

FABER EST

THE FORTIANS UNION

BULLETIN



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NUMBER 61

FEBRUARY 2002

Produced for the Ex-Students of:

- ❖ Fort Street Girls' High School
- ❖ Fort Street Boys' High School
- ❖ Fort Street High School

COMING EVENTS

Fort Street Speech Day
Friday 22 February 2002
Sydney Town Hall
Commencing at 9:30am



Pic: Courtesy News Ltd

The Guest Speaker is Taryn Woods,
Olympic water polo gold medalist.



Church Service
Sunday 10 March 2002
St Phillips Church Hill
York Street, Sydney
Just near Wynyard Station

The guest preacher will be Dr Fenton Sharpe. Mornng
Tea is provided by the Parish, after the service.



Fortians Union
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 20 March 2002
FORTIANS ROOM

Fort Street High, Parramatta Rd Petersham
Commencing at 7:30pm

Come along to the AGM and become a part
of the group that makes the Union events happen! We
still need more Committee Members - the more
members we have, the more we can achieve.

Do you know a Fortian legal eagle who would
become our "**Honorary Solicitor**"?

Do you know a Fortian who cares enough to
become the **Secretary** of your Ex-students
Association? Please call Denice on 0409 652 942.



Fortians Union Annual Dinner
Friday 18 October 2002
All Seasons Premier Menzies Hotel

Guest speaker: Maria Skyllas-Kasacos

Last year this dinner was a great success, so book
now to avoid missing out.

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome the following Fortians, who have
joined the Union since the last bulletin.

LIFE MEMBERS

Tamsin CALDER, 1993
Paul LAURENCE, 1971
Stephanie CRAWSHAW (Frappell), 1965
Stuart Adrian WARE, 1964
Nigel HUBBARD, 1959

ANNUAL MEMBERS

Shiu Fong LOWE, 1986
John A L CAVILL, 1934

The following **Annual Members** have
transferred to **Life Membership**.

Lynda BODY, 1994
Diane BODY (Castleman), 1957
Alan BEARD, 1949
Gabrielle ANDREWS, 1948
Eric BEDFORD, 1944
Fred LINEY, 1943



2001 Annual Dinner

Guest speaker at last year's dinner, **Ian Cohen** (Fortian 1969), drew chuckles from the
audience with his comparison between sitting in class
during school days and sitting on the benches of the
NSW Upper House, as a Greens MLC.

During his many years as an environment and
social campaigner Ian became quite skilled at
attracting publicity, and in his address made mention
of his dealings with the "reptiles of the press".

His comment encouraged some chiacking
and elbow-nudging around one table where Fortians
of 1971 were gathered for a 30-year reunion, as one
of their number was **Dennis Shanahan**, political writer
for *The Australian*.

That resulted in Dennis jumping up to follow
Ian at the mike with a few words of his own, and his
passionate impromptu speech on his years at Fort
Street finished to clapping and cheers.



Speaking of campaigning!

A front-page story in the *Weekend Australian* last week mentioned Fort Street among nine high schools across the nation that might be regarded as "radical" when it came to student political activism. That came as a bit of a surprise even to students and parents of recent years, let alone Fortians of earlier generations, although girls from around 1970 do recall spending much time and effort on the very active protest campaign to keep the girls at Observatory Hill.



Do you remember the "good old days" and the Old Girls' Union luncheons?

We want to reinstate a Fortian sense of camaraderie amongst those who feel unable to attend a night time function and 'old boys' are welcome! We need your help - tell us what you want,

- ◆ a luncheon at the Wentworth
- ◆ a picnic in the Gardens
- ◆ morning or afternoon tea at the Grace Hotel

PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU WANT. Call our newest Committee Member, Mrs Pat Morson with your ideas on 02 9799 2880 and help us to arrange an event for you!



What are you doing now?

We would really like to let you know what our fellow Fortians are doing before we have to write your obituary! Drop us a line or email the Union [c/- paulasmith@ozemail.com.au](mailto:paulasmith@ozemail.com.au) and tell us your story. You can also send a picture if you like.



Donations

Thanks to the following Fortians who have made donations to the Union:

Norma BOND, Gwenyth CLARKE ('36), Denise EWIN (Graham '62), Lorna GILMOUR, Edwina GRAY ('53), Mr A H HARRIS, ('2), Florence HEHER (Patterson '32), Louise HOPE (Shaw '32), Lilian KING, ('38), Gwyn LEWIS ('38), Jean LEWIS (Inman '60), Edna Grace LYLE ('41), Thea McGEE (Marriott '45), Clarice MORRIS, Barbara REVILL (Gibb '44), Russell Gordon ROBERTSON ('39), Joan A SMITH, Diane STEPHENS (Hutchings '64), Rita May STOCKBRIDGE (Adams '27), Stuart WARE ('64) and Prof Robin WOODS ('49).



Farewell Miss Arter

In August last year, we received the following letter from Maureen Wilson.

*"It is with regret that I am writing to inform you, albeit belatedly, of the passing of my aunt, Mrs **Lorna Coxon**, nee Arter, in February of this year, aged 96. Lorna Arter was a former pupil of Fort St Girls' High and completed her tertiary education at Sydney University where she graduated with a B.A. degree in 1928.*

After completing her country teaching service she returned to Sydney where she took up a position with the

Fort Street Girls' High faculty as a French Mistress.

Upon her marriage in 1955 she retired from teaching and settled in Fern Tree Gully, Victoria. During her retirement years she received cards and letters from her former pupils and always took an avid interest in the Bulletin and the activities of former and present Fortians."



School works

The State Government has announced it will spend about \$6 million on a major refurbishment of the school, which will be the biggest changes since the new buildings for the amalgamation in the 1970s. As well as improvements to classrooms, there are proposals for a performing arts centre, and a new building for the existing tarred parking area inside the gates on the Fort St side, which will have front office and main administration quarters on ground level and science labs above. Sorry to say, though, the Education Department says there's no money for proper sound insulation to combat the aircraft noise, and most of the unlovely brutalist style concrete stairways etc remain.

The Fortians Union meeting room under the hall may be part of the redevelopment, but the Union is promised space, probably in the original heritage building. The plans are still under discussion.



HSC results

Fort Street's Year 12 students of 2001 achieved excellent results in the new-style HSC in which nearly all syllabuses were rewritten. About 140 of the 160 Fort Street candidates gained a University Admissions Index (UAI) over 90, with about 20 over 99 and a similar number over 98.

Among the most outstanding students were Basia Slusarczyk with 13 units of study over 90 marks including ancient history, advanced English, mathematics and chemistry; Alice Chen with 10 units over 90 including extension 1 and 2 mathematics, physics and chemistry; Niven Vanmali with 11 units over 90 including chemistry, advanced English, information processes and technology, maths and physics; and Marcus Coleman with full marks in music extension.

For the latest information on the school, visit the school's website: www.fortstreet.edu.au



Those who served

To add to our records of Fortians who have served in times of war, a list of Fortian service women has been compiled from various sources; copies were available at the Annual Dinner. But four names on the list cannot be found in the school enrolment records.

Do you know of these Fortians who served in World War II? **Dorothy Doig**, **Ingrid Krosby** (married name Pomeroy), **Verna Mutton** (married name Cooke) and **Leila Smith**. If you have any information, call archivist Terry Glebe, (02) 9211 5019.



Obituaries



Pic: Courtesy News Ltd

"Literary wild flower bloomed amid neglect" said the headline on the obituary notice in *The Australian*, an evocative summing up of the life of writer **Amy Witting**. She was born Joan Fraser in 1918, but used a number of pen-names for her writing. While still at Fort Street Girls' High in 1934 she had her first work, a poem, published in the Sydney Morning Herald literary pages under a pseudonym. At Sydney University she won a bet with fellow student and Fortian James McAuley that in 10 minutes she could dash off an avant-garde nonsense poem of the kind he was then writing and publishing.

Later, generations of high-school girls knew her as Joan Levick, her married name, when she taught them English, French and German. Over the years she continued to produce poetry, short stories and other writing under the name of Amy Witting, but widespread recognition of her work did not come until her first novel, *The Visit*, in the 1970s and her best-known novel, *I For Isobel*, which had worldwide success in 1989. Her last novel, *After Cynthia*, was due to be published when she died in September at 83.



Amy Whitting

Pic: Courtesy News Ltd



Artist **Frank Hodgkinson** (1919-2001) began work as a commercial artist and newspaper illustrator after leaving Fort Street in the 1930s. After army service in the Middle East, North Africa, Borneo and the Kokoda Track, he caught malaria and finished the war as an official artist. After the war he spent some years in Europe, especially Spain, and his work was widely exhibited. Frank won the first Helena Rubinstein Travelling Scholarship in 1958.

Back in Australia in the '60s he became known for his paintings, sculptures and prints largely featuring the Australian landscape. He published several books of sketches, journals and research including *Aboriginal Words and Their Meanings*. Late in life, in the house and studio he built at Kenthurst, he produced some extraordinary ambitious works including a huge 18-panel mural, *Spirit of Sydney*, for the foyer of the grand Westin hotel built around the renovated Sydney GPO two years ago.



Paul Magee (Fortian 1931) was quite an all-rounder: athlete, scholar, diplomat, economic rationalist - and broiler chicken industry pioneer. After Paul, who died last December aged 86, left Fort Street he was one of only two employees taken on during the Depression by the Bank of NSW, and studied economics part-time at the University of Sydney while also pursuing athletics.

His 440-yards Australian hurdles record stood for 15 years. Paul competed at the 1938 Empire Games, but the war dashed his hopes of the Olympics in 1940. He spent five years as an RAAF squadron leader, serving in New Guinea. Later he worked for the Australian Trade Commission in Washington, and with the UN on postwar food surplus redistribution programs.

In 1953 he left the public service to set up one of Australia's first big commercial poultry farms on then-countryside at Frenchs Forest. In the '60s he sold the business and joined a management consultant firm. He kept a keen interest in athletics and was vice-president of Sydney University Athletic Club for 50 years. His grandson, Paul Greene, represented Australia in the 400m sprint at the Atlanta Olympics.



The girls of the centenary year, 1949, lost one of their number last year when **Nancy Le Huray** (nee Hesketh) passed away at Blakehurst.



Where are they now?

1969 Leaver, **Lisa Lark's** book "The Web" was sent to the Frankfurt Book Fair by a publishing consultancy and three major world publishers have taken out fairs right options! Watch this space for more information. Lisa can be contacted at: lisa.lark@hyper.net.nz



Other 1969 Fortians of significance (and weren't we all significant (from your apologetic editor who is a biased 69er!) included:

- ❖ **Jan Stephenson** - Ladies Golf Champion
- ❖ **Nikolai Bogduk** - extraordinary Doctor
- ❖ **Geoff Buckely** - Director Strategies & Alliances Tourism NSW



FORTIANS UNION MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Application.

Please complete this form and mail it with your payment to:

The Fortians Union
PO Box 1, PETERSHAM NORTH NSW 2049

Subscription fees:

- Free (first year after leaving school)
- \$15 Pensioner / Students (annual)
- \$25 Annual Membership
- \$100 Life Membership**

I would like to donate \$ _____ in addition to my membership subscription of \$ _____.

I enclose my cheque or money order made payable to the Fortians Union for \$ _____

Surname: _____

Given name: _____

Name at School: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Fax: _____

Awards: _____

Year awarded: _____

Years at school: _____ to _____

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