

Rose – Jeetho State School (90-second monologue)

Every morning my two brothers, three sisters and I saddle our ponies and ride about five miles from the farm to Jeetho State School.

It's a long trip, especially in winter, but we're used to it.

This is my final year at school. Jeetho only goes to Year 8, so I'll soon be leaving but I'm proud to have been a student here.

Our school is only a one-room building, yet people come from as far away as Lyndhurst and Leongatha to study with our head teacher, Mr Franz Stielow. Some even travel by steam train to attend.

Mr Stielow expects every student to do their best, and under his guidance Jeetho has earned an exceptional reputation. This year I was awarded a Merit Certificate — an achievement earned by only 11 per cent of Jeetho students, compared with just 3 per cent of students across Victoria.

One of the things I'm most excited about is that some of my schoolwork, along with work by other Jeetho students, has been selected for exhibition in Paris.

It's remarkable to think that work completed here in our little country school will be viewed on the other side of the world.

Mr Stielow is just as passionate about gardening as he is about teaching. Thanks to his encouragement, our school gardens have won many prizes over the years.

It's proof that even a small, one-room school in South Gippsland can achieve remarkable things.