

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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“All I want is for them to axe that stupid show”

A lot can change in five years and UTAS is keen to find out just how much.

In 2006, researchers from the School of Sociology and Social Work partnered with the Launceston City Council to invite 1170 primary school pupils from across Northern Tasmania to write down their hopes and aspirations.

Known as the Tree of Hope, the project drew responses that were precocious, humorous and often touching.

Interviewed in 2006, Grade 3 pupil Scott said his biggest hope was for “no more *McLeod’s Daughters*”; Scott was no doubt pleased when Channel 9 cancelled the Australian TV series in 2009 after it took a dive in the ratings.

Another Grade 3 pupil, Amber, who wanted to be Australia’s first female prime minister, has probably also re-evaluated her hopes and aspirations since Julia Gillard became Prime Minister.

Grade 5 pupil Brett hoped to become an official protector of Launceston “just in case aliens invade”, while Grade 1 pupil Jayden proposed a revolutionary new economic system, whereby each Australian was handed \$1000 each week but had to give half to someone else.

Many pupils also outlined their hopes for world peace, the environment, and their communities.

Now UTAS researchers want to meet up with some of these children again, particularly those who are now in high school.

In coming weeks, the project team led by Dr Karen Willis will visit northern Tasmanian high schools to hunt out students who took part in the original survey.

Two workshops will also be held, on September 7, and September 17, to allow researchers to interview students.

Tomorrow, Dr Willis and her team will visit Brooks High School and the media is invited to attend.

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