

# The Ram and Ewe

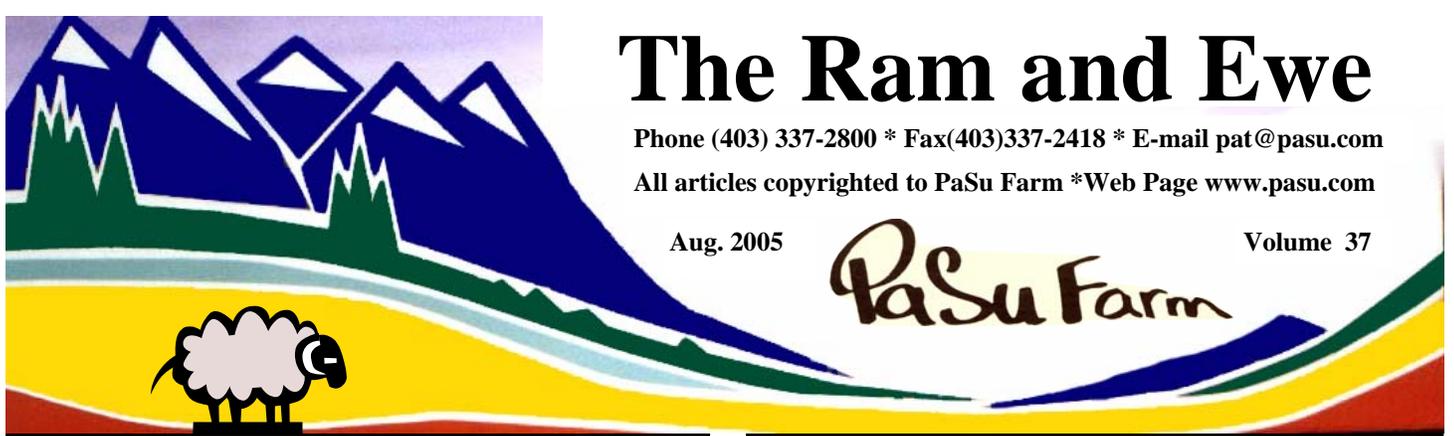
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## Higher Education.

Continued from last News Letter.

My mother, having been the driving force of my banishment to Boarding School, was in an emotional frenzy as the time drew closer for my departure. She imagined all sorts of catastrophes which included frostbite and starvation.

Pietermaritzburg was prone to frost in winter whereas where we lived the coldest it ever got was about seventeen degrees centigrade. I was sent with enough woolen sweaters and socks that would have been the envy of a Napoleonic platoon in the Russian Campaign. To combat scurvy and or starvation I was sent with a tuck box that took two of us to move.

The final day arrived. It was a Sunday. The trip from home to the school took about two hours as the roads were not highways in those days. The scholastic establishment was named St. Charles College and was run by Marist Brothers, an ecclesiastical order that took the vows of poverty, chastity and humility (we should talk about that) but were not actually priests. They wore black cassocks with a short white bib of about eight by four inches wide under their chin. Hence the name Crows.

The school was situated on about 500 acres of farm land and beautiful sports grounds on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg. There was a Junior, Farm, Middles and Senior dormitory. Being thirteen, I was at the upper age limit for the Middles dormitory. The Juniors were grades four, five and six. The Middles were grades seven, eight and nine whilst the Seniors were grades ten, eleven and twelve. The Farm? Well that was a bit of an enigma as it always seemed to be the centre of attention when ever there was a salacious scandal involved.

St. Charles was modeled on the same principles of an English Public school. The dormitories were controlled by House Masters who slept in a cubicle in the dormitory. The Middles dormitory held eighty beds in four rows in a large hall like building. Besides each bed there was a locker large enough for your clothing and personal effects. Tuck was kept in the Boot room down stairs.

Discipline was strict and the rod was certainly employed on a quota of students on a daily basis. Authority devolved from headmaster to the Crows and from there to the prefects who meted out physical punishment in the privacy of the prefects room.

This was indeed an intimidating scenario for a young rebel to confront. Also insidious and deceptive. That Sunday afternoon the Crows were out to greet parents who

were leaving their loved progeny to the care of others for the first time. They charmed and reassured distraught mothers that everything was just fine and in a matter of hours their precious son would have found new friends and adapted to the new environment. They were shown the chapel, classrooms and the wonderful dinner the kids were going to enjoy for their first supper at the school. Those suppers miraculously occurred whenever there was an open house for parents and the public.

Now a boarding school, no matter how posh, works on the same system as prisons albeit a little scaled down. You have a pecking order consisting of bullies, cliques, groups, enemies, sadists, untouchables, snitches, prefect favourites, the working staff (mostly Africans and East Indians) and the Crows all enshrined in the SYSTEM. This system is a combination of everything seen and unseen and has a persona of its own. It is like a current. You have to know how to use it or it will drown you.

My survival instincts inclined me to a very formal and disciplined parting of my parents. Those poor little brats that cried their goodbyes were toast as the seasoned establishment eyed the newcomers as grist for their mill and predetermined their status in the system.

That first night in the dormitory was a reminder of how desolate it can really be when you are away from the security and comfort of home. The first six months are the most difficult as you are an outsider to the system and you have to learn the ropes.

First and foremost was to learn the key players in the food chain. Crow Beak (large hooked nose) was ostensibly in charge of the kitchens. He was a morose fellow given to few words and cursed with an uncanny ability to outsmart even the most devious rebel. He managed the kitchen from a distance leaving the day to day management to Crow Beans (chronic continuous flatulence) who was so old that he hadn't a clue what was going on. He looked like Yoda (Star Wars) with a slack bottom lip from which he dribbled continuously as he painfully shuffled around. He was also very hard of hearing and no one was sure whether it was from enormous amount of wax that exuded from his hairy ears or whether he had lost his hearing and thus found it unnecessary to perform the elementary hygiene of these orifices.

Now the guy to know in the kitchen was Lips. Remember Cookie in the Beetles comics? Now imagine him as a six foot, 450 pound Zulu with very generous lips, a sixty inch girth and the disposition of an irritable hippopotamus. No one messed with Lips. But he could be bought with chocolate. A medium sized slab of chocolate could be ex-

# Saturday Evening Fine Dining Menu September

Duck Rillet

With Port Wine Jelly and Melba Toast

Chicken, Mango and Coconut Soup

Mushrooms and Prawns  
in a crepe

Passion Fruit Sorbet

Entrée choice of  
Rolled Loin of Lamb  
Stuffed with Wild Mushrooms

Prime Rib

Or

Atlantic Salmon  
With a Wine reduction sauce

Selection of Baby Garden Vegetables

Crème Brulee

Coffee

\$50 per person

Does not include GST or Gratuity

## LADIES NIGHT

Buffet Dinner, Fashion Show  
and Guest Speaker

4th November 2005

Cocktails 6pm. Dinner served 7.30pm

\$20 per person Reservations Essential

Does not include GST or Gratuity

Let us do your

# PRIVATE FUNCTION

OR

# CHRISTMAS PARTY

## SHEEP MANURE

Dress your Fall garden with Sheep Manure ready for the spring and have a few bags in the potting shed for a great mix with potting soil. Phone first to make sure that bags are available or that there is a tractor operator if you are buying by the truck load.

Price is \$5 per bag

6 bags for \$25

changed for an extra piece of toast and a pat of butter for about week to ten days. This clandestine arrangement was fraught with danger involving drop-off and pick-up sites that were changed randomly. An excellent early training for aspiring spies.

The infirmary was probably the most challenging aspect of the system. It was absolutely necessary to know how to use this tool without becoming a victim of Sister Mary. It was only in cases of absolute emergency when you knew beyond doubt that you were earmarked for a thrashing.

Sister Mary was about four foot six inches tall and must have weighed about eighty pounds. She wore a starched white nurses uniform with a huge white triangular head piece. It was her duty to attend to the infirmary and sort out the genuinely ill from the slackers and shy-sters. Her side kick Jim was an African assistant who looked like a basketball pro and had hands the size of dinner plates. He was a sort of enforcer or restrainer depending on the treatment prescribed for the ailment.

At eight in the morning on any given day of the week (nobody got sick on Saturday or Sunday) there would be about six to twelve malingerers waiting to be treated. The dispensary was lined with medicinal bottles, enamel basins, hospital paraphernalia and the dreaded big bottle of orange Moo medicine. The rumour was that this vile concoction was a combination of turpentine, cow urine and bitter aloe. Everyone was treated with this whether it was a rugby injury, sore tummy or the flu. Sister Mary would place a thermometer in your mouth and before taking it out and reading it she would have a four ounce glass poured and ready. Jim was good at helping you to get it down and if you knew what was good for you, you took your Moo medicine.

I once was genuinely ill and admitted to the infirmary in the evening at about nine and diagnosed by a doctor with a severe dose of flu. I had the opportunity of watching the morning session from my bed through the door and into the dispensary. One of the malingerers, probably terrified of facing an inevitable spanking, insisted that he was not going to school. After everyone had been treated, Sister Mary indicated that Jim should escort the unfortunate student to an adjoining cubicle.

She then retrieved from a shelf an enormous enema which she filled and took into the cubicle and from the ensuing commotion and loud protestations, I am certain that the hapless victim had no idea that this draconian treatment would be administered when he plea bargained to be admitted sick. What ever took place in that cubicle had the wonderful effect of transmuting a miraculous cure. When Sister Mary came to take my temperature I was bright, alert and asking to go back to school.

In those days it was common practice to get caned for any transgression of the rules. The Crows all carried canes in a long sleeve sown into the side of their cassock. The punishment was usually administered where the transgression took place and ninety percent of the time this took place in the classroom. It was firmly believed by the Crows that a lackluster student could vastly improve his scholastic performance by touching his toes and receiving a whacking.

Crow Leo was an irascible and sadistic old

# Shopping Notes

## Christmas

### EXTRA SHOPPING HOURS

We will be open in December on Friday nights for shopping till 8 pm.

ALSO

December Mondays -11 am to 5 pm

The restaurant will not be open on these Mondays

### OTHER LOCATIONS

As usual we will be at

**Northlands Village Mall**

Mid Oct., Nov. and Dec.

Please Note we will be located in a sore previously occupied by Japan Camera

Also

**AG TRADE RED DEER**

9th to 12th November

And do not forget

**Spruce Meadows**

Christmas Market

Nov.18th,19th &20th

And of course

**CHRISTMAS  
WEEKEND MAGIC**

At

**PaSu Farm**

Years ago before we had a shop we used to have an OPEN HOUSE at the farm on the weekend. During the weekends in Dec. We continue this tradition by offering FREE Christmas cake and hot cider. Let us take the stress out of your shopping.

**OUTSTANDING SELECTION  
OF NEW MERCHANDISE**

Frenchman who ran the maintenance shop as well as trying to teach students Latin. He had a weakness for the bottle and once he was tipsy would wander the dormitory bathrooms eyeing the students in the communal shower with lusty bloodshot eyes. In the morning whilst suffering from his usual hangover he demanded absolute flawless performances of the reading and translation of Caesars Gaelic Wars. Those who rendered a flawed performance would be taken after the class to the Woodworking shop for an "adjustment" as he called it.

Crow Leo didn't just spank and let you go. He relished every moment. The nervous group of students would be ushered into the shop one by one with the others waiting outside. He made a big production of selecting a cane from the half dozen he had on the wall by flexing and testing it on a cushion before administering it to the bug eyed student.

One thing about the Catholic Faith is their obsession with sins of the flesh. Purity and virtue are instilled, enforced and reinforced. There was no such thing as personal health courses that would have been beneficial in explaining our reproductive organs. It must have been assumed that carnal knowledge would over stimulate our virginal pubescent minds and lead to onanism, blindness and eventually the fiery pits of hell. The little information we gained was from our peers and it certainly was not based on solid knowledge.

With this puritanical philosophy I cannot imagine why they had the strangest Right of Passage when you reached grade ten. This was the dance at the girls' convent. As it was a regular event we all knew it was going to happen. By the time you had reached grade nine it was all you could talk about and thus for the next twelve to fifteen months you were like a sponge for any information relating to this event. The grade elevens and twelves, wanting to prove their machismo, spun elaborate stories of sex, deprived girls and nymphomaniacs. We would listen in rapture as one or other of the initiated elders regaled us with stories of unbridled lust, frantic foreplay and occasionally fornication. Details were not spared and each time the stories were repeated their erotic nuances were explored and embellished in greater detail.

As the date drew closer there was a correlation between the demand for more detail in the narratives and an increase of grade tens to confession. There was without a shadow of doubt a palpable sensation of fear and fervent religiosity. The erotic yarns were having a disastrous effect on the moral rectitude of testosterone saturated grade tens. The school library was in high demand for those special books that had missed the censorship of the Crows. Performance on the rugby field diminished as no one wanted to be hobbled for the occasion. Blindness was the inevitable conclusion to all this story telling.

The great day arrived. The energy exuded by thirty six, fifteen and sixteen year old males who expected to loose their virginity within the next few hours was profoundly overwhelming. We washed, scrubbed and slicked our hair with the remnants of the Bryl Cream. There was laughter, towel flicking, friendly punches, shadow boxing and a massive sense of anticipation. All the rugby songs were being bellowed out, the favourite being "Roll me over in the clover" and "Four and twenty virgins from Inver-

ness.”

We walked the four miles to the Immaculate Conception Convent at a brisk pace jabbering all the way about the maidens we were going to ravish and the fun we would have doing it. When we arrived at the convent we were led to a brightly lit gym hall. Boys and girls were formed into parallel lines and you were paired off with the girl in front of you. The rules were read out. You may hold hands when you dance. A distance of four inches must be maintained at all times between your bodies. You were encouraged to swap partners. There was to be no kissing. Then a prayer was said and the band struck up a foxtrot. We dutifully shuffled onto the floor scrutinized by about twenty stern nuns

Well my partner did not exactly meet my expectations of a Jezebel. She had short mousy hair and plain looks. She kept her eyes downcast and seemed a little apprehensive as if she had been forewarned of our singular purpose. I was having about as much fun as in Crow Leo's Latin class.

After a while I excused myself to go to the wash-room. The senior girls change room had been allocated for the boys. By the sounds of the jocularity that was coming from one corner it seemed as if some of the lads were engaged in some mischief that was worth investigating. The fuss was over a little electric incinerator attached to the wall. This little gadget, whose purpose we could only speculate on, did a marvelous job of incinerating anything you put in to it. The sacrifices of choice were girl's tennis shoes that we called in those days "tackies." Hence the Tacky Machine saved the day, for the majority of us were totally disillusioned and deflated as our wild imaginations were replaced by mundane reality and the certainty that we were not going to achieve nirvana on this round.

## RESTAURANT EVENTS

### CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATRES

Saturdays

26th November

3rd, 10th & 17th December 2005

Cocktails from 6pm

Dinner served at 7.30pm

Shadow Productions

Present

### A CHRISTMAS MURDER MYSTERY

PaSu Farm presents an interactive murder mystery dinner theatre with Shadow Productions. You play detective as a hysterical whodunit is served up along with fine food. Keep your eyes peeled, ask the tough questions and be ready to laugh until your sides split. You might even win a prize.

Tickets are \$60.00

Includes GST & Gratuities on meal and Show

Advance booking essential  
by ticket purchase

## African Feast

with  
**David Thiaw**  
and  
**Domba**

An extravagant selection of wonderful  
African Food, followed by Music,  
Stories and Dancing.

Saturday Oct. 22nd 2005

Cocktails at 6 pm Dinner at 7.15 pm

Reservations Essential & Ticket Purchase

Tickets are \$60 per person

Service and GST for meal  
included in above price



### Victorian Christmas Dinners



Fri. 25th Nov.

Fri. 2nd, 9th & 16th Dec.

6.00pm Cocktails 7.00pm Dinner

Once again we will be presenting our seven course, plate service English Victorian Christmas Dinner. The entrée will be a choice between Roast leg of Lamb and Prime Rib. To create a warm hospitable atmosphere our staff will be dressed in Victorian garb, candles and crackers will be placed on the table and the plum pudding will be flamed for all to see.

\$50 per person

Service and GST. Are not included in the above prices.

Reservations and tickets ESSENTIAL