



30 June 2008

MEDIA RELEASE

Students celebrate local heritage

The winners of the prestigious annual National Trust (NSW) Schools Competition will be announced at a special event this morning at the Trust's SH Ervin Gallery, Observatory Hill, Sydney.

Saturday Disney's popular team of presenters (Jack, Sally and Shae) will MC the event.

This competition encourages students to celebrate their local heritage, consider what makes their communities unique and present their ideas in creative ways.

Over 600 entries were received from across the state. Trust Acting Executive Director Steven White said he was impressed by the quality of the submissions. 'Looking at the artwork and reading through the project folders, the strong message that comes through is that these kids are proud Australians with a strong sense of connection with their local communities. The National Trust values this opportunity to engage with school students and encourage their interest in heritage', Mr White said.

This year's theme, 'Our Place', spans four subject areas in the school curriculum:

- Human Society and its Environment,
- History,
- Geography and
- Art.

The overall winner in each category receives \$500 for their school, as well as individual prizes.

The 5 category winners are:

The Year 3 – 4 Primary School Human Society and its Environment category winner is **Mayfield East Public School, Newcastle**. The group entry traces the history of the school to commemorate its 150th anniversary. The students have produced a poster documenting their research which included meetings with local historians and past students. They were particularly interested in the aboriginal history of their district and as part of the project wrote to the local Council proposing the school establish a small museum of local aboriginal artefacts.

The Year 5 - 6 Human Society and its Environment category is won by **Grace Gillard of Tamworth Public School**. Her essay, titled 'What makes me Australian' examines her family tree which includes a stolen generation aboriginal, convicts, free settlers and a WWII soldier. She explains how being Australian can mean many things to the one person.

The Geography category is won by a combined entry **from Asquith Girls High School**. The Year 9 girls examine the significance of a neighbourhood park to their local community. Eric Evans Park was named after a young boy who was killed in a road accident travelling home from school. The girls explain how the park is strongly aligned with the community's sense of identity. As well as being a popular place for young families to play it is also symbolic of the community's shared grief, and a reminder of the subsequent community driven initiative to improve road safety for children.

The History category is won by two Year 9 **Fort Street High School** students. This entry discusses the historical significance of The Rocks, tracing changes in the area from pre-settlement times and early colonisation. The students discuss the community fight to save the area from high rise development in the early 70s and the value with which the Australian community now holds The Rocks' heritage.

The Art Prize is won by Marina Young from **North Sydney Girls High School** with her water colour 'The Bridge wore a necklace of Diamonds' (below). The judges praised the artwork saying it was a highly original interpretation of the theme 'Our Place'. "The painting has a strong sense of light, colour and composition and her attention to detail demonstrated her artistic strength". Marina said the painting seeks to communicate Australia's unpredictable nature and multiculturalism.



The competition guidelines were developed by the National Trust in association with the NSW Department of Education and Training, to ensure all criteria are in line with the 2008 syllabus.

Highly Commended and Commended certificates will also be presented at the awards ceremony. Media representatives are welcome to attend.

Time: 11am

Place: S.H. Ervin Gallery, National Trust Centre, Watson Rd, Observatory Hill

Media inquiries

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