

**FORTIANS UNION ANNUAL DINNER
BOOKING FORM.**

**Date: Friday October 15 2004
Venue: Menzies Hotel**

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

The Fortians Union
PO Box N1, PETERSHAM NORTH NSW 2049

Cost per person **\$55**, no. in this booking: __: \$ ____
I enclose my cheque or money order made payable to the Fortians Union for \$ ____.

Surname: _____

Given name: _____

Name at School: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

I wish to sit with the following year group: _____ (ie last year at school)

Others in this booking: _____

**Please book no later than Friday 8 October
NO TICKETS WILL BE MAILED OUT
BOOKINGS WILL BE CHECKED AT THE DOOR.**

Parking on the evening is available at Secure Parking - entry in Wynyard Lane off Margaret Street.

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**THE FORTIANS UNION
BULLETIN
No.69 SEPTEMBER 2004**

PO Box N1
PETERSHAM NORTH NSW 2049
May be opened for postal inspection



FABER EST

THE FORTIANS UNION

BULLETIN

NUMBER 69

SEPTEMBER 2004

Produced for former students of:

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



PO Box N1,
PETERSHAM NORTH NSW 2049
02 9798 8882 (AH) Don Newby
Email: newbyd@email.cs.nsw.gov.au

Annual Dinner

Date: **Friday, October 15**

Cost: **\$55** Time: **7pm**

Venue: **All Seasons Menzies Hotel, Wynyard**

Bookings close **Friday, October 8**. Use the form on the back page of this bulletin, or phone Don Newby 9798 8882 or email newbyd@email.cs.nsw.gov.au

Book Now!

The dinner is open to anyone interested, not just ex-students of Fort Street. For instance, last year several parents of current students came along and had such a good time they said they'd come again.

Guest speaker this year is **Nazli Munir**, ('76). Those who were at the "naming ceremony" for the new Evelyn Rowe and Fanny Cohen buildings will remember Nazli as one of the speakers, along with classmate **Richard Yamine**, who both spoke about their time leading up to the first year of the combined school on Taverners Hill. Nazli's fond memories of Evelyn Rowe, who was last principal of the Girls' School at Observatory Hill and the first of the combined school, drew many chuckles and nods from the audience. Excerpts from her speech are later in this newsletter.

After school, Nazli went on to various jobs in community service, and now has a senior post in the NSW Public Service, in the Cabinet Office, dealing with Commonwealth and state relations. Nazli's outgoing personality means she will be remembered by all students of her years, as will her sister Ayshe (Fortian '75).



Reunions and other things

Names are coming in from the class of '75 for an "unforgettable" 30-year reunion next year, in August or September. To join them, contact Marina Constanti at PO Box 91 Eumundi, Qld 4562. Her telephone number is (07) 5442 7217 or email marinaconstanti@ozemail.com.au

The Boys of '74 have decided to hold their reunion at this year's Annual Dinner on October 15. You can contact the organiser, Peter Dixon, on (02) 9558 5762 or send an email to petergdixon@bigpond.au or simply fill out the Booking Form and send it to PO Box with your cheque.

The Boys of '69 will also have a bigger group at this year's dinner to mark their 25 years. Contact John Young, the organiser for their table, on john.young@yindi.net or 0407 940.943.

The Girls of 1940 - 44 will be holding their 60th reunion in November. Judith (02) 9486 3661 says she expects around 40 to attend; they had over 100 at the 50th. Judith points out the class is the only group to have undertaken the whole of their secondary schooling during the years of World War II.



Two eras: Nance Irvine (Fortian 1929) and Tim Sowden ('03 SRC President) at the new buildings naming ceremony

Join the Shoosh Campaign

Fortians of all years have been urged to add their voice to the campaign to have the school insulated against aircraft noise. The roar of jet aircraft passing overhead has been a constant problem for decades; lessons frequently have to stop while planes pass overhead. A pity that the \$6 million or so budgeted for the new buildings did not stretch to effective noise insulation for the whole school, which sits just 400 metres outside the airport flight path zone in which the Federal Government provides insulation. Putting the hard word on Federal MPs and candidates during the election is a way of pushing forward the battle to treat the school as a special case. The School Council has been organising a letter, fax and emailing campaign, and council chair Louise Redmond urges all Fortians to take part. There are sample letters available, for writing to the member and candidates for your electorate; for more information, phone Louise Redmond on (02) 9004 6452 in office hours, or see the link at the front of the school's web site, www.fortstreet-h.schools.nsw.edu.au



Order of Australia honours board

Do you know of a Fortian who has received an Order of Australia, at any level? A group from the Boys of 1952 have offered to present a special Order of Australia Honour Board to the school, with an initial listing of 25 names. The Fortians Union will add other names, as they come to light.

Do you know of someone who has been honoured? Please send the following details: full name, level of award, and final year at Fort Street, by post or email to the Secretary, who will pass the information on. Include contact details so the group can get back to you if necessary.



Vale

Arnold Milton has advised us of the passing, at a relatively young age, of two members of his 1954 class. **Ron Flanagan** died in Cairns, where we understand he was living. Ron was very strong in the advertising business, and it is rumoured that he may have started John Singleton off as a beginner. **Jim Grant** died on 4 July, in Italy. Jim was a highly regarded insolvency practitioner, moving up to managing partner of the accounting firm Deloitte's, until his retirement.

Emeritus Professor **Keith Oliver Campbell**, who died earlier this year, had been known to all as KO since his years at Fort Street in the mid 1930s. Prof Campbell was founder and a former dean of the University of Sydney's Department of Agricultural Economics. When he was appointed reader in the discipline in 1952 he was the first full-time Australian academic in the field. His 1973 book, *Agricultural Marketing and Prices*, challenged government marketing boards and price setting, such as reserve prices for wool; it is still read by students. A colleague is quoted as saying that Prof Campbell became known by many as "the possum stirrer from the bottom of Science Road". His concern that students understood the economic, social and environmental implications of agricultural production brought him into conflict with those who felt that "knowing how to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before" was all they needed to know.



Keith Campbell

Norma Bond tells us of the passing of Betty Armstrong ('33) who died in August at 90. After obtaining her BA at Sydney University, Betty taught at North Sydney Girls' and from 1938 for 30 years at Katoomba High. After retiring, she taught lipreading at the nearby Bodington Nursing Home. She had completed a course at the then Deaf and Blind Institute under the direction of Fanny Cohen. Norma Bond (nee Young) recalls from schooldays as being introduced, not as Norma Young, but as "Betty Armstrong's cousin".

Just as this newsletter was to be printed we also heard of the passing of the 1933 girls' school captain, Beryl Lamble.



Goodbye Mr Jennings

The school's Head Teacher of Languages, Neil Jennings, is retiring. Fortians of recent decades will have fond memories of his passion for languages. Neil received a special Excellence in Teaching award from staff, students and parents.



Powers of persuasion

The school's fine tradition in debating is being maintained, with this year's Years 10 and 11 teams winning their zones, and Year 12 coming second. A year 12 student was a finalist in the Plain English Speaking competition. The Mock Trial team has been undefeated after six rounds. And Year 12 student Tim Sowden has received the prestigious Minister for Education's Student Excellence Award; the judging panel was so impressed, he has been invited to speak on behalf of all winners at the award ceremony this month.



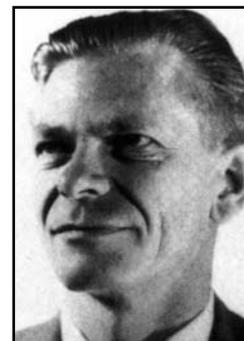
The man who never was

The names of two Fortians of some notoriety, 1934 classmates **James McAuley** and **Harold Stewart**, cropped up in an unusual context recently. McAuley, the boys captain in '34, and Stewart became household names when they concocted the famous Ern Malley poetry hoax in 1944. The pair invented a romantic dead poet and composed samples of his supposed works by stringing together meaningless words and phrases and submitted them to Max Harris, editor of the *Angry Penguins* literary magazine, who eagerly published them. When the truth came out, it sparked a worldwide furore about whether the poems were nonsense or actual art.

The two conspirators gave the address of the suburban house in Dalmar St, Croydon, where McAuley grew up, as that of an "Ethel Malley" who said she had found the modernist poems among the belongings of her late brother Ern.

Then house still stands and is little changed. The architectural historian for the local council recently recommended it should be considered for heritage listing. He said the house, though very ordinary and not even well looked after, was unlike any other he had come across in his 25 years in the job in that its former famous inhabitant was not real!

McAuley and Stewart later became well-known poets in their own right. McAuley edited the right-wing literary magazine *Quadrant* for some years, and was Professor of English at the University of Tasmania when he died in 1976.



James McAuley



Harold Stewart



Festival fun

The school's Fort Street Festival on September 5 drew good numbers of visitors who enjoyed a variety of good food, displays and entertainment – with a grand finale of the huge hailstorm that hit Sydney late that afternoon. Jennifer Summers and George Jaksic were on hand at a table for the Fortians Union to meet and greet current students and parents, and run a jellybeans-in-a-jar guessing competition to raise a few more dollars for the union.



From near and far

Olive Coutts reports that the "fabulous '49ers" led by Sunny (Lee) Bidner met at the old girls' school on the first Saturday in September, as they have done annually for many years. Girls came from throughout NSW, and Meg (Ramage) Hestelow all the way from Perth. Diary date for '49ers: next get-together will be Saturday, September 3, 2005.



Still going strong

Among more senior Fortians is Clover Millen, whose picture appeared in a local newspaper recently as she cut her 105th birthday cake at the nursing home in Ashfield where she lives. The then Clover Watman attended the school on Observatory Hill before the First World War, and still treasures the certificate for art awarded to her in her first year, says her son Harry, a Fortian of the early '40s,

whose sons are third-generation Fortians: Greg ('70) who was a prefect, and younger brother Trevor.



Clippings of yesteryear

Fortians Union archivist Terry Glebe has been given some fascinating old newspaper clippings from the early 1930s. One is a report of the farewell at the Conservatorium for Miss **Ada Partridge** on her retirement as principal of Fort Street Girls' High School after 25 years. The staff presented her with a silver hairbrush, mirror and silver vase. In 1895 she had succeeded Mrs Allingham as headmistress of the public school where she herself had been a pupil. The other clipping, a yellowed page from the Sydney Morning Herald of May 10, 1934, carries a feature on the girls' school, illustrated by a picture of the staff of 1871, with the woman in their crinolines. The article reproduces an item from the school magazine of the time, by Mrs Terry, the "oldest old girl" who had attended the school in 1855 when Wynyard Square was an unfenced piece of waste ground where drays were parked. She recalled being "turned loose after school and going helter-skelter down the avenue and out through the tall iron gates".



Ada Partridge

The clippings were provided by Fortian **Bernice Munns** (nee Williams) who said they were found "among the treasures of a friend's elderly aunt, **Margery Ward**."

Terry has also been busy responding to inquiries from people seeking school-day information on their Fortian forebears, including a request about a great-grandfather who attended in 1908.

Bruce Langsworth, boys' captain of '33, has moved from Narooma on the NSW south coast and now lives in Melbourne. His son was recently in Sydney on business, and Bruce took the opportunity to send along his 1933 school blazer, which the school put on display in a glass cabinet in the foyer.



My time at Fort Street with Evelyn Rowe

At the "naming day ceremony" of the new buildings earlier this year, Nazli Munir was one of the guest speakers, along with her '76 classmate Richard Yamine. Nazli's address to the audience drew chuckles and much applause from the listeners. Here are highlights from her speech.

"Fort Street Girls' High gave me more than the opportunity to do well academically. It gave me an identity I am proud of; it gave me the most wonderful teachers, the smartest the State had to offer; and, with its threatened closure, led to my political awakening.

Evelyn Rowe was a significant part of my school experience. As a principal she was stern, somewhat intimidating, but fair, and dedicated to the school and the academic achievement of her students.

She believed that girls at Fort Street should have every opportunity to compete academically without the distractions of subjects like home economics - a subject she refused to have on Fort Street Girls' High syllabus.

She was a lover of the classics and encouraged the study of Latin among the girls. I remember her pulling me out of class to discuss my second year electives and persuading me to drop commerce for Latin. I will always be grateful to Mrs Rowe for this, as I went on the do Latin in my HSC.

She was a strict task master who kept us in line with her regular spot checks - standing half way between the school and Wynyard station to check that we were in full school uniform, with berets and gloves.

Yet despite her conservative demeanour, Evelyn Rowe heeded the pleas of freezing students on Observatory Hill during winter and made Fort Street Girls' High the first girls' school in Sydney where girls could wear trousers to school.

I remember Evelyn Rowe for the love she had for the school, for the great personal defeat she must have felt when the government of the day decided to close the school and move us to Taverners Hill. I remember a principal who, despite the pressures that she must have been under, did not discourage us from taking up our own fight against the Department of Education.

She allowed us to walk the streets of Sydney (with our gloves and berets on, of course) collecting signatures for a petition to stop the Government selling off our Hill and to keep our school. I remember the mock funeral procession we conducted through Wynyard station where we carried a coffin containing a photo of Eric Willis, the then Minister for Education.

The move to Taverners Hill was made easy for us girls because Evelyn Rowe came with us and continued on as our principal. It is only years later that I can appreciate how important it was to have her there for that transition. Her commitment never faltered, even though it must have been personally a difficult adjustment for her.

On both hills, Evelyn Rowe managed to pull together a strong team of teachers that were not only the brightest but in some cases also eccentric. Teachers who challenged us, who went the extra distance to support and encourage us. So many teachers stand out for me as wonderful role models, who encouraged me to extend myself, to believe in my abilities and always look ahead.

There was Helen Palmer, who instilled in me a love for literature and writing; Sandra Stark who made Latin such a live and fascinating subject; Ron Horan and Ida Guggar - two such different personalities yet such wonderful teachers of French; Ena Noel for broadening my love of books; and who can forget the wonderful Mary Pickard, who shared with us her love of Chaucer.

My time at Fort Street High on Taverners Hill was a very happy one. The class of '76 has remained a special part of my life, with regular reunions every 5 years. Of the 190 or so students from the class of '76, we maintain contact with around 100 and have about 75 still attending reunions. As well as students, a number of teachers attend reunions.

In finishing, I just want to read a quote from Evelyn Rowe from our school magazine year book: "While you are at Fort Street, I would hope you learn to value knowledge and reason, to respect truth, to value yourselves, to value personal freedom and the freedom of others." I think this quote best describes Evelyn Rowe."



About the last issue

Even though this is a leap year, it still doesn't have two Februarys! Eagle-eyed readers of Faber Est will have noticed that the previous issue, which came out in May, carried on the masthead a repeat of the date and number (February, Number 67) of the issue before that. Our apologies for the error; the last issue should have read Number 68, May 2004.

We may not have two Februarys, but it seems there ARE two Dr Brian Gilletts. In the previous issue, we carried a piece on our Dr Gillett (Fortian '47) being made a member of the Order of Australia. A gremlin got into the process, and another source supplied us with a picture of another Dr Brian Gillett! Apologies again.