

**Portfolio of Media Releases written by Rebecca Byfield for Fahan School
January 2012 – April 2012:**

A decade of busing students safely home:

Twelve years ago, Evalds Kuplis retired from his position working within Human Resources and, after a few years of tinkering in his workshop, was up for a new challenge.

“An old colleague of mine was driving school buses for Collegiate, Hutchins and Fahan,” said Mr Kuplis.

“He told me there was a job going at Fahan School and that I should apply. I went down and saw the Business Manager, who explained if I could get my public passenger licence I could start when school went back in February.” That was ten years ago. Next month, when school resumes for 2012, Evalds Kuplis will put on his uniform and embark on his eleventh year of driving for Fahan School. He is one of three bus drivers who deliver students from Fahan School as far afield as Seven Mile Beach, Blackmans Bay and Brighton.

“This is a unique service that we provide to our students that offers a door-to-door service from Kindergarten right through to Year 12,” said Mr Kuplis. “Older girls are often the ones walking to and from school or waiting at public bus stops.”

“They are just as vulnerable as the younger children. We deliver all our students home safely. That’s our job,” said Mr Kuplis.

Fahan School parent, Angela Curnow, couldn’t agree more. Angela’s daughter, Emily, travels regularly on Mr Kuplis’ bus.

“Mr Kuplis is fantastic. I couldn’t ask for a better bus driver for my daughter. He often goes out of his way to accommodate our needs,” said Angela.

“As a parent it’s reassuring to know Emily travels safely to and from school everyday. She leaves and arrives home from our doorstep and I don’t have to drop or pick her up from a bus stop,” said Angela.

When asked what he enjoys most about his job, Mr Kuplis said it’s satisfying to know his role is helping families.

“Every day is different. I could be dropping students off at the Aquatic Centre for swimming lessons or the Domain for athletics training. Then there are the last minute changes. Parents could be running late or held up at work and they know they can text or call any time and we will cater for these last minute changes,” said Mr Kuplis.

“It’s satisfying knowing I’m doing my part to keep Fahan students safe and helping make life easier for busy families.”

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Fahan School media contact: Edwina Cummings, 0457 859 920,
cummingse@fahan.tas.edu.au

A year of achievement at Fahan School:

With 2011 over, the Fahan School community is celebrating the academic, sporting, artistic and personal achievements, which have taken place at the School over the past 12 months.

The exiting Year 12s once again performed very well in the Tasmanian Certificate of Education, achieving outstanding results with 100% qualifying for university entrance. Of these, 80% achieved ATAR scores in the top 20% (ie above 80) and 39% achieved scores in the top 10% (ie above 90). This continues the Fahan tradition of excellence in obtaining a high mean score. Of these students, Clare Browne achieved an ATAR score of 99.6. Across Years 11 and 12, Clare achieved perfect scores in all her subjects and was listed in the top 100 performers in Tasmania.

Principal Tony Freeman said that he was incredibly proud of the academic results achieved by all of the students at the School.

"What makes these results all the more remarkable is that Fahan is a small, non-selective school. We pride ourselves on helping every student become the best they can be," Mr Freeman said.

Mr Freeman said that whilst many of the girls have excelled academically, Fahan students continue to achieve in areas like sport, the arts and community service.

"The 2011 Year 12 leavers are true all-rounders who have been an asset to our community," said Mr Freeman.

"As a small school the teachers and I get to know each girl as an individual and this allows us to follow and foster their achievements while they are at School and also when they graduate and become members of the Fahan Alumni."

- ends -

Fahan School media contact: Edwina Cummings, 62251064 or 0457 859 920, cummingse@fahan.tas.edu.au

Fahan School ELC Upgrade:

Local residents may have noticed some building work at Fahan School over the January period.

In 2012, Fahan School is undertaking a number of refurbishment programs as part of their School Master Plan and the first building to be upgraded is the Early Learning Centre - located in the iconic Octagon.

"We're upgrading the entrance foyer and undercover areas, extending the child care room and constructing a dedicated outdoor space for the children," said Tony Freeman, Principal at Fahan School.

"These renovations will cater for the increasing popularity of our programs." The Fahan Early Learning Centre is operated in conjunction with Lipscombe Child Care Services and allows children as young as three to interact and be part of this nurturing school community.

Cindy Jones, Room Coordinator for the Early Learning Centre believes that parents are attracted to Fahan School's program by the small group size,

which allows the staff to have much greater interaction with the children. “Last week, we made a banana cake and studied what happens to ice on a hot day” said Mrs Jones. “We tailor the learning environment to the children’s needs and interests, as they are interested in very different things to adults.” This approach to education aligns with the Reggio Emilia educational philosophy, which underpins the Fahan School Infant curriculum. This is also supported through the Lipscombe Child Care Services philosophy in keeping with the Early Years Learning Framework, to develop each child’s individual potential.

“At Fahan School, we apply this philosophy which encourages the children to be proud of their achievements,” said Mr Freeman. “This in turn promotes excitement about learning.”

Mrs Jones agrees. “The children develop self-help and fine motor skills through water play, picking fresh vegetables from their own organic garden as well as feeding the chickens. They also learn about recycling, personal health, and their environment. They visit the School Library and art studio, and learn music skills from Lipscombe’s resident musician, Tristan Barnes.” Expansion of the Fahan Early Learning Centre is due for completion in March but the centre will be operational for the start of the school year in February. For enrolments, please contact enquiries@fahan.tas.edu.au or 036225 1064.

Police Association Memorandum of Understanding:

What goes in to choosing a school for your child? For Senior Constable Andrew Brodribb (Hobart Traffic) and Constable Katie Luck (Radio Room), location played a big part in why they chose to send their daughters, Emma and Alice to Fahan School.

“When we transferred to Hobart from a small rural station, we visited a number of private schools but Fahan School stood out straight away. The school is located in a very private setting, not on a main thoroughfare and public access to the girls, particularly at drop off and pick up points, is very limited,” said Katie.

The main highlight they have found so far is the attitude of the people involved at Fahan School.

“We come from a small rural community, so Fahan’s small size was a big bonus. We instantly felt like we were part of a small town community yet we still have the facilities and opportunities available to any of the big schools. In fact, the new gym, art room and music facilities played a big part in why Emma and Alice were so excited to come to the school.”

“The staff are so friendly and approachable,” said Katie, who was impressed to see the Principal knew every girl by name. In fact, Katie believes the caring attitude of the staff reflects in the way the girls treat each other. “They really

look out for each other and love being part of the Big Sister/Little Sister Program.”

Katie’s biggest surprise was the overwhelming support received from the Fahan parents after Andrew’s cycling accident.

“I was overwhelmed by the number of parents who offered to help with the girls. Andrew and I are both full time shift workers. It’s hard to juggle work, family and school commitments. Sometimes other parents can look down on this but at Fahan, we have never felt this. Many of the families have dual working parents with similar time constraints, so it was nice not to feel like the odd one out.”

So would Andrew and Katie recommend the school to their friends?

“We already do! It can be hard to move schools but we’ve been surprised at how easy the transition was for our girls. They have settled in so quickly and that is largely because of the attitude of the school. We are so impressed with how issues are handled and how involved families are with school activities. In fact, we’re so impressed we will do our best to stay positioned in Hobart just so our girls can finish their schooling at Fahan.”

The Fahan Police Association of Tasmania Bursary program has been launched for 2012. This offers a special reduction in fees for Tasmanian Police Association members. Please enquire by calling Edwina Cummings on 6225 1064 or email cummingse@fahan.tas.edu.au

2012 IPSHA Leadership Day:

On Wednesday 14 March 2012, Fahan School will host the 2012 Independent School Heads of Australia (IPSHA) Leadership Day at its Sandy Bay campus.

This annual event brings together student leaders and teachers from the ten member schools – Fahan School, Hutchins School, Calvin Christian Junior School, Scotch Oakburn College, Friend’s School, St Michael’s Collegiate School, Launceston Christian School, Launceston Church Grammar School, Sacred Heart College and St Mary’s College - and alternates its location each year from the north to the south of Tasmania.

“We’re delighted to be hosting the event at Fahan School,” said Junior School Coordinator at Fahan and IPSHA Secretary, Amanda Beltz. “Last year it was an early start for our Year Six leaders who travelled north to Scotch Oakburn College in Launceston. Now we are looking forward to having the students and teachers visit us in the south.”

The program of events will focus on developing effective leadership skills and students will engage in activities based on team building, communication and the theory of effective leadership. Fahan School has also managed to secure State Opposition Leader, Will Hodgman, as guest speaker for the event.

“IPSHA is a fantastic organisation with a strong sense of collegiality. Our girls love the opportunity to interact with students from all over the state while learning about leadership skills,” said Amanda.

Event: 2012 IPSHA Leadership Day

Photo/Vision Opportunity: State Opposition Leader Will Hodgman’s speech at 2pm; students from ten Tasmanian independent schools joining together to discuss future leadership.

Venue: TM Hall, Fahan School – Fisher Avenue, Lower Sandy Bay 7005

Date: Wednesday 14th March 2012

Time: 9.30am – 2.15pm (whole event); 2.00pm – Will Hodgman’s speech.

Opposition Leader Will Hodgman answers some tough questions:

State Opposition Leader, Will Hodgman may have had a torrid time in Parliament on Wednesday but he faced some tough questions from the Year 6 students leaders at the 2012 Independent Primary School Heads of Australia (IPSHA) Leadership Day.

The event was held at Fahan School’s Sandy Bay campus on Wednesday 14 March 2012 and brought together more than one hundred Year 6 students from the ten member schools.

The Travers Morphett Hall was filled with a sea of different coloured uniforms with Fahan School, The Hutchins School, Calvin Christian Junior School, Scotch Oakburn College, The Friends’ School, St Michael’s Collegiate School, Launceston Christian School, Launceston Church Grammar School, Sacred Heart College and St Mary’s College represented on the day.

Fahan School Principal, Mr Tony Freeman, opened the event, welcoming the students and giving them a brief run down on the history of Fahan School.

“Fahan was started back in 1935 by two women who had a vision for girls to receive quality education and to have the same leadership opportunities as their male counterparts,” said Mr Freeman of Miss Isobel Travers and Miss Audrey Morphett, the School’s founders.

Mr Freeman then went on to explain to the students that leadership was about far more than popularity or wearing a badge. “Leaders should be

motivated by a desire to serve, to help others be improved, inspired and directed. They should help others to feel good about themselves. Leadership is not always easy. In fact, it's sometimes hard to do the right thing. I encourage each of you to use this opportunity to make connections for life."

The students participated in a number of workshops throughout the morning on effective leadership, team building and communication skills before reconvening in the Travers Morphett Hall for a speech by the Honourable Will Hodgman MP, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Hodgman said visiting Fahan School was something of a homecoming for him, as his family had a long association with the school. "My grandmother and mother were past students of Fahan and my father attended Kinder here. During my matric, I did a number of subjects at Fahan, including appearing in Mary Poppins as part of my drama studies."

Mr Hodgman went on to speak about the importance of education for the future of Tasmania and how quality teachers brought out the best in their students.

"My message to you today is to challenge yourself in education. It's never too early to start thinking about the future. Education should be life-long. We should all learn something new every day."

The floor was then opened for the Year 6 students to ask Mr Hodgman some questions. There were the usual questions: "What football team do you barrack for? Have you always barracked for them? Which team would you follow if you didn't barrack for them?" Mr Hodgman remained true to his beloved Geelong despite pressure from the students.

But there were also a number of excellent questions from the students. In answering what leadership meant to him, Mr Hodgman mirrored Mr Freeman's earlier comments in stating "real leadership isn't about title. It's about stepping up and encouraging people to do better; encouraging them to do the right thing. It's about putting your hand up and doing what is needed."

To the question of why he wanted to become a politician, Mr Hodgman spoke about role models and how he was influenced to enter politics by his father, grandfather and uncle, who were all politicians. "I saw how politicians could be a positive influence in the community and I wanted to be a part of that."

The questions then started to come thick and fast, as the students gained confidence: "What would you change about Tasmania? What is the biggest challenge you face as a politician? Were you a leader while at school? What's it like to read negative things about yourself in the media? What is your biggest challenge? Are you a Christian? What are your goals in life? And -

perhaps the best one of the day - have you ever cracked a tanty (sic) in parliament?"

The student leaders had obviously taken hold of the lessons they had learned earlier in the day and were putting them into practice.

They exhibited wisdom far beyond their years in their thought-provoking questions and confidence in their ability to put the hard word on one of our politicians.

Who knows? In a few years time, perhaps one of them will be standing before a group of students as the Leader of the Opposition - or even better, as Premier of Tasmania.

Fahan School named Top School in the State:

Fahan School was the only Tasmanian School to feature in the list of the Top One Hundred Primary and the Top One Hundred Secondary Schools in the State in a report released in The Australian today. The paper also ranked Fahan School as number one in the State.

Each year, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across the country are tested on their Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation and Numeracy proficiency. The lists published in the newspaper are based on these results.

Also in recent years, Fahan has had the highest percentage of Year 12 students achieving university entrance, in the State.

Fahan School principal, Mr Tony Freeman, believes that it is the quality of the teaching, the support of parents and the commitment of the girls to their learning that has created this fine record.

"Also, our size affords all of our students the opportunity to receive individual attention from the teaching staff," said Mr Freeman. " We are very proud of the girls' achievements across a wide range of activities. Today's results underline just one aspect of excellence across the varied program offered to the girls," he said.

"We are also very fortunate at Fahan School to have such a wonderful team of dedicated teaching professionals who strive to ensure each of our students reaches her full potential".

Where Rhodes are paved:

Rhea Longley, the 2010 Tasmanian Rhodes Scholar recipient, credits her alma mater, Fahan School, for giving her the best start to her education.

“I am a strong believer in the opportunity that small class sizes give students to learn and mature,” said Longley, who is in her second year of a PhD at Oxford, studying malaria immunology and vaccine development.

Fahan School has a fine history of leading academic excellence. Not only does it have the highest percentage of Year 12 students achieving university entrance, over the last five years, it has been listed in recent times as one of Australia’s Top 100 Schools by The Australian newspaper.

“We believe our size allows all of our students to receive individual attention from the teaching staff,” said Fahan School Principal, Mr Tony Freeman. “We have found, over the years, that our girls achieve consistently high results in their individual exams and overall Tertiary Entrance Ranking and perform strongly in other external assessments, including NAPLAN. We are very proud of the girls’ achievements.”

He credits their impressive results to the quality of Fahan School’s teachers, supportive parents and the commitment of the girls.

“I had such great, supportive, inspirational teachers who believed in every one of us and made sure we were equipped to achieve what we wanted in later life,” said Longley. “All my friends from Fahan have gone on to do exactly what they wanted and are very happy.”

“We recognise every student is different and has an individual learning style,” said Mr Freeman. “Also, we have a Guided Learning Program in place for girls requiring extra support. Our staff continually challenge the students’ thinking and encourage them to see the world through a different lens.”

Fahan School was founded in 1935 by Miss Isobel Travers and Miss Audrey Morphett - two women who had a vision for girls to receive quality education and have the same leadership opportunities as their male counterparts.

If recent results are anything to go by, Travers and Morphett would have every reason to be proud.

Nurturing and shaping young artists:

It is no secret that Tasmania has inspired artists for generations. From William Charles Piguenit, often described as Australia's first professional painter, to contemporary Tasmanian artists such as Philip Wolfhagen, Raymond Arnold and David Keeling.

So what is it about Tasmania that arouses and awakens artistic yearning in its inhabitants?

Sure, there is an abundance of natural beauty to whet creative appetites. From the brilliant colours and coastal beauty of the Bay of Fires and Freycinet on the East Coast to the untamed splendor of Tasmania's wild West; from the soaring heights of the rugged Central Highlands to the tall trees of our primeval forests. Everywhere you look, there is natural beauty to behold - beauty that almost demands artistic veneration.

For Alex Pitt, however, her love of art was nurtured and cultivated at a more organic level –at Fahan School where she is both an Alumna and current teacher.

“It is a privilege to be teaching students in an environment that inspired me so profoundly, and to be able to extend that same inspiration to others,” said Alex.

Students at Fahan have the opportunity to explore a wide variety of mediums ranging from digital photography, drawing, painting and sculpture to a multitude of printmaking techniques such as monoprinting, collagraphs, etching, woodcuts and silk screen printing.

If teacher accolades are anything to go by, the students at Fahan must be truly inspired.

All students at Fahan have the benefit of working with practicing artists. There is a long standing Artist in Residence program at the school, established in the 80's where both primary and senior students have the opportunity to work with practicing artists, who inspire and extend students skills and knowledge, gaining an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art practice.

This program begins in the Early Learning Centre, where Artist in Residence, Jane Burrell, works with students on a variety of projects that support enquiry based learning.

Burrell started her career at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, creating scientific illustrations of insects and animals. She has also been the illustrator of a number of children's books including Wombat's Can't Fly and Wombats Don't Have Christmas.

The children gain skills in a variety of techniques and media to enable them to communicate their ideas and thoughts on classroom projects. Giving them the ability to express through art enables their creative thinking to go beyond words and into a shared visual language. This authentically reflects the guiding principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy employed in the Early Years at Fahan.

Junior School students at Fahan come under the tutelage of the dynamic artist, Nic Goodwolf. Nic is a practising artist as well as an educator. Nic has a wealth of experiences he brings to the classroom. Nic has worked in public and community arts, and as an art administrator for Arts Tasmania. He also founded the Tapir Printmaking Studio and was the core founder of Art Goods, an art leasing company promoting Tasmanian artists. In addition to being the Artist in Residence for Years 3 – 6 students at Fahan School, Goodwolf's evocative prints are represented at both Handmark Gallery and Port Jackson Press.

Coordinator of Art at Fahan, is Alex Pitt, who acknowledges the School as being responsible for her role as an artist and teacher today. Previously she taught Art at Launceston Church Grammar School and Scotch Oakburn College, both of which have strong reputations as fostering the visual arts. Alex teaches students from Year 7 to 12.

“The Art Department at Fahan has always been an inspiring environment for both teachers and students alike. You are constantly exploring and experimenting with mediums and ideas and this stimulation has a positive flow-on effect. An inspired teacher generates inspired students.”

The work of TCE Art students at Fahan is consistently of a very high standard and has a strong reputation around the state. TQA examiners' feedback often reflects on the strength of traditional skills being taught at Fahan. The contribution of the recently retired, Sue Ekins, after 23 years at the School has been a major factor in the success of Fahan's art students.

Each year there is an acquisition of a students work to form an outstanding and varied collection representing the ideas, mediums, and explored techniques of the times. This archive of student work is an essential reference for students to access. It also provides a stimulus for the production of work.

“The student collection is a public acknowledgement of the support and importance of the creative arts at Fahan.” said Fahan principal, Tony Freeman.

Helen Wright, a well-known contemporary Tasmanian artist, combines her role as a lecturer in Printmaking at the University of Tasmania as the Artist in Residence for Years 11 – 12. Helen has won a number of prestigious art awards including the Hutchins Art Prize and the Burnie Print Prize, as well as exhibiting her work in galleries and museums across Australia and internationally. Helen's work is currently included in an exhibition of Australian Drawing in London, curated by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The exhibition will travel to New York and Berlin later this year.

“As Artist in Residence at Fahan, the great thing about teaching art is the capacity we have to help students produce distinctive and challenging art work, which reflects their individual characters. This is helped by the opportunity to work one on one with each student,” said Wright.

Another of the School's artists-in-residence, David Keeling, felt proud to work as part of a tradition of professional artists employed to teach art including artists such as Jack Carrington-Smith and Ann-Marie Reaney. He also believed that the teaching environment was conducive to fostering creativity

Fahan School has long been known for their academic excellence. In fact, just last month, they were listed as the number one school in Tasmania by The Australian newspaper and for the last five years has had the highest rate of students gaining University entrance scores in the State.. Principal, Tony Freeman, is proud of the girls' achievements across a wide range of fields and is pleased that they are gaining the recognition they deserve.

“The Arts have always been an integral part of our program and we are pleased to offer more students the opportunity to participate,” said Freeman of Fahan School's brand new Fine Arts Scholarship.

“As far as I know, we are the only school in Tasmania offering a Fine Arts Scholarship,” said Freeman.

Interested girls are invited to submit a portfolio of their artwork for consideration through the school website,
<http://www.fahan.tas.edu.au/scholarships>

Fahan School announces the State's first Fine Art Scholarship:

Fahan School has long been known for its academic excellence. Over the last five years, it has had the highest rate of students gaining University entrance scores in the State and was recently ranked the best school in Tasmania by The Australian newspaper.

However, it is its Art Department that is the focus of a brand new initiative. "The Arts have always been an integral part of Fahan School's program," said Mr Freeman when announcing a new Fine Arts Scholarship for secondary students - a first of its kind in the State. "We believe this scholarship will offer more students the opportunity to participate in our engaging arts program."

Art has been a strong focal point at Fahan School since it opened in 1935, complementing and highlighting its academic program. It wasn't until the 1980s, however, that the School's Art Department took its current form.

Ms Alex Pitt, who is both a Fahan School Alumna and a current teacher, is very proud to be part of the School's long standing Artist in Residence program. "It allows both primary and secondary students the opportunity to work with practising artists who stimulate and extend the students' skills, encouraging them to gain an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art practice," said Ms Pitt.

The program begins in the Early Learning Centre with Artist in Residence, Ms Jane Burrell, who works with the children on a variety of projects that support enquiry based learning.

"The children gain skills in a variety of techniques and media, which enables them to communicate their ideas and thoughts on classroom projects," said Ms Burrell, who believes Art allows children to express their creative thinking beyond words and into a shared visual language. "This authentically reflects the guiding principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, which Fahan employs in its Early Learning programs."

Ms Burrell started her career at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, creating scientific illustrations of insects and animals. She has also illustrated a number of children's books including Wombats Can't Fly and Wombats Don't Have Christmas.

Mr Nicolas Goodwolf, who is the Junior School Art Teacher for Years 3 - 6, is both a dynamic practising artist and has worked in public and community arts, and as an Art Director for Arts Tasmania.

"Mr Goodwolf founded the Tapir Printmaking Studio and was the core founder of Art Goods, an art leasing company promoting Tasmanian artists. His evocative prints are represented at both Handmark Gallery and Port

Jackson Press,” said Ms Pitt, whose own role at the School is Coordinator of Art, teaching students from Years 7 - 12.

“Fahan helped shape me as an artist,” said Ms Pitt, who has previously taught Art at Launceston Church Grammar School and Scotch Oakburn College. She believes the stimulation Fahan students are given has a positive flow-on effect on student engagement. “Inspired teachers produce inspired students.”

The Artist in Residence for the senior students in Years 11 and 12 is Ms Helen Wright, a well-known contemporary Tasmanian artist who combines her role as lecturer in Printmaking at the University of Tasmania with her teaching responsibilities at Fahan.

Ms Wright has exhibited her work in galleries and museums across Australia and internationally, and currently features in an exhibition of Australian Drawing, which is touring London, New York and Berlin. Ms Wright has also won a number of prestigious art awards, including the Hutchins Art Prize and the Burnie Print Prize.

“The great thing about being the Artist in Residence at Fahan is the capacity we have to help students produce distinctive and challenging art work, which reflects their individual characters. This is helped by the opportunity to work one on one with each student,” said Ms Wright.

No acknowledgement of teacher contributions would be complete without recognising the work of Sue Ekins, who retired from Fahan School last year after investing 23 years into shaping and nurturing future artists.

“Ms Ekins played a major part in my becoming both an artist and a teacher,” said Ms Pitt. “It was her contribution to the School which has ensured our TCE Art students have scored consistently high results and have a strong reputation around the State. The TQA examiner’s feedback often reflects on the strength of traditional skills being taught at Fahan School.”

Girls interested in applying for the Fine Arts Scholarship are invited to submit a portfolio of their artwork for consideration through the school website, <http://www.fahan.tas.edu.au/scholarships>

Fine Arts in Sandy Bay:

Fahan School has been shaping future artists at its Sandy Bay campus since 1935.

However, it was with the addition of the highly acclaimed Artist in Residence program in 1980 that Fine Arts at the School really came into its own.

Fahan School is now offering a brand new Fine Art Scholarship to girls interested in an artistic career.

“The Arts have always been an integral part of the School,” said Fahan Principal, Mr Tony Freeman. “We believe this scholarship will give even more girls the chance to participate in our engaging Arts program.”

Girls interested in applying for the Fine Arts Scholarship are invited to apply through the school website, <http://www.fahan.tas.edu.au/scholarships>

Boarding a fact of life for farming families:

Leaving home for the first time can be daunting at any age but leaving home when you are only ten years old is a frightening prospect.

For many rural communities, however, boarding school is a fact of life and something farming children grow up to expect.

For Sophie Edgell, whose family runs livestock and crops on their property near Bothwell, boarding school became a reality when she reached Year 5 and moved from the farm to Fahan School, Sandy Bay.

“My parents both grew up on farms,” said Sophie, “my mum in Victoria but my dad and his family in Tasmania. My great aunties and my aunty were all Fahan girls.”

Five years later, Sophie has both her younger sisters - Hannah, in Year 8 and Phoebe, in Year 6 – at the school with her.

“When I first came to the city, just hearing traffic was really weird,” said Sophie who had, until that stage, spent her entire life on the farm.

“Fahan’s location and size is a great asset for farming girls,” said Sophie, who loves the wide, grassy spaces and country feel of the Sandy Bay campus. “I love the fact that it’s still peaceful and quiet. It’s not such a big jump from home life.”

“Yeah, it’s not all munched up!” said Phoebe. After meeting quizzical stares, Phoebe added, “You know, there’s not heaps of people here. Some schools are just so big and noisy.”

What do the girls love most about their new home in the city?

“You get to meet heaps of people from other grades. If we were just day girls, we wouldn’t get that opportunity,” said Phoebe who has friends all the way up to Year 12.

For Sophie, however, it’s the chance to show her independence that she relishes. “At boarding school, you don’t have your parents hovering over you. We have to learn to do things for ourselves. We get ourselves to classes and motivate ourselves to go to co-curricular activities. I think that will be really important for us later in life.”

“The afternoon teas are by far one of the best things,” said Sophie.

“And desserts. Don’t forget about the desserts,” said Phoebe, remembering the bowl of chocolate brownie and ice cream they had just eaten with dinner.

Surely there are downsides?

“I still get homesick,” said Phoebe, who is only in her second year of boarding. “It’s nice to be able to go back to the farm on weekends.”

“Imagine having twenty sisters all living in one house,” laughed Sophie. “It can get a bit ‘catty’ at times but amazingly, we all get along. It is like a family.”

If they could both say one thing to other girls thinking of coming to Fahan, what would it be?

“The life experiences you will have here are amazing,” said Sophie.

Phoebe, however, summed it up perfectly. “We get the best of both worlds; a home in the city and a home in the country.”

Hannah was not at the interview as she was involved in playing tennis at the time. She has certainly taken the opportunity to be involved in as many activities as possible, as have her sisters, and thoroughly enjoys her time at Fahan.

To find out more about Fahan School’s boarding program, as well as their long history of academic excellence, visit them at Agfest in booth CWA10/07 or visit their website (www.fahan.tas.edu.au) for more information.

Fahan School continues to lead academic excellence:

Fahan School – a day and boarding school for girls located in Sandy Bay - prides itself on a fine history of leading academic excellence.

In recent years, Fahan has had the highest percentage of Year 12 students achieving university entrance, in the State, and has been listed as one of Australia's Top 100 Schools by The Australian newspaper.

Fahan School principal, Mr Tony Freeman, believes that it is the quality of the teaching, the support of parents and the commitment of the girls to their learning that has created this fine record. "Also, our size affords all of our students the opportunity to receive individual attention from the teaching staff," said Mr Freeman. " We are very proud of the girls' achievements."

"I am a strong believer in the opportunity that small class sizes give students to learn and mature," said Rhea Longley, Fahan alumna and the 2010 Tasmanian Rhodes Scholar Recipient.

"I had such great, supportive, inspirational teachers who believed in every one of us and made sure we were equipped to achieve what we wanted in later life," said Ms Longley, who is in her second year of a PhD at Oxford University, studying malaria immunology and vaccine development.

To find out how Fahan School can help your daughter achieve her best, come and see us at Agfest in booth CWA10/07 or visit our website (www.fahan.tas.edu.au) for more information.

Home away from home:

For many rural communities, boarding school is a fact of life.

Just ask Sophie Edgell, whose family has a farm near Bothwell. Sophie started boarding at Fahan School in Year 5 and has since been joined by her two younger sisters, Hannah and Phoebe.

"Now we don't have to travel long distances every day," said Phoebe, who would otherwise have had an hour long commute each way to school.

While being away from family and home can be tough, boarding school offers the girls a wonderful array of co-curricular activities and academic programs they would not have access to on the farm.

Activities such as athletics, tennis, equestrian, debating, drama, music, swimming, rowing, and sailing, to name just a few.

“Being so close to the water is a big change,” said Sophie, who is on the rowing team and loves to go swimming at the beach whenever she gets a chance.

One of the things Sophie loves the most about boarding at Fahan School is the opportunity it gives her to develop independence. “We have to learn to do things for ourselves. We get ourselves to classes, and motivate ourselves to go to co-curricular activities. I think the independence we develop will be really important for us later in life and the life experiences we have at Fahan School are amazing.”

To find out more about Fahan School’s boarding house, academic excellence, and rich co-curricular program visit their booth at Agfest in CWA10/07 or visit their website (www.fahan.tas.edu.au) for more information.

Nurturing and shaping young artists:

It is no secret that Tasmania has inspired artists for generations. From William Charles Piguenit, often described as Australia’s first professional painter, to contemporary Tasmanian artists such as Philip Wolfhagen, Raymond Arnold and David Keeling.

So what is it about Tasmania that arouses and awakens artistic yearning in its inhabitants?

Sure, there is an abundance of natural beauty to whet creative appetites. From the brilliant colours and coastal beauty of the Bay of Fires and Freycinet on the East Coast to the untamed splendor of Tasmania’s wild West; from the soaring heights of the rugged Central Highlands to the tall trees of our primeval forests. Everywhere you look, there is natural beauty to behold - beauty that almosts demands artistic veneration.

For Alex Pitt, however, her love of art was nurtured and cultivated at a more organic level - at Fahan School where she is both an Alumna and current teacher.

“The Art Department at Fahan has always been an inspiring place to be,” said Alex. “It’s a privilege to be teaching students in an environment that influenced me so profoundly.”

What makes Fahan School’s Art Department so inspiring?

“They have a long standing Artist in Residence program, established in the 1980’s, that allows both primary and secondary students the opportunity to work with practicing artists,” said Alex. “These artists stimulate and extend

the students' skills, encouraging them to gain an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art practice."

The program begins in the Early Learning Centre with Artist in Residence, Jane Burrell, who works with the children on a variety of projects that support enquiry based learning.

"The children gain skills in a variety of techniques and media, which enables them to communicate their ideas and thoughts on classroom projects," said Jane, who believes art allows children to express their creative thinking beyond words and into a shared visual language.

"This authentically reflects the guiding principles of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, which Fahan employs in their Early Learning programs," said Jane.

Alex believes the stimulation Fahan students are given has a positive flow-on effect on student engagement. "Inspired teachers equals inspired students."

If teacher accolades are anything to go by, the students at Fahan must be truly inspired.

Jane started her career at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, creating scientific illustrations of insects and animals. She has also illustrated a number of children's books including *Wombats Can't Fly* and *Wombats Don't Have Christmas*.

Nicolas Goodwolf, who is the Junior School Art Teacher for Years 3 - 6, is both a dynamic practicing artist and an experienced educator.

"Nic has worked in public and community arts, and as an Art Director for Arts Tasmania," said Alex. "He also founded the Tapir Printmaking Studio and was the core founder of Art Goods, an art leasing company promoting Tasmanian artists."

Nicolas's evocative prints are represented at both Handmark Gallery and Port Jackson Press.

Alex's role at Fahan School is Coordinator of Art, teaching students from Years 7 - 12. "Fahan helped shape me as an artist," said Alex, who has previously taught Art at Launceston Church Grammar School and Scotch Oakburn College.

The Artist in Residence for the senior students in Years 11 and 12 is Helen Wright, a well-known contemporary Tasmanian artist who combines her role

as lecturer in Printmaking at the University of Tasmania with her teaching responsibilities at Fahan.

“Helen has exhibited her work in galleries and museums across Australia and internationally,” said Alex. “She currently features in an exhibition of Australian Drawing which is touring London, New York and Berlin. Helen has also won a number of prestigious art awards, including the Hutchins Art Prize and the Burnie Print Prize. It is a privilege to work alongside such an esteemed artist.”

“The great thing about being the Artist in Residence at Fahan is the capacity we have to help students produce distinctive and challenging art work, which reflects their individual characters. This is helped by the opportunity to work one on one with each student,” said Helen Wright.

David Keeling, a former Artist in Residence at Fahan, is proud to work as part of a tradition of professional artists employed to teach art that includes Jack Carrington-Smith and Ann-Marie Reaney. “The teaching environment at Fahan was conducive to fostering creativity,” said David.

No acknowledgement of teacher contributions would be complete without recognising the work of Sue Ekins, who retired from Fahan School last year after investing 23 years into shaping and nurturing future artists.

“Sue played a major part in me becoming both an artist and a teacher,” said Alex. “It was her contribution to the school which has ensured our TCE Art students have scored consistently high results and have a strong reputation around the State. The TQA examiner’s feedback often reflects on the strength of traditional skills being taught at Fahan School.”

Another unique program is the annual acquisition of student work, which forms an outstanding and varied collection representing the ideas, mediums and explored techniques of the times.

“This archive of work is an essential reference for students to access,” said Alex. “It provides stimulus for the production of work.”

“The student collection is a public acknowledgement of the support and importance of the creative arts at Fahan,” said Principal, Mr Tony Freeman. Fahan School has long been known for their academic excellence. In fact, just last month, they were ranked the best school in Tasmania by The Australian newspaper.

“Over the last five years, we have had the highest rate of students gaining University entrance scores in the State,” said Tony, who is proud of the

achievements of all the girls across a wide range of fields. "I'm so pleased they are gaining the recognition they deserve."

The Arts have always been an integral part of Fahan School's program but a brand new Fine Arts Scholarship - the first of its kind in the State - will ensure they are able to offer more students the opportunity to participate in such an engaging program.

Interested girls are invited to submit a portfolio of their artwork for consideration through the school website,
<http://www.fahan.tas.edu.au/scholarships>