

# FABER EST

THE FORTIANS UNION

## BULLETIN

Produced for former students of:

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



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### Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner will be held this year on **Friday 20 October** at the **Sir Stamford Hotel, Macquarie Street Sydney**. Our Guest Speaker will be Chris Cheng (1977). Looking forward to hearing the road he took from Fort Street via Taronga Zoo to a published author.

There is a booking form for the Dinner included with this newsletter.

### Annual General Meeting

As has been our recent practice, the AGM will be held at the end of the Annual Dinner, on **Friday 20 October, 2017**. All Management and Committee positions are open for election.

Thanks to the Fortian Committee, elected at the 2016 AGM:

Denice SMITH (Padmore/Hurst)	1969	President
Wailyn MAR	1973	Vice President - Female
George JAKSIC	1971	Vice President - Male
Don NEWBY	1967	Secretary
Rob VINE	1969	Treasurer
Siegfried CERVENY	1968	Public Officer
Karen CHARLES	1973	Committee Member
Gordon HILL	1962	Committee Member
Colin LONG	1965	Committee Member
Glenn MADDOCK	1977	Committee Member

### Can You Help?

Since her appointment as Principal, in 2000, **Ros Moxham** has not only maintained the School's academic status, its Traditions, and Social Conscience, she has also overseen a number of building projects.

In 2004, two new buildings, named after Principals of the Girls' School, were opened. These were funded by the State Government. In 2005 spaces in the Wilkins Building were refurbished resulting in the **Ron Horan** and Boys Class of 1955 rooms being established. This refurbishment was funded by the Class of 1955.

In 2011 the School was fully insulated against Aircraft Noise, and Air Conditioned. This was funded by the Commonwealth Government after a 10-year campaign by the School Council and supported by the local federal member the Hon Anthony Albanese.

Four science laboratories have been refurbished. One was funded from the Foundation and the others through school funds and Department of Education. Most of the money in the various Foundation accounts, comes, and has come, from the parents of students.

In a school the size and age of Fort Street, there is always something to be done.

In 2017, the Foundation Library and Building funds are being used to refurbish the library. The School Council has endorsed building a Lecture Theatre / Auditorium on vacant land on the corner of Palace and Fort Streets. This will provide a space for lecture style presentations to the senior years, as well as a performance space, which could also be leased to the community. It is unlikely that either the State or Commonwealth Governments will fund further building work at Fort Street, at this time.

This is a multi- million-dollar project, so if you are able to make a donation, large or small, follow the link to the Foundation, through "Community" on the School's website, or contact the School. Donations to the Building Fund are Tax Deductable. If you have experience in Fund Raising, or can suggest, or help in, other ways to fund this project, please contact the Secretary. Details are on the front page of this bulletin.

## Speech Day 2017 - Far and wide

The topics covered a lot of ground when **Thomas Cooney** (Fortian 2007) addressed the school at this year's Speech Day – from outer space to the inner ear. Here is an abridged copy of Thomas's speech.

"After high school, I completed a degree in electrical engineering at the University of New South Wales with a Co-op Scholarship. Under this program, you work for the sponsors, so I interned at four different companies, which helped me to quickly work out whether this degree was a good idea or not. I did an exchange to the University of California Santa Cruz.

"My final-year thesis at university was a prototype radar module for a satellite design.

"On a post-uni trip in Europe, I had an email from a director of the project about applying for an internship at a NASA research facility in the US. I was in a very rundown hostel at the time, so I leapt up, ran downstairs, convinced a very drunk young Italian man that he had finished using Facebook on the hostel's single computer, and quickly pulled an application together. The result was a very exciting 10 weeks at NASA's Ames Research Centre near San Francisco, where I worked on a helicopter probe concept for a Venus exploration mission.

"It was an eye-opener into the US space program, where we visited Jet Propulsion Laboratories (the people who landed the Curiosity Rover on Mars) and SpaceX, a private space company. I lived and worked alongside seven US students and four other internationals. Though there was not much sleep to be had, I had a blast, learnt a huge amount, and I'm still in touch with many of those I met there."

In Sydney now, Thomas works with Cochlear as a senior electrical design engineer. "Cochlear implants have improved and restored the hearing of more than 250,000 adults, children and babies around the world," he said. "I work on new electrical circuit and component designs to provide better sound quality.

"Some of you will be lucky enough to stumble upon a course or career that you really like straight out of school; others will change quite a few times. When I look around at my year, I'm dazzled by the diversity of skills, passions and careers, as well as the many different ways people ended up where they are now.

"Try to make the most informed decision you can coming out of high school, but rest assured, so long as you are alive to opportunities along the way, you'll have a great time. No matter what you do, commit to it and give it your all, as you never know who is watching, and whether they might help you realise your dreams.

"One thing that really stood out for me at the Fort was the extra-curricular activities to extend skills and experience, all run or supported by enthusiastic and dedicated teachers: from Tournament of the Minds to



debating and public speaking, organising the 40-Hour Famine and travelling to Germany on a school trip. "I missed out on the incomparable Instrumental Music Programme, though with my musical inability, the family and the neighbours were relieved I didn't take up the trumpet."

"Not everyone has the good fortune to meet people they really click with at high school, but Fort Street gives you a better chance than most. There won't many times in life when you are surrounded by as many switched-on and like-minded individuals, so make the most of it while you can, and try to keep many of them in your life as you spread your wings and go out into the world."

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## Robert Johnson - Finishing on a high note

By Sigi Cervený

Luckily, or fortuitously, the chance departure of Doug Mills in Year 9 in 1965 meant there was an opening to take up one of the school's two French horns, and given that Robert Johnson (Year of 1968) had started tinkering with the tenor horn, he was "volunteered" by Denis Condon to take Doug's place.

This was the start of a path that sees Robert retiring this June from his pinnacle position after 30 years as principal horn with Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Singing in his younger years gave him his lifelong love of music: "I always knew I could sing; at Stanmore Primary I drew the short straw to participate in the Primary Schools Concert, and at Fort Street I pestered Denis Condon to get into the madrigal group."

At the end of his first year on the French horn, Robert applied for a scholarship at the Conservatorium. He was auditioned by the renowned Director, Joseph Post, and despite a nervous rendition of "Men of Harlech", when asked "What do you want to do with the horn", he recalls replying "I want to play in the SSO." Not bad for Year 9; and yes, he got the scholarship!

This allowed him to train at the Con once a week and play with the Conservatorium Orchestra while completing his HSC at Fort Street.

Then started Robert's trip on honing, perfecting and performing his musical craft. After a year with the ABC Training Orchestra, in 1970 joined the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra as second horn, then moved to the West Australian Symphony as third horn until his elevation as principal horn in 1977.

He returned to the SSO in 1978, but the next year left for Europe seeking to open new horizons, ranging from performing in Early Music (pre-Beethoven) concerts in Zurich to working in a kibbutz near the Lebanese border in Israel.

Robert returned to Sydney in 1981 as principal horn with the Elizabethan Trust (forerunner of Opera Australia Orchestra), and then in 1986 re-joined the SSO as principal horn. His 30 years since, have provided many memorable concerts with leading conductors of our time, among them Mahler's Fifth Symphony with American Lorin Maazel, Mariss Jansons and his great feel for the

music, and Vladimir Ashkenazy who drew on his great recital skills to channel his conducting.



This remarkable career saw Robert perform with the SSO internationally at world class venues, including Leipzig's Gewandhaus and other classic European venues, Suntory Hall Tokyo with its amazing acoustics, and Carnegie Hall in New York. Retirement from the SSO will only signal a change in pace: "I will still keep playing."

With more time he intends to work with some schools, the Australian Ensemble, guest appearances with other orchestras, and tutoring and auditioning applicants for the Australian Youth Orchestra for a start!

The "sliding doors" scenario in 1965 helped set a path that, despite challenges and no easy roads, helped shape a leading orchestral musician. Robert's advice to any students seeking the same rewards is simple: "Practice and persevere". Thanks to Louise Kennerley for the picture of Robert.

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## Reunion news

### Fort Street Girls 1947 – 1951 Our Annual Reunion

The first Friday in November, is always our day to meet at the old school. 2016 was a celebration of 65 years since we finished our Leaving Certificate. This picture was taken in part of the cafe at the old school which is now Headquarters of the National Trust. This was a strange room as there were no normal windows in this class room but a large skylight. It was for some of us our roll call room in Fourth Year.

From front row left

to right: Jeanette Parkin

[Barrie], Nancye

{Adcock}, Elaine

Mostyn [Knapman],

Barbara Collins

[Wing] Norma

Smith [Geribo

Angela Hooper

[Balding], Faye

Clark Judith Lucas

[Trewin]

Helen McEwan

[Collier], Margaret Simon [Pardy], Pam Mills [Peterson] had to leave before the photo.




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### Fort Street Boys 1967 – 2017 Reunion

For details contact Don Newby by email [don.newby@bigpond.com](mailto:don.newby@bigpond.com)

## Sad Farewell to the following Fortians

It is with great sadness that we must acknowledge the loss of the following well known Fortians, **Norma Bond, Elizabeth Dangar and John Mulford.**



Thanks to the Australian Rugby Union for the following on the late **John Mulford.** The Australian Rugby community is in mourning over the passing of Australian Rugby

Union historian, archivist and writer, John Mulford.

While he played Rugby in the late 40s and early 50s, it was off the pitch where Mulford's impact on Rugby was most keenly felt, from books to governance and preservation of the game's history.

In 2000, John was awarded the Australian Sports Medal for his contribution to the game of rugby union and the youth of Australia.

That same year, the ARU recognised John's outstanding contribution to Australian rugby with the Joe French Award. "John was a wonderful soul and always represented the values of sport," said Classic Wallabies Manager Stephen Hoiles.

"Although he never had the honour of wearing the gold jumper, his legacy with the Classics and Rugby will be the history and all of the players being remembered and respected the right way, through his tireless efforts in establishing the Rugby Archive here at the ARU.

"We have lost one of the true gentlemen of our sport." Mulford attended Fort Street Boys' High School before studying economics at the University of Sydney, captaining the undefeated Drummoyne District Rugby Football Club's State Junior Premiership teams of 1947-8 and the Combined State U21 team.

He played First Grade from 1949-52 and then became a First Grade referee, going on to become President of the Club from 1982-1987, and Club patron in 2001.

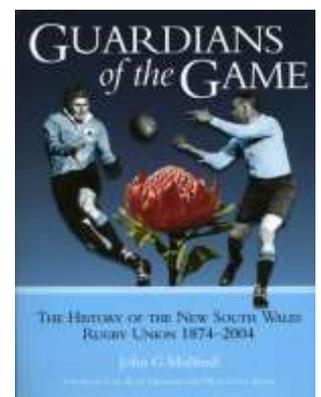
In 1989-90 he was elected president of the Sydney Rugby Union, and then Chairman and Senior Vice-President of the New South Wales Rugby Union in 1990, eventually named an Honorary Life Member.

In 1994 he established the Rugby Archives and was the honorary archivist for the New South Wales and Australian Rugby Unions. In 2005, John's *Guardians of the Game - The Definitive History of the New South Wales Rugby Union 1874-2004* was published by HarperCollins.

The same year John

authored the 2nd edition of *Men in Scarlet: History of the Balmain, Glebe and Drummoyne Rugby Clubs 1874-2004.*

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It is with great sadness that I write of the passing of **Norma Bond** (Young 1939), who I got to know well when attending Fort Street Girls' High. Norma was guardian of the late book and I am sure that I am well represented in it!  
Norma, a former WAAF died in July 2016 and not only was a proud Fortian but an active member of the Old Girls' Union and a Patron of the Fortians Union.

Denice Smith



**Elizabeth Dangar: marketing guru**

Elizabeth Dangar, regarded as the doyenne of Australian market research, was a singular force in the industry for nearly four decades. Known for her fearless intellect (and her spectacular jewellery), Dangar was pivotal in the reshaping of market research, from a be-cardiganed, backroom function to an indispensable

basis of modern advertising. She had integral input to such campaigns as BP's "The Quiet Achiever", Mitsubishi's "Please consider", the meat producers' "Women and Iron", Huggies and Kleenex, and pet food brands Pal and Whiskas. Born in Adelaide in 1944, Elizabeth moved with her family to Glebe in Sydney in the late '40s. At Fort Street Girls High she excelled academically, and at 16 began her BA studies at Sydney University.

After a job in London in marketing, back in Sydney she founded her own research business, followed by leading roles in several top agencies. She also started a pasta shop in Double Bay at a time when fresh pasta was almost unheard of in Sydney.

Aside from her self-deprecating wit, Dangar was a woman of extravagant style and great passions – among them Renaissance Italy, gardens, food, friendship, films, books, architecture, science and opera.

Throughout the '90s she also devoted herself to transforming a rundown Federation pile in Centennial Park into a modern version of an Italian Renaissance villa. It became known among friends as "Casa Costa Plenty". She died in December, after a short illness.

*Adapted from an article in the Sydney Morning Herald*



Simply search for **Fortians Union**

From **Colin Long**

Dear Fortians, former Teachers at Fort Street Boys' High School during the 1961-65 Years, current Fortian Union Committee, current Fort Street Foundation Board and certain current staff, It is with great pleasure and approval of the author **Rodney Cavalier** that I share with you *The Heart of Education*, an outstanding essay on the recently launched memoirs of Rod West and a major excursion into FSBHS between 1961-65. Part of this essay is included here.



*The Magister with a former student*

Mr Roderick West taught at Fort Street from 1959 to 1961 inclusive, teaching Latin. He departed for the UK and returned to Fort Street in 1965 teaching Latin and Ancient History.

Mr West, in addition to being a fine teacher and scholar, was a stalwart and convenor of the ISCF (Interschool Christian Fellowship) and led a number of biannual weekend House-Parties to The Grange in Mount Victoria, together with Mrs West, other teachers, and pupils from other schools.

Such an event in 1964 saw the contingent snowed in at Mt Victoria. Following safe passage to the station by the Army, the outcome was a delay of one school day, until our return home in Sydney. This outcome, to the delight of all the boys present.

Copies of this essay have been published on the Fortians Union Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Fortians-Union-265200806826696/> or a Pdf copy can be requested by emailing the Fortians Union at: [fortiansunioncommittee@gmail.com](mailto:fortiansunioncommittee@gmail.com)

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