

Girraween High Newsletter

ph 9636 7293 fax 9896 3274
Email: girraween-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web page:
www.girraween-h.schools.nsw.edu.au



March 2006

Year 7 Visits the Kingwood Observatory.

On Friday the 17th of February nearly 50 parents and students, mainly year 7s and their parents, spent a night under the stars at the Kingswood Observatory on the grounds of the University of Western Sydney.

After arriving just after 7:00p.m. students and parents were given an excellent presentation on the solar system by Raelene, one of the post graduate students working at the observatory. Meanwhile, the 600mm aperture major telescope was prepared for viewing as Dave, another post grad student, set up some excellent Schmidt Cassegrain telescopes on the outside viewing area.



Unfortunately, the main event of the night, a chance to see inner planet Mercury was foiled by low clouds. However, Dave and Raelene were able to display the Tarantula and Orion nebulae the star cluster at 47 tuscanae (literally thousands of stars clustered together within a sphere a few light years in diameter) as well Eta Carinae was viewed. Eta Carinae was at one time the second brightest star in the sky until it exploded throwing off most of its outer layers into space. The double

star, alpha centauri (the bright pointer to the southern cross) was viewed and easily broken into its two components.



Next we moved onto the planets Mars and then the very spectacular Saturn. Saturn was very impressive with the rings inclined at an excellent angle for viewing, also the largest moon of Saturn, Titan was easily seen in the viewfinder. This view was so impressive that a number of students took photos with their digital cameras and phones.

Eventually, the observatory staff had to leave and a little after 10:30 p.m. the last of our students had to be sent home. It had been an excellent night of observing, enjoyed by all.

Chris Howard H.T.Maths

The Blood Bank

Groups of our Year 12 students are going to the blood bank on Friday afternoons to donate blood. Mr Howard has organized this outstanding community service.



P & C Meeting
Wednesday, March 22
AGM at 7:30 p.m. followed by March
meeting.
Common Room
All are welcome

Reminder

Parents **MUST NOT** enter the school grounds to drop off or pick up students between 8am and 9am and between 2:45pm and 3:30pm.

YEAR 9 HISTORY ELECTIVE CLASS - VISITS SYDNEY HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

This term, the 21 students in the Year 9 Elective History class have been studying the Holocaust through the childhood eyes of Anne Frank, the 14 year old Jewish girl from Holland, who together with her family and others, attempted to hide from the Nazis in the attic of an office building in Amsterdam.

To compliment our research into this topic, the class recently visited the Sydney Holocaust Museum in Darlinghurst where they were first addressed by Professor Konrad Kwiet of Sydney University, an international authority on this period. Professor Kwiet described his family's experience surviving the Holocaust in Holland and his early professional years as a tour guide in the Anne Frank House where she was hidden and where she penned her immortal diary.



After this, 86 year old Eddie Jaku, a survivor of a number of concentration camps, related his miraculous story of survival while taking the students through the exhibition. Our students were visibly moved and inspired by Eddie's great courage and highly positive outlook on life despite having endured great suffering.

Educationally, our students were able to gain a remarkable and unique insight into this period of history through the eyes and memories of two survivors in an experience which few of those present will forget.

Mr B. Kaplinski – Year 9 History Elective Teacher

WANTED: PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, GREAT-GRANDPARENTS, RETIREES

Do you perhaps have an hour a week to spare next term to come into our Year 9 Elective History class and be interviewed about your past as part of a class oral history project?

The students will be writing biographies of you – the oral historians – and your help would be greatly appreciated in what would be a highly rewarding experience for both the student and for you.

Everyone has a story to tell and is a part of history irrespective of their background. Your participation would be of very great benefit to our young, budding historians.

If this sounds like you and you have the interest and time to spare, please contact Mr Kaplinski in the History Department as soon as possible on 9636 7293.

Canteen News: The popularity of sushi has meant that we now sell it twice a week (Mondays and Thursdays). Nachos continue to be offered on Fridays and we have introduced Wraps on Wednesdays. Why not place a lunch order on these days and try them out? We would also welcome suggestions for vegetarian items, especially those that will keep well.

Of course all of these healthier foods take more time to prepare, so even with our new Assistant, Terri, we still need more volunteers. Even if you can only help once a month for an hour or two in the morning that would be appreciated. Any money raised by the Canteen goes to the school, so to offer to help please telephone our Canteen Manager, Liz, on 9636 7293.

We need more parents to volunteer to assist in our canteen. We are quite happy to have volunteers who may only be able to give 1 or 2 hours a week or month of their time.

2006 School Strategic Plan



IF ANYONE'S GOT A PLAN B, NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME.

Girraween High School is in the process of developing the school's Strategic Plan for 2007–2009. Through consultation with the school community, the aim is to develop priorities, strategies and action plans to be implemented throughout 2007–2009.

Recently students, staff and parents/guardians were surveyed in regards to the values they thought should be important at Girraween High School. Thank you to the pleasing number of parents/guardians who gave us

valuable input by responding to the questionnaire. The results from these surveys will be used to arrive at the Core Values of the school.

The Girraween High School Core Values, as well as priorities, strategies and action plans for 2007–2009 will be further explored at the School Strategic Planning Conference on **Wednesday 31 May 2006 (5 pm – 9 pm)**. Staff, students and parents/guardians/community members are invited to attend the Strategic Planning Conference. Further information regarding the Strategic Planning Conference will follow.

Greg Murty
Deputy Principal

Principal's Comments

The school has got off to a great start to the 2006 academic year. We all received a boost from the excellent HSC results with 98% of students receiving main round university offers. The breakdown of offers was :

University of Sydney	38%
University of NSW	16%
UTS	20%
Macquarie University	14%
UWS	6%
Other	6%

Our restructured House system has been an outstanding success. The enthusiasm displayed by our students on assembly for house activities demonstrates commitment and pride.

Our website will be used now as the portal to our school. This should be where you check for any changes or for up to date information. The 2006 calendar is now available. Newsletters will be posted on the site. There will be copies of the newsletter available from the front office.

Fees and contributions: Our fees and contribution are very reasonable when compared with the other selective schools. It will assist us to continue to improve the quality of school resources if parents could pay fees/contributions by the end of March.

Years 7 to 10 pay \$100 general contribution, \$20 Competition Entry and \$20 Technology Access Contribution.

Years 11 to 12 pay \$100 general contribution and \$20 Technology Access Contribution.

Years 7 to 11 pay \$40 per term sport fee.

Graeme Holden
Principal