering and ignorance of different living- and working-standards in the ‘real world’.

Attending the National Coalition of Girls’ Schools Annual Conference was a defining experience for us. We would like to thank the Alliance and the Coalition for the opportunity to participate in such an invaluable activity and the amazing support we received from Jan Butler, Meg Moulton, Beth Peterson and Sarah Mabel – we will encourage our peers to apply for this incredible program. The forum provided us with an enriching composite source of inspiration. We interacted with intelligent, passionate and *active* role models in

feminism from a vast spectrum of specialties, we were given the opportunity to establish and consolidate our own goals and areas of interest, and we were supported by like-minded role models of our own age – with whom we have now founded powerful global relationships. This experience has launched us onto an exciting and groundbreaking course of motivation and meaningful determination, in the still largely unexplored and potentially volatile feminist scene. This idea coordinates directly with the message that Dr. Deborah Merrill-Sands, Dean of The Simmons School of Management, delivered to us so vehemently in her keynote speech:

*The only safe ship in a storm is leadership.
And women, we are in a storm.*

Women of Achievement

Marie C. Wilson



Marie Wilson was honoured at the 2006 National Coalition of Girls' Schools Annual Conference, hosted by Winsor School, Boston, with the Woman of Achievement Award. The following article about her work has been reprinted from The White House Project Web site at www.whitehouseproject.org.

An advocate of women's issues for more than 30 years, Marie C. Wilson is founder and President of The White House Project, co-creator of Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work® Day and author of *Closing the Leadership Gap: Why Women Can and Must Help Run the World* (Viking 2004).

In 1998 while President of the Ms. Foundation for Women, Wilson founded The White House Project in recognition of the need to build a truly representative democracy – one where women lead alongside men in all spheres. She left the Ms. Foundation in 2004 after two decades, to devote her full energy to The White House Project.

In honor of her work, the Ms. Foundation created The Marie C. Wilson Leadership Fund, which will be under her sole advisement. She is also an honorary founding mother of the Ms. Foundation for Women.

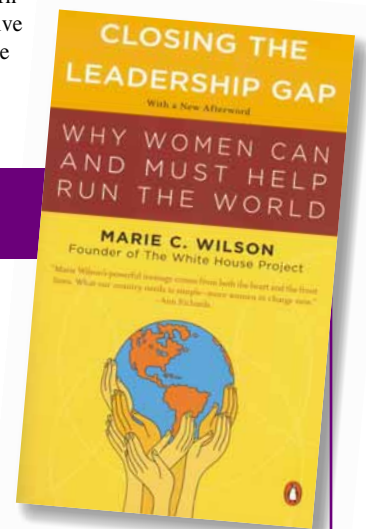
Since its inception, The White House Project has been a leading advocate and voice on women's leadership. Under her stewardship, innovative research and initiatives have been hallmarks of the organization. Highlights of the last eight years include groundbreaking research on young women's political participation, an analysis of women's appearances as guests on the influential Sunday political talk shows, the convening of women CEOs and executives for two national leadership summits, a bi-coastal conference of international women leaders, a partnership with Girl Scouts to launch the Ms. President patch

and initiatives to influence popular culture.

In conjunction with Wilson's national book tour for *Closing the Leadership Gap* in 2004, she announced the launch of The White House Project's Vote, Run, Lead™, providing a roadmap for addressing the issues she raises in her book. Through this innovative initiative, The White House Project equips women across the nation with the tools they need to vote, run and lead. In 2005, she launched The White House Project's Invite a Woman to Run campaign which encourages the public to tap women they think are presidential material to run for the nation's top political job or other important offices from school board to U.S. Congress.

Over the last thirty years, Wilson's accomplishments span becoming the first woman elected to the Des Moines City Council as a member-at-large in 1983, co-authoring the critically acclaimed *Mother Daughter Revolution* (1993, Bantam Books), and serving as an official government delegate to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995. And in 2000, in conjunction with Mattel, Wilson brought the world President Barbie.

Wilson has been profiled in *The New York Times* "Public Lives" column, has appeared on *The Today Show*, *CNN*, *National Public Radio* and other national programs and is quoted widely for her expertise. Born and raised in Georgia, Wilson has five children and four grandchildren. She resides in New York City.



BOOK REVIEW

Closing the Leadership Gap Why women can and must help run the world

Marie C. Wilson, Penguin Books, 2004, Cover illustration by Luba Lukova; Cover design by Jasmine Lee

"Eloquent, stunning, and irresistibly on target, Marie Wilson doesn't just have her finger on the pulse of the culture; she's changing it."
- Faith Popcorn

Despite the common view that women already permeate every level of leadership in this country, the United States in fact ranks fifty--ninth in the world in terms of female political representation, and women lead only eight Fortune 500 companies. In this inspiring call to action, leading women's advocate Marie C. Wilson explains why we need more women at the top alongside men now, not just for the sake of fairness, but for the larger social good. Compelling research shows that when women sit at the table, they enhance the decision-making process dramatically. And yet, even as our nation sits on a world spinning with crises, we have barely begun to tap our most critical natural resource - women.

Drawing on a wealth of research, Wilson explores the deeply ingrained political and cultural factors that have supported the resistance to women at the top, and then offers motivational lessons and a realistic blueprint for change. Written with passion and insight, this handbook shows how we can all make a difference and finally close the leadership gap.

"Every man who's in despair over world leadership - and every woman who fears her gender is a barrier to leadership - will find hope and help in [this book]." - Gloria Steinem

For more information, visit www.closingtheleadershipgap.com

'Young Women of Achievement' Road Show

The Alliance has begun to collect information about young graduates of girls' schools who have made a significant contribution to the community. The Road Show will take the form of a travelling exhibition of posters showcasing the achievements of girls who have attended girls' schools.

Alumnae Meritae

Diocesan School for Girls in Auckland has an Alumnae ceremony which follows a tradition beginning in 1990 of recognising Old Girls who have achieved high standards in their chosen fields and, by their example, are role models for current students. Previous Alumnae Meritae have been awarded for services ranging from science, literature and sport to writing, law and music. In their various fields of expertise, these Alumnae Meritae recipients demonstrate the breadth of ability in the wide community of Old Girls in whom the School is justifiably proud. Two most recent Alumnae Meritae are described here by Susan Buckland, an Old Girl of Diocesan.

Principal, Ann Mildenhall, says, "It is important for schools to take time to reflect on the past and to acknowledge the contribution of those who have preceded us. The awards are given for service to a particular area of expertise and so, by extension, are a living example of our School motto *Ut Serviamus; in order that we may serve.*"

Dream maker: Tracy Grant for her services to the arts

Tracy Grant has designed outstanding stage sets and costumes for theatre, film, opera and ballet productions and highlights include her work for the novel *Ihi FrENZY* performance of the Royal New Zealand Ballet, as well as the Company's 50th anniversary production of *Romeo and Juliet*. The latter production received an Olivier Award nomination for Best New Dance Production in the United Kingdom in 2005.

Her artistic talent has been on display in the Czech Republic at the Prague Quadrennial, an event which is described as an Olympics of theatre design. The exhibits received the UNESCO Prize for Emerging Artists in 1999 and a Jury Award in 2003.

Tracy's costume and set designs were showcased throughout New Zealand during her most recent work for the Royal New Zealand Ballet, *The Wedding*. She won Best Production Design for the short film *Possum* at the St Kilda Film Festival in 1999.

Training for her career in costume and stage design began at Auckland University of Technology where she gained a Bachelor of Spatial Design. She was made a Winston Churchill Memorial Fellow in 1987 and has since managed to fit tertiary tutoring and Diocesan, into her busy life.

Looking back to her days at Diocesan Tracy describes them as formative. "They didn't lead me directly to what I do now but they gave me confidence to explore areas that were not obvious. These days I often come across people associated with the school who are supporters of the arts and there is a shared experience that began with Dio."



Seed sewer: Sally Synnott (Ryall) for her services to business

After leaving Dio, Sally Synnott (Ryall) went to Design School at what is now the Auckland University of Technology and then worked for the apparel industry and for a short while in real estate. She was in her teens and her first job when she launched a business called Sal Rene. She designed and sold silk shirts and suits, while still holding down her other job as an employee in the apparel industry. The 18 hour days were mercifully curtailed by a proposal of marriage from Mark Synnott. She and Mark travelled the world together before the seeds for Pumpkin Patch were sewn.

Sally was 25, five years into her marriage and embarking on huge challenges to get her new business off the ground. Three young sons later, Sally sold ninety percent of the business and became a consultant and Board Director to Pumpkin Patch to enable her to spend more time with her family.

Today, Pumpkin Patch is an international company turning over about \$300 million dollars each year and employing 2500 people. In July this year it opened its 171st store. Meanwhile, Sally is sharing her business acumen as a mentor to young people in business and addressing organisations about the start-up phase of

the company she conceived and drove on its way to huge success. And as well as looking after her three boys she works on the board of the Hearing House Charitable Trust. Sally and Mark have also established their own small charitable trust to help South Auckland children who would not otherwise be able to achieve some of their aspirations, due to lack of funds.

"I remember back at school thinking that I would love to have a business of my own, to start something from nothing, and preferably in fashion. I was also encouraged by my father, an open-minded and business-minded man who never treated women differently from men. So when I started working in the industry and saw a gap in the market for affordable but quality kids' wear using natural fibres, I found a place in Manukau Road in Auckland and got stuck in to developing it."

And the rest is history.



Student Leadership Conference

17-21 January 2007

To be held at: Penrhos College, Como, Western Australia

Journey to Inspire

A residential conference for senior students which focuses on understanding leadership and developing skills and confidence.

Girls from the 2007 leadership team of each Alliance member school are invited to attend. They will meet and work with student leaders in schools from all over Australia, New Zealand, Asia, South Africa and the United States: a unique opportunity to form lasting connections.

The maximum number of students we can accommodate at the conference is 110. Therefore we have to limit the number attending from any one school to 2 DELEGATES. The students attending the conference should be entering their last year of secondary school in 2007 and be your KEY 2007 STUDENT LEADERS.

OUTWARD BOUND

Inspiring Australians

The Outward Bound Australia team is planning an exciting program which will take the form of a multilayered journey of self exploration. Through initiative activities and challenges, performances and creative work, involving buddies, group work and individual reflection, the girls will look at leadership from an emotional, social and intellectual perspective.

Highlights of the conference will include

- Dinner with past School Captains
- Inspiring Leaders Panel

Information about the 2005 and 2006 conferences can be found in Volume 31 May 2005 and Volume 34 May 2006 at www.agsa.org.au.



For information on how to register
visit www.agsa.org.au

For more information, contact
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