



From the Principal

Dear Parents,
My last word in June was about the exams which are always a challenging time for us as we try to keep the school running.

Our students managed to achieve a 100% success rate in the *Diplome National du Brevet* and in the *Baccalaureate*. There were many grades awarded, with, once again, one of our students receiving "**Félicitations du Jury**".

Thank you to all the teachers who helped our students along to such great success, and we are all very proud of them.

As you no doubt saw on the first day of school, a lot of work was carried out during the holidays. This work was necessary as we have two new classes this year; a new preschool class and a third Year One class. The French School continues to grow, a little faster than we expected... There will soon be a total of 600 students here at the school.

A group of parents was particularly active during the holidays, working with shovels, wheelbarrows and rakes preparing beautiful flowerbeds where lavender will soon replace drought-damaged grass.

You will also have seen the new parking rules around the school. Please respect the signs that have been erected. If you need to park for more than a few minutes, you must park in an authorised space. There are many areas where you can park legally, just a few minutes' walk from the school gates.

This school year will also see the launch of our new website, brought about by the sub-committee created by the Board of Directors last year. A big thank you to all the volunteer parents who continually work hard to improve the conditions here at school for your children.

I wish you all the best for a successful school year 2008-2009.

Francis Cappe

Sustainable Development and School Grounds

During the school holidays, a willing group of parents and friends of the school set about trying to rejuvenate the gardens of the school grounds. The work commenced to concentrate on the central courtyard and to update a tired garden.

The workers tried to balance the changes with reuse and recycling as much as possible. The stone for the garden beds was recycled from old kerbstones from last century, very generously donated by Randwick council. Logs were also donated to provide habitat for lizards, insects and micro organisms. Lavender was also donated in large part by the council. The turf that was removed was very carefully re-used with the heavy use of organic recycled fertilisers to try to replace the bare patches at the entrance of the school.

Beside the entrance to the administration building, a start was made to rejuvenate the plantings. Weeds were removed (asparagus fern, date palms, grass, asthma weed and fish fern) and an attempt made to build up mass plantings of similar plants, some of which were taken from other areas at the school where they were not thriving. The council donated other native grasses and other shade tolerant plants that were salvaged from development sites.

Australian native ferns were saved from a development site (rather than being taken to the tip) and while they have been heavily pruned back to transplant them, will emerge in full leaf by mid summer. Continued over the page.....

Calendar

Wednesday 3rd September	Cocktail party
Thursday 4th September	Parent-Teacher Evening Yrs1-2
Monday 8th September	Parent-Teacher Evening Kindy
Tuesday 9th September	Parent-Teacher Evening Yr3, Yrs6-9
Wednesday 10th September	Parent-Teacher Evening 2nde, Yr10, Yr11IB, 1ère, T
Thursday 11th September	Parent-Teacher Evening Yrs4-5
Friday 12th September	Deadline for applications to the School Council
Thursday 25th September	School Council Elections
29th September to 10th October	School holidays

One of the techniques used to save precious water is the use of mulch, which not only saves water but builds up the soil with organic material and encourages the micro organisms and worms. Within a week or so, the workers noticed earthworms emerge where there had previously been none. The bark mulch was donated by the council, and the mulch around the lavender was recycled from the sugar cane fields from Far North Queensland (rather than being burnt). If you look carefully, under the lavender mulch there is cardboard which is a very effective way of stopping



weeds from growing and competing with the plants. This was being thrown out and would have been wasted.

The native garden beds were weeded, fertilised with recycled material and mulched. The gaps in the garden beds were filled in with further native plants from the council.

We would wish to thank Emmanuelle D'Halluin, Charlie, Nick Renneberg from the council, and the Randwick Council for their huge support in helping us with all the logistics and providing help and encouragement. And thanks to those parents who put in a lot of hard work and thought, and to their partners who helped make it happen.

We hope you like what we have achieved. There is so much more work to do. This is really only the start. We expect that in months to come there will be further work groups, and if you and your children would like to join us for a bit of outdoor work and a picnic lunch, please feel free to join us. The next working party will be advertised later in the spring.

Jeremy Morris

Pinchgut Opera

In 2005, the Pinchgut Opera Company presented Rameau's *Dardanus*.

In December this year, the company will be presenting another French baroque masterpiece: *David and Jonathan* by Marc-Antoine Charpentier.

Shows will take place in the City Recital Hall in Angel Place, Sydney, on Wednesday 3rd December, Saturday 6th December, and Monday 8th December at 7.30pm and also on Sunday 7th December.

We will be organising an excursion for the children on **Monday 8th December 2008**.

Anders Dahlin will be playing David, and Sara McLiver will be playing Jonathan. The Cantillation choir will be singing along with the Antipodean Orchestra, under the direction of Antony Walker. The orchestra will be playing traditional French baroque instruments.

This opera was first played in Paris in 1688 at the Théâtre des Jésuites, and has never been played in Australia. It is a touching story of friendship and war, accompanied by very moving music from Charpentier.

The opera will be sung in French with English surtitles.

The Pinchgut Opera Company is a Sydney based company which produces rarely seen operas. You can find out more on their website: www.pinchgutopera.com.au.

We are pleased to inform you that the Pinchgut Opera is giving special discounts to parents and friends of the French School.

Special discount:

Group booking prices: A Res \$105 (normally \$115), B Res \$85 (normally \$95) and C Res \$55 (normally \$75).

These prices are available for the four shows.

To book, please call the City Recital Hall booking office on 8526 2222 and quote "**French School**".

We hope you will make the most of this opportunity to discover the Opera Pinchgut production of this French opera masterpiece.



SCHOLARSHIPS

If you are a French citizen, and are registered at the French Consulate, under certain financial conditions you could be eligible for a scholarship. Application forms are available from the School Office. The deadline for applications is the 22nd September 2008. Mr Lambert is responsible for scholarships at the Consulate. You can contact him on (02) 9268 2407.

Getting to know...

I grew up in a family composed primarily of teachers and so have always been in contact with teaching and so naturally wanted to become a teacher after leaving school.

I enjoy discovering new countries and was able to carry out my military service as a Mathematics teacher in Honduras. It was at that time that I caught the travel bug which has never left me to this day. On returning to France, I did



everything I could to get all the degrees and qualifications necessary to leave again overseas as soon as possible.

To everyone's surprise, I left my job as a teacher trainer in Essonne to take up a position at the Alliance Française in Colombia. From there, I accepted a Principal's position at a school in Cambodia, then a school in Madagascar. After three years in France at the AEFÉ recruitment office in Nantes, I left for South America yet again as Principal of the Martinez Middle Secondary School in Buenos Aires.

And so here I am in Sydney. I arrived on the 7th August and was quickly joined by my wife Evelyne, also a teacher, and my son Florian, who is in Seconde. My daughter Karen, currently in France, had the opportunity to spend one year in Brisbane and is very much looking forward to returning to Australia.

Considering we are in the middle of winter and we haven't had much of a chance to visit yet, Sydney seems to be a very pleasant city. The only

place in Sydney I know well is the French School. I received a very warm welcome and can say (from my experience working in foreign schools) that after two weeks, I can already see that the school functions well, assisted by an excellent teaching team. This is the first time I have worked as a Director in such a positive context.

I will put all my energy and experience into continuing to develop the school, endeavouring to provide the best working conditions and equipment for all the preschool and primary school students and all the teachers. I will act in collaboration with the Principal and the Board of Directors to put in place all necessary measures to aid in the advancement of the French School.

I would like to wish everyone a very successful school year: students, teachers, administrative staff and parents.

Philippe Porchet

CAMBRIDGE CERTIFICATES

Fistly, I would like to congratulate some students for successfully participating in Cambridge University English Certificate tests last school year. The following students have acquired the First Certificate in English (FCE):

- Madly Stock
- Briac Virey
- Marine Guinaudeau
- Eva Lancelin
- Fraser Olender

If any of these students wishes to join a club preparing for the Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English (CAE), please let me know immediately.

Likewise, if anyone in Years 6-11 would like to join a club preparing for the FCE, please, let me know.

The next exams date for all Cambridge Certificates will be held on December 9 and 10. The enrolment fee for the exam only is \$350. Enrolment for these exams will close on 19/9/08. If you wish the school to enrol your child, we must know this by no later than 12/9/08.

If you have any questions about the Cambridge Certificates, please contact me at school or send me an email: directorofstudies@condorcet.com.au

Bernd Fichtner

The | LC Salon

We are establishing “The LC Salon” - a forum for Australian and French parents, teachers and other invited participants such as journalists, writers, musicians and educationalists to discuss contemporary issues of interest in a convivial atmosphere. The aim of the Salon is:

- to promote inter-cultural exchange and understanding of French and Australian perspectives on contemporary debates and issues
- contribute to strengthening the school community

It is proposed to convene the Salon three times a year. Discussion in both English and French. First Salon will be held on **Wednesday 17 September 2008, 7pm- 9pm**. The topic:

“Democratic Education” Contemporary French and Australian issues and debates.

There are now nearly 600 children at the Lycee Condorcet over one third of them are from English speaking families living in NSW who choose the French education system for their children instead of the Australian system. Many then choose the local school system for secondary education as do some native speaking parents continuing to live in Australia.

On first glance, the two education systems appear vastly different but recent reform proposals to schools by French President, Nicolas Sarkozy and Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd triggered a similar response of student and teacher protests. What are the reforms?

Hear from our Speakers and discuss the democratic principles that underpin the two education systems. How do these principles manifest themselves in the way education is delivered? How do they compare?

Decide - “How different really are the two education systems?”

Stay after the discussion, continue the conversation and enjoy a light supper.

The Speakers:

Francis Cappe: Current Principal of the Lycee Condorcet. He has Degrees in French Literature and French as a Foreign Language. He has worked as a teacher and school principal in various countries, including France, Canada, Tahiti and Hong Kong.

Jennifer Buckingham: is a Research Fellow with the Centre for Independent Studies, Australia’s leading independent “think tank”. She worked as schools editor with The Australian newspaper and has written numerous articles and appears regularly on radio. Jennifer is at the forefront of debate on education matters in Australia.

Gerard Noonan: is a journalist and education writer with The Sydney Morning Herald. With over 30 years of experience he has worked for small magazine publishers and was editor of the Financial Review. He has a reputation of “measured, incisive and tough” journalism. He was awarded a Walkley Award in 2007 for “Most Outstanding Contribution to Journalism”

Limited places - so please register your interest in attending. Contact [Kerryn Boland](mailto:boland.k@bigpond.net.au) on - boland.k@bigpond.net.au or on 0412 128 417. We will then forward the details of the venue and some background material.

Next Salon: **Wednesday 26 November 2008**, ‘Creative Nation’ – French and Australian Perspectives on the Arts.