

MARCH 2024



NEWSLETTER



President's Report

PAMELA MILLAR

SAGSE had a very successful 2023, with six scholarship winners being sent to Germany from November 2023 to February 2024, and five German students being successfully hosted from June to September 2023.

This year we have selected nine students from five different schools to participate in the program, eight girls and one boy.

The schools involved are MLC, Rossmoyne SHS, Kelmscott SHS, Byford SC and Perth Modern School (via Goethe Society).

As you can see, we have expanded the program to include some schools where German is not yet taught at Year 11 level.

We are going to have to continue to broaden our student base until the teaching of German builds up again in our high schools.

We have been fortunate to obtain eight sponsors this year and SAGSE WA is also offering one sponsorship. Let us hope that we can continue to grow the program as it is creating quite a stir in the WA German business world.

A very big vote of thanks goes also to all the families who hosted our six German students last year as they really did a marvellous job of looking after their guests, as did our wonderful GASS group, who organised special activities for our visitors.

Without our generous sponsors we would not be able to continue to grow our program and we are very grateful for their continuing support. Thank you so much to you all.

Last but not least I would like to thank our hard-working and enthusiastic committee, who take so much time out of their busy schedules to promote, organise and plan so that SAGSE WA continues to support and encourage the learning of German in WA.

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GASS President Report

JASON RUSTANDI

2023 and 2024 have ushered in the return of two of GASS WA's largest ever exchange cohorts.

Each incoming GASSie is a welcome addition as we work to rebuild the community we established prior to our pause in activities. We have already held a couple of events this year to bring both Australian and German GASSies in Western Australia together, and have great plans for the rest of the year, with plenty of inspiration from the activities we undertook in 2023.

Last year we had one of our most fulfilling hosting periods: we involved Stipis and GASSies in a number of exciting, interesting and educational events, including group trips to Rottnest Island and the Pinnacles, as well as barbecues and other recurring events.

Speaking of recurring events, GASS Victoria is in the process of finalising the details for Wintercamp, an annual camp which is usually held in a regional town in Victoria during the school holidays. Being as isolated as we are in Perth, Wintercamp is a great opportunity to see your Jahrgang and meet other GASSies based in the Eastern states and due to the activities they plan is a ton of fun otherwise.

I have personally been to every Australian Wintercamp since receiving my scholarship, which should tell you how much I enjoy it!

Finally, I would like to thank all of the GASSies, especially those who have stuck around for years after their exchanges. It has been a few quiet years but things are picking back up and we none of it would be possible without your attendance and support. Thank you!



Husna Wan Zainuddin

I was fortunate enough to have this amazing opportunity to visit Germany. I stayed in a beautiful city called Freiburg in the South of Germany.

My host family are the sweetest people, and I had the best time with them. Our weekends were generally packed with many different activities, from skiing in the Black Forest, exploring what Freiburg had to offer, or just a chill Sunday afternoon with board games.

During the Christmas holidays, my host family and I went on a wonderful ski trip to Austria. The Austrian Alps were simply beautiful, and we spent the Christmas time with friends and family. Free travel was an unforgettable time – I got to explore Germany with some of the most amazing people. Another one of my highlights would definitely be the Bayern Football game, a game filled with so much energy and spirit. I also really enjoyed Berlin Camp where the nights were filled with endless laughter. I'm definitely planning to visit Germany again in the future.

Alyssa Eakin

Moin!

My name is Alyssa Eakin and I stayed in Flensburg in the North of Germany. During my time there, I was able to quickly become accustomed to German culture with the help of my host family and friends at school. I explored many other cities in the north too, with my favourites being Bremen and Hamburg.

My favourite part of the exchange was Winter Camp in Biedenkopf with the rest of my Jahrgang. In the week following Winter Camp on free travel, we visited nine cities, my favourites being Cologne and Dresden.

I was thrilled to learn about German culture and found the holidays so interesting, my favourites of course being Weihnachten and Silvester.



As well as improving my language skills, my time on exchange has allowed me to grow as a person.

I feel much more confident, patient and determined – attributes that will help me through my last year of high school, into university, and well into the future.

I cannot express how grateful I am for the opportunity to go on this exchange. It has allowed me to develop a better understanding of the world, improve my German skills and of course, have a great time and make friends I will never forget.

I could not possibly say thank you enough times to convey my gratitude.





Dinelka Fernando

I had the time of my life in Germany, and I was able to create life-long memories that I will never forget. It is most definitely one of the highlights of my life and something I will tell my kids again and again about until they can recite my stories by heart!

As this was my first time in Europe, I was determined to pack as much as I could into my 10 weeks, and I did just that – whether it was experiencing a typical, Brötchen-filled German breakfast, eating hearty Bavarian food in Munich or dominating the kids on the baby slopes when I went skiing.



In the 10 weeks I spent in Germany, I created more core memories than I have in my 16 years of life and I have SAGSE WA to thank for that.

Vielen, vielen Dank for sponsoring me. Without you I could have never experienced such a different culture and learned such valuable lessons. I cannot stress enough how much this exchange has truly changed my life and how grateful I am for this opportunity.

Zoe Millsteed

During my time in Germany, I stayed in Bochum, a culture-rich town in North-Rhein Westphalia. My host sister Mona was amazing and we did everything together. We enjoyed lots of winter activities like building snowmen and sledding in the deep snow. We took many long train rides across different parts of Germany.

The week of free travel was amazing; I got to travel to so many different cities. Some of my favourites were Dresden, Cologne, Dortmund, Munich, Leipzig and Hannover. It was super cold all winter long and that was a bit shocking after leaving Australia.



One of my biggest highlights was buying a ukulele and getting everyone to sign it at winter camp. On my last day with Mona, I then gifted it to her. It was such an emotional moment; it really was the highlight of my trip. Over the course of 10 weeks, I've improved my German skills and overall confidence and comfort zone immensely.

I'm so much more prepared now to face any challenges thrown my way and for this, I can't thank you enough. It's been an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime experience and there are not enough words in the dictionary to describe how thankful I am for this incredible opportunity. I've built a life-long friendship with my host sister and will forever be grateful for this experience.





Harvina Arvi

My entire time in Germany was better than I could have ever imagined, but to choose a few of my highlights: Landing and meeting my whole host family for the first time, my hostie taking me to see Clemens, who I hosted in Perth, going down to South Germany to visit extended family and then driving down to Italy for a family skiing/snowboard trip where we spent both Christmas and New Years, then of course Wintercamp and free travel! Berlin Camp was also awesome; Especially getting to spend so much time with my Jahrgang - people who I am also incredibly grateful to now have in my life.

I could not have had a more incredible time and I can genuinely say it was perfect. I am eternally grateful to have had this experience and to have gained so many amazing people in my life from this exchange program.

My time in Germany has shaped my future and I truly could not be any more thankful to SAGSE for giving me the opportunity to find my family halfway across the world and truly immerse myself in Germany. I miss it incredibly and I'm already counting down the days until I go back.





Evelyn Allan

I am so grateful for the wonderful experience I had in Germany. I was incredibly lucky to be matched with a funny, warm and kind family that I felt instantly welcomed into. Christmas and Silvester were definitely highlights for me. In the lead up to Christmas, Leni and I attended Christmas balls, where we danced the night away together, Christmas markets, where I first experienced kinderpunch and delicious food such as my favourite Currywurst.



We spent Silvester lighting my first at home fireworks together and listening to German music with friends. Wintercamp was also an amazing experience for us; we particularly enjoyed dressing up in a 2000s theme as Eminem and Christina Aguilera. These are only a few of the countless memories I have made, and I'm ever so grateful to (and homesick for) my absolutely wonderful host family.



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Mona Ketelsen



Neometals



Host Families WANTED

Each year SAGSE and the German Australian Students' Society (GASS) welcome a group of German students to Australia in the middle of June for approximately 10 weeks. During this time, the students will live with Australian host families and attend school with their host brothers/sisters. It is with great pleasure that we invite you to host a German exchange student for this period of time.

Valuable and long lasting friendships can be formed through hosting. Hosting an exchange student provides all participants the opportunity to broaden their understanding of current issues and everyday life in both Australia and Germany. Furthermore, communication between a German student and the Australian host family is not only beneficial and rewarding but promotes cultural understanding for all involved.

SAGSE WA Inc. is searching for families who would like to host a German student for these 10 weeks, without necessarily having a child that would go on the exchange to Germany. These 'back-up host families' would be available if required each year to provide hosting support in the event that we are unable to find suitable host families for the current scholarship winner cohort.



Please contact Pamela Millar at pamelajm@bigpond.com to register your interest in becoming a back-up host family!