Drama at Fairytale High

Faith was a demure Snow White in the drama Fairytale High. Details page 6 & 7.
The quiet before the storm

Actually, there won’t be a storm but it certainly has been a quiet week. The Middle School are all off on various camps and the Year 10 and 11 students trickle in and out as they undertake their exams.

So the rest of us are taking the chance to celebrate and enjoy the Primaries. They’re such a great group of kids. It’s always a pleasure to walk around the Primary School and see their smiling little faces, see them engrossed in climbing the ‘red back’ or playing down ball, and I always get a ‘Mr O, Mr O’ as they seek my attention. I’ve loved the chance this year to meet each Primary student at our VIP morning teas – sharing conversation over a muffin. Our Primary school is full of students who are genuinely interested in how you are going and are able to articularly discuss the exciting activities that are happening in their classrooms.

There’s also a real desire amongst the kids to be ‘helpful’. We have some students that come and empty the office paper recycling bins every afternoon – cheerfully and willingly. And I know that there are many other jobs that get done around the school by cheerful and willing primary students. A culture of ‘helpful community’ is a wonderful thing.

This kind of culture doesn’t happen accidently or without a lot of intentional hard work. The Primary staff, led by Di, have done a wonderful job at building, protecting and maintaining this culture, to the point where it’s almost a tangible thing – you can see, hear and feel the difference. What an amazing blessing to the students. Many people who visit the school or who come across our students on excursions or camps, consistently comment on the quality and calibre of our students in the way that they behave and conduct themselves. We know that’s not only our doing, it’s also a credit to you as parents. There’s a climate of cooperation and respect; things don’t always go smoothly but it’s the sense and feeling that we are all on the same page. It is great that in partnership together we can see these young children blossoming.

Yes, the same can be said about the rest of the school, but this week I want to take the chance to appreciate a special group in the school that adds so much to MECS.

In 2007, I attended the official opening of the new Primary Multipurpose room and Junior Primary Complex. My eldest son was in Year 2. It was a strange feeling – things had changed so much from my day…just ask Roger.

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Initially it was strange coming back as a parent – some things were so profoundly different it’s hard to recognise, while other things were the same (even some of the teachers). My kids build cubbies around the trees like other students will remember the swinging logs bridge and the big A-Frame structure where we spent countless lunch times. The Primary oval did not exist in any form, nor the basketball court. Only trees, trees and more trees. The only original equipment still remaining in the current playground is the monkey bars.

Where the Primary MCG Garden now sits, sits, an old weatherboard house once stood where one or another staff member would live and undertake the caretaker role for the school. Not much privacy there; I remember as a young student thinking it was hilarious to see a teacher’s underwear hanging on the washing line! At that time the school driveway ran down between the playground and the house - probably not all that safe!! Thankfully no accidents ever occurred.

From Grade 4 we were allowed to play up near the old hut – we made cubbies amongst the bush and collected pine cones from the massive pine trees. There were no classrooms or buildings of any kind up there then.

Initially it was strange coming back as a parent – some things were so profoundly different it’s hard to recognise, while other things were the same (even some of the teachers). My kids build cubbies around the trees like I did, they play chasey the same as we did. But now they also have wonderful spaces where the whole Primary school can get together; they have classrooms that are designed for multi-age learning; they have a great oval to play footy and soccer; they have an amazing rope climbing structure to challenge themselves and build confidence. They even have fancy interactive white boards in the classrooms! Not quite the same as the blackboards from my day...just ask Roger.

Natasha
Class of ‘91, Current parent

Celebrating 40 Years
New Warlpiri Murals

The art panels now decorating the outer wall of the Gym have been created to demonstrate the enduring connection between the MECS community and our friends, the Warlpiri community at Yuendumu.

Each of our sports tribes’ names is a Warlpiri noun from the natural environment. Our name categories reflected in single nouns cannot simply be expected to have Jukurrpa (dreaming/law) associated with them (that would be a Western cultural expectation). The artworks have been selected to both reflect the sports tribes’ colours and convey a Jukurrpa that has some sort of relationship to the names. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Cecilia of the Warlukurlangu Art Centre in facilitating our acquisition of the art works and the permission to reproduce them in the large panel format. We also thank the Mount Evelyn and Montrose Community Bank Branches for the grant that made this project possible. Finally, we esteem the Warlpiri artists who have shared their stories with us through these works of art.

Wirri
Wirri primarily means watercourse, gully, though it can refer to water. The blue panel, Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming) by Shorty Jangala Robertson, depicts flood waters with curved lines.

Warlu
Warlu primarily means fire. The yellow panel, Warlu Jukurrpa (Fire Dreaming), is by Paddy Japaljarri Sims (1916 – 2010). The curvy lines depict the fire and flames spreading out across country. The Warlukurlangu art centre at Yuendumu is so named because of the community’s location in Fire Dreaming country.

Warlpa
Warlpa means wind or turbulent air. The white panel is another Ngapa Jukurrpa (Water Dreaming) by Shorty Jangala Robertson. It uses short bars to depict cumulus and stratocumulus clouds.

Walya
Walya means soil, sand, earth or land. The red panel, Pikilyi Jukurrpa (Vaughan Springs dreaming), is by Mary Napangardi Butcher. The painting evokes an image of the dry cracked earth.

Wapirra Jukurrpa
This panel is still to be installed but we have a picture of how it will look to the right. Claris Nampijinpa Poulson has depicted the creation of the world by Wapirra (Father God) in this painting. This is one of a large range of Christian stories she has skilfully painted with Warlpiri iconography.

Gerry
Administration Manager
Farewell Martin

You’re warmly invited to attend a Whole School Assembly to farewell Martin on Friday Nov 29, 9.45am in the Gym, followed by morning tea.

Book Fair News

Thank you to all students and parents who came along to support the Book Fair last week. Thanks to you, we were able to raise $1550, which will be used to purchase new books for Jinja Christian School in Uganda. This is a fantastic result. Thank you also to the Year 9 girls who helped staff the Fair. Emily Conway was the lucky winner of our ‘Guess the Lollies in the jar’ competition with her closest guess of 165. The actual amount was 163.

Fiona Haynes
Librarian

MECS Notes

Thank you!

We are pleased to announce to the MECS community that through our two sausage sizzles this semester, we have raised a total of $1400 to establish a playground at Jinja Christian School in Uganda.

A further $700 was raised last Thursday and we are thrilled that this will go towards much needed equipment for the children.

Thank you for your support!

Sharon
Year 9 Service Elective

Careers at the Zoo

If you are interested in a Career at a zoo then the following opportunities might be of interest to you.

Keeper for a Day at Healesville Sanctuary

Go behind the scenes with some of our most precious and endangered Australian animals. Come and work as a threatened species keeper at Healesville Sanctuary these school holidays and learn how you can help fight extinction.

Vet for a Day at Healesville Sanctuary

Come and work alongside our vets on real life cases involving Healesville Sanctuary’s animals, including endangered species, as well as injured wildlife brought to the hospital.

Keeper for a Day at Werribee Open Range Zoo

Are you an aspiring Zoo keeper? Find out if you have what it takes to care for the amazing array of animals at Werribee Open Range Zoo these school holidays! More information: http://www.zoo.org.au/holidays

For students in Years 7-12
Phone for Bookings.

MUSIC Notes

Attention Musicians and Singers!

On Wednesday 4 December at 7pm we will have our Final Recital for 2013 in the Senior School Theatrette. With only 2 weeks to go, the date is quickly approaching and if you haven’t performed in a Recital this year, this is your final opportunity!

Please talk to your Instrumental Teacher or Annora if you would like to perform in this Recital.

Those with surnames between M and Z, this is particularly for you.

Watch this space for more information.
Exchange Students at MECS

For the last 12 weeks we’ve had the pleasure of having 4 lovely Japanese students attend MECS as exchange students. Mayumi, Chisaki, Tomoya, and Jiemusu have been staying with host families (one of those was Sandy, MECS staff member) and participating in MS activities and classes for 3 days a week. This week they’ve headed down to Inverloch with the Year 7 & 8s to experience school camp – MECS style. Last Friday, we had a surprise morning tea to say goodbye and to wish them all the best as they head back to Japan after camp. The students have commented numerous times on the positive experience it has been for them, and how much they have enjoyed their stay. We’ve also received many positive comments from their coordinator, on how welcoming the MECS students and staff have been. Thanks and well done Middle School!

Natasha
Principal PA

Year 7, 2014 Orientation

Friday 8 November was the annual ‘Meet the Family’ orientation BBQ for next year’s Year 7 students. And what a night it was... Whilst the parents and older siblings sat to chat about their lives, getting to know those around them and welcoming newcomers into the mix, the Year 7 students were entertained and engaged in some great ‘getting to know you’ games.

Rolls of toilet paper started discussion about folding and scrunching as the students introduced themselves to the group ‘sheet by sheet’.

Anxious frowns turned to elated smiles as the students of MECS welcomed ‘new’ students into the mix. What a joy it was to watch our current Year 6 students warmly share of themselves and make sure that these new faces were ‘looked after’.

Scrumptious Hot Dogs were devoured quickly and then it was on to more fun and games, chasing each others’ ‘tails’ to avoiding being left standing on the sidelines.

Our Middle School staff and Community Development Team put on an awesome event, one that really helps with the students’ integration into Middle School. It provides an opportunity to break the ice and get to know those who will be in our care for the next three years.

Bring on 2014....

Karissa
Year 7/8 Coordinator
Secondary Ed Support Coordinator
Celebrating 40 Years

Fairytale High

This year our Performing Arts students put on a fabulously entertaining performance of Fairytale High, written by our very own Marlene. The students have been rehearsing since the beginning of Term 2 during our 2 periods on Thursday afternoons. It has been wonderful to see students performing a range of over-the-top fairytale characters with confidence and enthusiasm. Some of the key roles also involved performing songs either written especially for the show or arranged by myself.

Our evening performance last Thursday night was well supported by the students’ families and friends and was a great celebration of all the hard work and many hours of rehearsal that have gone into putting on a production like this. Congratulations to all involved!

Annora
Music Performance Coordinator
Fairytale High

Celebrating 40 Years
Thank you to all those who have offered to help with the packing and sales days. The roster will be emailed out shortly.

Urgent: more help needed for Thursday 30 January.

Help is also needed on the following days as I set up the stationery room and unpack

- Thursday 28 November (am) – emptying storeroom and bringing up to Senior School (in cars).

- Friday 29 November – unpacking and sorting new stock.
- Monday 2 December – unpacking and sorting new stock.
- Tuesday 3 December – unpacking and sorting new stock (if not finished from previous days).

If you can help out on any of those days, even if it’s only for a few hours, please contact me.

Thanks, Evelyn

Found

The left side lens from a pair of glasses has been handed in to the Senior School office. If you have lost one of these in the last couple of weeks please see Rosalie in the SS.