

Australian student makes State College home

Series Note: This is the first in five-part series that profiles Penn State international students.

By Julia Kern and Kristin Stoller
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

When asked what the biggest difference is between his hometown of Canberra, Australia and State College, Pa., senior exchange student Michael Bones answered without hesitation — ‘grinding’ while dancing.

“I’m uncomfortable with it,” Bones said. “I like to not be held down — I like to flail around a little bit.”

Bones came to Penn State at the beginning of this year — but not by his own choosing.

After his exchange program at a school in New York was shut down, Bones said he was random-

ly placed at Penn State for a semester. He is currently studying English and philosophy, but he will pursue a law degree when he returns to Australia at the end of the semester.

Bones’ indie-pop band, The Trivs, decided to take a hiatus, providing an ideal time for Bones to study abroad. Though Bones has been pleased with his classes, he said he has found State College’s music scene to be less than perfect.

The Trivs are a relatively popular band in Canberra, Bones said, but he stressed the American influence on the Australian music scene.

“I think American music overall is very diverse,” he said. “As far as

American bands, there is quite a similar taste in music, but I think Australian bands have an inferiority complex.”

Byron Fay, Bones’ bandmate, said his friend is a talented musician. “He writes very interesting songs and some pretty crackin’ pop tunes,” Fay (graduate-critical science and theatre) said.

Bones said he was surprised by the similarities between Canberra and State College.

“Thanks to globalization, a lot of places want to be America or at least want American things,” he said. “Starbucks, McDonald’s — they’re all around in Australia.”

But Bones said there’s a few differences between the cultures, especially in the language. To Bones, a “thong” describes a flip-flop shoe, a “jumper” means a zip-up sweatshirt and a “biscuit” describes a cookie.

“In Australia, [the word] ‘root’



means something entirely different — sexual intercourse,” Bones said.

“It was initially off-putting.”

Another difference is the excitement level for collegiate sports. Bones said there are not many university-wide sports in Australia. There, students form competitive sports teams based on their residence halls, and in general, sports are less competitive in Canberra than at Penn State.

After living at Penn State for a semester, Bones finds that it is his Australian accent that draws the most attention.

“Normally it’s either ‘Oh my

god, keep talking,’ which — as a side note — doesn’t actually encourage further conversation,” Bones said. “If you’re planning on talking to someone with an accent, just ask a further question.”

Bones said many people mistake Bones as someone from England or New Zealand. He said he was disappointed, because “somehow New Zealand became cooler than Australia.”

In the future, Bones said he plans to work with the Australian government on policy writing as well as pursuing a future in music.

On Bones, Fay said, “I think he is adjusting very well. He had a rocky start, but now he’s kicking goal.”

To listen to an interview with Australian exchange student Michael Bones: psucollegian.com



Bones

OPP set to battle crows once again

By Paul McMullen
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Office of Physical Plant workers will gather today at 5 p.m. in front of Old Main to carry out a full-scale effort to relocate approximately 1,500 migratory crows, which have begun seeking refuge around campus.

The mass of crows has primarily been spotted roosting in the central corridor of campus, running from College Avenue through the elm trees east of Old Main, and up to Pattee Library, according to a news release.

“Over the past three or four years, crows have continued to roost on campus during this time of year, and it is becoming a problem,” said Phillip Melnick, OPP director of buildings and grounds. “Crows tend to think Penn State is a safe place to inhabit, but they cause a nuisance and are unsanitary.”

Because of the crow activity, two pyrotechnic launchers will be stationed near College Avenue, two near Boucke Building and Osmond Tower and one between Moore and Music Buildings, according to a news release.

Similar to past years, highly-

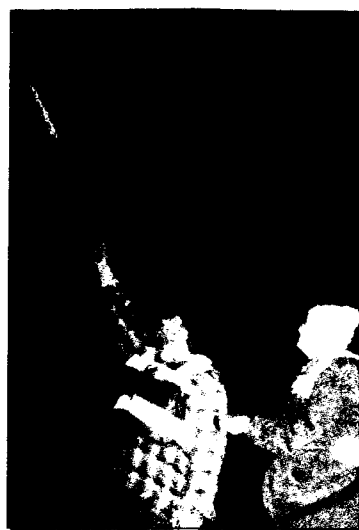
trained OPP employees will use noise-making activities during the early evening hours. Continuing for a couple of hours each night, the process will occur daily until crows have vacated, OPP spokesman Paul Ruskin said.

Ruskin said a major problem caused by an increased presence of crows is the amount of droppings, which smatter the walkways around campus and the community. The outcome of the process is to vacate the crows so OPP can work to bring crows back to the clean and pristine state it is known for, he said.

With sequential launching, OPP hopes to push the birds in a northern direction toward their roosting location of last year, he said.

The goal of the project is to discourage crows from roosting within the area, which has historically been a problem for the university and surrounding areas. Last year, about 3,000 migrating crows landed on campus, according to a news release.

OPP will partner with Penn State researchers, the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services and the borough



Collegian file photo

Andrew Braucht shoots fireworks into the sky in an attempt to rid trees of crows last year.

of State College to carry out the effort.

OPP urges students to be aware of the loud noises that will come with the pyrotechnics and bangers that will be used to harass and startle the birds, Ruskin said.

Though students have nothing to worry about, the crow’s days on campus are numbered, he said.

“Crows need to tell their relatives to head toward the equator, not the Penn State campus,” Ruskin said.

To e-mail reporter: p5030@psu.edu

Tussey Mountain provides winter fun

By Nathan Pipenberg
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

As winter approaches and many students find themselves stuck indoors, Tussey Mountain can provide an outdoor escape for students looking to enjoy the snow.

The ski resort’s nine slopes for skiing, snowboarding and tubing are scheduled to open on Dec. 11 this season. Mountain manager Tom Matalavage said the expected opening date is earlier compared to previous years and is tentative depending on the amount of snowfall.

Erik Pindrock, a meteorologist with Accuweather, said he’s predicting the ski conditions to be less than ideal this season in State College and elsewhere in the Northeast. The season will have more mixed precipitation in the form of rain, snow and ice, which could make for below-average skiing conditions, he said.

Accuweather’s yearly winter forecast predicts a near-normal level of snowfall in the Northeast. Compared to “Snowmageddon” — what Accuweather dubbed last year’s winter season — this year should be average in terms of snowfall and temperature.

Accuweather’s chief long-range meteorologist, Joe Bastardi, said in a press release that temperatures may fluctuate more than in an average year, including the possibility of a major thaw in January.

But Matalavage said Tussey Mountain is not overly concerned about the snowfall totals since the resort can make its own powder.

Tussey Mountain is home to four ski lifts and nine slopes, designed for beginners as well as experienced skiers.

Penn State students can access the mountain via the Centre Area Transportation Authority Boalsburg route. During the first eight weeks of the spring semester, CATA also offers an express route directly to Tussey Mountain. The bus leaves campus mid-morning and returns around 6 p.m.

Penn State offers Skiing and Snowboarding classes (KINES 11 and 12) for credit, along with free CATA transportation for class members.

Matalavage said Tussey Mountain offers discounts to both college students and area residents.

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