

“Equipment for Living”

“There’s a great American literary critic called Kenneth Burke who said that “Stories are equipment for living.” Story gives life its form. Of all the arts, storytelling is the most civilizing. It is the way in which the human mind understands life. And so the great storytelling of the theatre and the novel and film give shape and meaning to life. They give us as Burke said, the equipment that we need to have insight into ourselves, to others as human beings, to experience the truth of what it is to be a human being, comic or tragic, and it equips us to live. If you took story out of life it would be unlivable.”

So says Robert McKee the great guru of screenwriters, quoted in a recent Inside Film magazine. McKee should know: he was passing through Sydney last weekend presenting his Story Seminar, a workshop for writers whose students over the years have won 27 Academy Awards.

We happen to agree with him. At Glenaeon we put stories centre stage. We recognise that stories, as McKee says, give life its meaning, or the “equipment for living” that he describes. Steiner educators would more simply describe this “equipment” as the Imagination, an inner picture-forming ability that can become another organ of perception. The Imagination needs to be built and formed over years, just as the intellect is shaped over years. Stories contribute to this forming, by building the bank of images that in time can become a “thought structure” in its own right.

Over the past few weeks, our students have been experiencing some of the greatest stories produced by humanity:

- Class 1 began with some of the fairy tales written down from oral sources by the Brothers Grimm, the classic tales that create a world of magical possibility so appropriate for children still in the first stage of growing up;
- Class 2 started with Animal fables of Aesop;
- Class 3 heard the opening of Genesis, the Hebrew creation story;
- Class 4 entered the entrancing world of Norse myth, where Odin and Thor and Loki battle the Giants;
- Class 5 has begun their journey through Ancient Epochs with The Ramayana, one of the classics of Asian civilization;
- Class 6 began with a Science main lesson on Astronomy, but as important background to the world of the stars they heard some of the Greek myths that were the origin of star names;
- Class 7 heard some of the most well-known and enduring of all stories of our civilization in King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table;
- Class 8 has been studying the Renaissance and heard the biographies of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Copernicus and Martin Luther.

What a feast of stories! And they are not arbitrarily chosen: they were all originally suggested by Dr Rudolf Steiner as a developmental sequence and the school has worked over many years to refine the details. Each year of stories builds on the preceding foundation. In the Senior College the older students experience the European legends of Parzival and Faust, stories that challenge their individuality and raise questions of the moral order of the universe. Over the years of our curriculum the growing child experiences our human heritage, our human story.

Each story is told by the teacher, then retold the next day by the class, and written up as part of an English main lesson. From this experience the students learn to listen and retell, and develop their writing, spelling and reading skills.

And this is only the beginning: each class has a curriculum of stories that unfolds through the year. In Australia of course we have a substratum of stories that lie in our landscape: the Indigenous stories of the traditional owners of Australia gave meaning to a culture that has survived for countless thousands of years.

Our local Australian story starting from the traditional owners and continuing through from the First Fleet to the present also figures prominently.

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Such a diet of stories builds a repertoire of human possibilities within each child's Imagination, images that are there for life. From the little tailor facing the giant, to Rama facing the might of the demon armies of Ravana, we give the children images of courage and resilience in the face of danger that one day may serve to inspire and strengthen them in their own lives. It builds a global Imagination with stories from across a wide range of epochs and cultures, and nourishes the growing inner life of the child.

We all experience the enriching power of the Imagination: at the end of a busy week, who sits down for relaxation to do a bit of work on an Excel spreadsheet? No, we turn to a powerful novel, an engaging play, a good movie: we turn to stories to refresh and rejuvenate us. So for the growing child it is important to hear the great stories of humanity, told as oral literature in the classroom. The classroom then becomes a place of refreshment and rejuvenation, and we build for each child what Robert McKee so rightly calls their "equipment of living".



Victorian Bushfire update

We now have more information on the situation for Steiner schools in Victoria. At the Melbourne school in Warranwood, 4 of the Melbourne teacher trainees lost their homes as did two teachers at the School. In particular a young mother doing the teacher training course has a 2 year old boy and lost everything, and the Red Cross packages contain only plastic toys. If you have any spare wooden toys that would be appropriate, please pass them on to Peggy Day, our Teacher Training Coordinator, via the school office. The two teachers Peter Mitchell who has been at the Melbourne school for more than 25 years as High School PE and Sharon Donovan who is a Kindergarten helper and who has been away from the school with cancer. We will be fundraising specifically to help these colleagues. The Little Yarra School is busy with counselling for the children – even the primary classes - as many are traumatized by loss and by living on high alert for a long time waiting for their area to be declared safe. Any contributions to our school appeal for the victims of the fires are gratefully accepted: please contact the school office.

Memorial Service for Susan Lincoln

Glenaeon will hold a Memorial Service in memory of our much loved English Teacher, Susan Lincoln on Wednesday March 4th at 4.30pm in the Sylvia Brose Hall. Those involved with Susan in the past are warmly invited.

Biodynamic Garden:

Our garden got off to an energetic start last week under the direction of Evette Sunset. The rain only briefly held up the proceedings, and last weekend a crowd of people worked solidly to lay the basic foundations. Next weekend there will be more opportunity to contribute, and this time it will be more gardening-like with planting on the agenda. All enquiries to: sarahs@glenaeon.nsw.edu.au or 9417 3193.

P and F Dinner Dance:

One of the highlights of last year's social calendar was the Leap Year Latin night, an evening of dancing to great Latin music. This year it's **All that Jazz: Glenaeon Jazz Club**. Put the evening of Friday March 20th in your diary. Class 9 is hosting the night of dining and dancing to Big Band jazz with **Sussudio**. The evening is a wonderful opener to the year, bringing the community together and raising some much needed funds for school projects. We are hoping each class will be represented by at least one table on the night: your Class Parents will be contacting you for bookings. Alternatively you can contact Jacqui Landis on 0414 456 302 for details. Entry by donation.

*Andrew Hill,
Collegiate Chair*

School Calendar

Important dates to remember

February/March 2009	EVENT
Thursday, 26 th February	Classes 3 & 8 Parent Teacher Meetings, 7.30pm – Middle Cove classrooms
Monday, 2nd March	Student Photo Day, Middle Cove
Wednesday, 4th March	Memorial Service for Susan Lincoln, 4.30pm – Sylvia Brose Hall
Thursday, 5 th March	Class 4 Parent Teacher Meeting, 7.30pm - Middle Cove
Wednesday, 11 th March	ISD Swimming Carnival
Wednesday, 11 th March	"Meet the Music", Opera House
9 th -13 th March	Class 6 Camp
8 th -14 th March	Class 9 Camp
16th – 20th March	Class 12 Mid-Course Exams
Friday, 20th March	"All that Jazz - Glenaeon Jazz Club" P&F Dinner, 7.00pm – Sylvia Brose Hall
19-22 March	RSSA Conference, Middle Cove campus
Wednesday 25 th March	Kindergarten Harvest Festival, Castlecrag – 11am
Thursday, 26 th March	Information Open Evening, 7.30pm – Sylvia Brose Hall

RSSA CONFERENCE BILLETING

19-22nd March 2009

Billets are **URGENTLY** required to house fellow Steiner teachers from across Australia on the abovementioned dates. There will be only a few delegates arriving on the evening of the 19th March and they will be delivered to your door. The remainder will be coming in (mostly by plane) on the morning of the 20th requiring accommodation for that evening and that of the 21st March. Please advise Susie on 9417 3193 the number of people you are able to accommodate. Your offers of kindness are greatly appreciated, enabling us to show the wonderful generosity and support within the Glenaeon community.



"Fräulein Heidi"

At the end of 2008 the new Glenaeon project-idea for Design & Technology was taken up by Poul Erik working closely with Friedrich & Hans from Germany: the

making of real boats.

The first successful launch took place on the last day of term before the Christmas holidays & the good ship "Fräulein Heidi" proved to be a sea-worthy craft of great beauty. It also proved to be unsinkable due to it's built in air-chambers.

Several staff, teachers & representatives from school management witnessed the launch. It was a joyful occasion.

Friedrich & Hans deserve much heartfelt thanks from the whole Glenaeon community for their skills & hard work constructing such a fine boat for the school. Stand by for updates on our ongoing maritime endeavors.

PICKLES SCHOOLWEAR

Trading as Your Uniform Shop, will no longer be accepting cheques as a payment method. This is due to a significant increase in dishonoured cheques. We accept VISA, MATERCARD, CASH and EFTPOS as a payment method.

Sorry for any inconvenience.

Tel (02) 9905 2711



**EFFECTIVE AS OF
THIS WEEK – THE
COMMUNITY
NOTICEBOARD WILL
APPEAR MONTHLY.**

STUDENT EXAMS - READERS/WRITERS NEEDED

Glenaeon is looking to build a list of parents who would be willing to act as writers and/or readers for students eligible for special exam provisions. Parents would need to be available during school hours and be prepared to work with students from other classes within the school. Exams take place throughout the school year and writers/scribes would be contacted on an on-call basis. Those parents willing to make themselves available will be given an introductory overview and are required to complete the "Working with Children" forms (available at the introductory session).

This is a great way to support others within our school community.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email annetteb@glenaeon.nsw.edu.au or leave a message with the Middle Cove office.

HEAVENS LEAVEN

Heaven's Leaven will be selling pastries after school:

⇒ **Castlecrag** on **Tuesdays**

⇒ **Middlecove** on **Wednesdays**

Kamaroi is delighted to be hosting **RavenTales**, renowned storyteller duo from UK, for a **VOYAGES OF WONDER** adventure for families and friends of Kamaroi and Glenaeon school communities and beyond, to be held at Kamaroi on Saturday March 14th , 7.30pm.

Joy Day

Michael & Wendy Daere
RAVEN TALES

VOYAGES OF WONDER

...that carry you to other worlds...
...that transport you to lands of endless dreaming...

vivid words and haunting song

Blue room www.raventalles.co.uk

Kamaroi Steiner School
220, Forest Way, Belrose

Sat March 14th 7.30

Tickets \$25, \$20 concession, \$12 students
from Sherryl at Kamaroi 9450 1651, or email joyeday@hotmail.com
suitable for adults and children 9+

ALL THAT JAZZ

featuring 'Sussudio'

Glenaeon's Jazz Club

www.myspace.com/bigbandsussudio

Friday, March 20th

7pm - 10.30pm

Sylvia Brose Hall

\$30 per head (fundraiser)

Includes dinner & welcome cocktail

BYO

'Sussudio' is a high level community band, playing big band hits from the libraries of Glenn Miller, Count Basie, Buddy Rich, Phil Collins, Gordon Goodwin and Bob Florence as well as original arrangements and compositions.

Featuring an amazing line-up of young up-and-coming jazz stars, the band covers all tastes and moods, from old style big band classics from the World War 2 dance band era, through to Sinatra classics and on to modern funk, rock and pop songs.



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