

High school entry #12: Belmont High School



# High Tide



OPTIMISM: Belmont town co-ordinator Jennie Barry.

## Town centre is moving on with the times

By MAX SHARROCK and TRACY POTTER

VISITORS to Belmont recently will notice a great deal of construction taking place.

With new Woolworths and Aldi supermarkets being built, as well as many residential and commercial buildings, Belmont is developing a new look and feel.

There has been significant investment in the shopping precinct, with new high-rise apartments being built along the waterfront and near Coles.

Belmont town co-ordinator Jennie Barrie said there were a few new high-rise buildings planned but they were mainly residential rather than commercial.

"I know that too much development would be a bad thing," Ms Barrie said.

"And keeping the residents in mind as well as the social and environmental impact, the (Lake Macquarie City) council is making sure that over-development does not occur."

With both Woolworths and Aldi supermarkets coming, Ms Barrie expects the competition for customers will be fierce.

Ms Barry believes it will be a positive change, providing very competitive prices, which should come as a relief to shoppers around the area.

# Brett bounces to Beijing

By BRIANNA BARRY

BELMONT High School physical education teacher and sports organiser Brett Austine was in Beijing this month to judge the trampolining at the 2008 Olympic Games.

Mr Austine's nomination as one of the eight trampoline judges selected worldwide was a real honour and the first time an Australian had been selected.

After 39 years of competing in the sport, Mr Austine knows a good trampolinist when he sees one.

Mr Austine, 46, reigned as world champion in 1982, 1984 and 1986 when the world championships were held every two years.

"I can still remember the exhilaration of winning my first world championship, doing routines that broke the world difficulty record, and the response of the crowd. That was pretty special," Mr Austine said.

Apart from his world championship successes, Mr Austine has some impressive awards under his belt.

In 1981 he was the only gymnast to be inducted into the NSW Sports Hall of Fame and in 2004 and 2006 was named official of the year by Gymnastics Australia, adding to NSW and national coach of the year awards he received in 2005.

Last year was also a stellar year, with Mr Austine named the 2007



LAIIDBACK: Belmont High School physical education teacher Brett Austine in the new gymnasium.

international trampoline sports coach of the year and the 2007 Australian official of the year, making him the only person to win both awards in their career, let alone in the same year.

With Belmont High School's Parents and Citizens and local members of parliament, Mr Austine helped secure for the

school its recently completed state-of-the-art gymnasium, with upgraded facilities such as extra roof height to accommodate trampolining.

Mr Austine went to the Olympics with the same professional attitude he took into his competitions. "I've set my mind to represent myself, my country and the Inter-

national Gymnastics Federation and do the best job I can," Mr Austine said before he left.

"I aim to walk onto the judging panel with my integrity and walk off with my integrity intact.

"With a job well done comes the pride of knowing you've been a fair and just judge at the highest level."



BRUSH WITH FAME: Belmont High School English teacher Naomi Frost with her photograph of Hugh Jackman and others on the set of *Wolverine*.

## Snap of star puts local in the frame

By ALEXANDRA ILIEVSKI

BELMONT High School teacher Naomi Frost had a brush with fame at Blacksmiths Beach when fans and paparazzi gathered to get a glimpse of Aussie actor Hugh Jackman.

Jackman arrived in June to film scenes for *Wolverine*, a prequel to the *X-Men* movies.

Arriving at the beach with

her two young children, the English teacher was able to take several pictures of Jackman in costume.

"I don't think anyone took me seriously because I was with my boys," Mrs Frost said.

She put the photos on her Flickr website and was surprised to see one had received more than 20,000 hits and been used in articles about the film.

Mrs Frost received an email from a Sydney company, Icon Images, wanting to help her sell her photographs to magazines and websites all over the world.

Since taking up photography 18 months ago, Mrs Frost has won numerous prizes, had several photographs published in magazines and been a finalist in Shutterbug '08 and a national save water competition.



## Saving for their education? Hurry in for an 8.00% p.a. at call savings account

Earn a high 8.00% p.a.\* with a Newcastle Permanent Rapid Saver savings account. Just make one deposit and no withdrawals per month to save at this rapid rate. With no account keeping fees and free phone and Internet banking, this at call account helps you save for all their education needs.

Call today 13 19 87 [www.newcastlepermanent.com.au](http://www.newcastlepermanent.com.au)

That's what we're here for.

# It's time to slow down on fast food

## Editorial

By AMY TSANG

WHEN you go down to Belmont, what do you see? Traffic moving to get people to their destinations and people walking on the sidewalk.

This is a normal day in the suburb but there is one particular problem in that routine that people should be aware of: the amount of fast-food places in Belmont. McDonald's, KFC, Hungry Jack's and so many more fast-food stores are located in Belmont.

Now that Australians have realised we need to fight the bulge, Belmont could be seen as a bad influence on our diet.

Some days are so busy that people don't have time to have a home-made, healthy meal. Most people then choose to buy takeaway food. This is fine if you eat this food on rare occasions but if eaten on a regular basis it takes its toll on your health.

Eating fatty foods can cause obesity, high levels of bad cholesterol, different types of cancer, gallstones, diabetes, strokes, high blood pressure, heart disease, asthma, sleep apnoea and even changes to the hormones and brain. Fast food doesn't just affect our image but also our bodily functions and systems.

Belmont encourages education and there are several schools in

the area. But due to the vast range of takeaway food, children and adolescents are also tempted to eat these fatty foods on a regular basis.

Scientists believe we are suffering from an international epidemic of childhood obesity. This doesn't just affect the physical health of a child or adolescent but also their social health.

Also, some of the effects of fast food don't appear until later stages of their lives. It may seem okay to eat regular servings of fast food while you are young but that decision is regretted later on in life.

If children don't learn to restrict their intake of fatty foods while they are young, these habits could remain with them when they are adults. Students are encouraged to eat healthily during school hours and canteens are trying to be healthier. But how are they expected to do so if there is easy access to unhealthy food nearby?

The number of fast-food restaurants has reportedly increased by 25 per cent in the past four years. In Belmont it seems that every time one fast-food place closes, a new one opens.

Belmont does not need so many fast-food restaurants. Sure, they are a good place to catch up with friends every once in a while. But what happened to the traditional Australian dinner with the family?

The amount of fast food in Australia needs to be reduced. If not, what price will we have to pay?



PRISTINE: The result of work done to revive South Belmont Wetlands.

# Wetlands are out to educate

By JEREMY MUDFORD

LAKE Macquarie City Council and the trustees of the new Belmont wetlands state park are working on improving awareness of the area's natural attractions.

Belmont is fortunate to be surrounded by wetlands stretching from Jewells to Belmont Lagoon.

Volunteers have worked tirelessly for many years to conserve and protect the areas.

They have encouraged the council and state and federal governments to help protect and renew the wetlands.

Signs are popping up to explain the new state park and its place in the coastal wetlands park system.

Vehicular access is being restricted in the early stages of improvement to prevent damage to sensitive areas and provide enhanced safety for walkers.

Belmont High School teacher Mr Greg Wright, a volunteer involved in several of these projects, said that the wetland projects would help make it easier for people to interact with nature but also protect many species of birds, fish and other native creatures.

Migratory birds fly in from as far away as Siberia and Japan.

Many people who live in the area still know little about these sites as they begin to emerge from years of past neglect and misuse.

# Building rises from the ashes

By JADE VERSCHULDEN

FOUR years and \$4 million after Belmont High School was devastated by a fire that destroyed many resources, classrooms and much of the school's heritage, its new A block is being put to good use.

"The fire was really devastating," deputy principal Don Hudson said.

"There was so much lost but overall it turned into a really good thing and now we have much better teaching and learning facilities."

The principal Mr Peter Morgan believes many significant improvements have been made.

"The Matrix (computer laboratory) and the performance space are fantastic," Mr Morgan said.

"The classrooms are much more spacious and staff facilities are much better."

There has also been the addition of new seats, gardens and grass.

"I just want the school to be a really nice place," Mr Morgan said. "I want there to be nice passive areas but also really good active areas."

The student representative council and Mr Morgan are discussing ideas for the next three years and a survey is about to be conducted among staff and students.

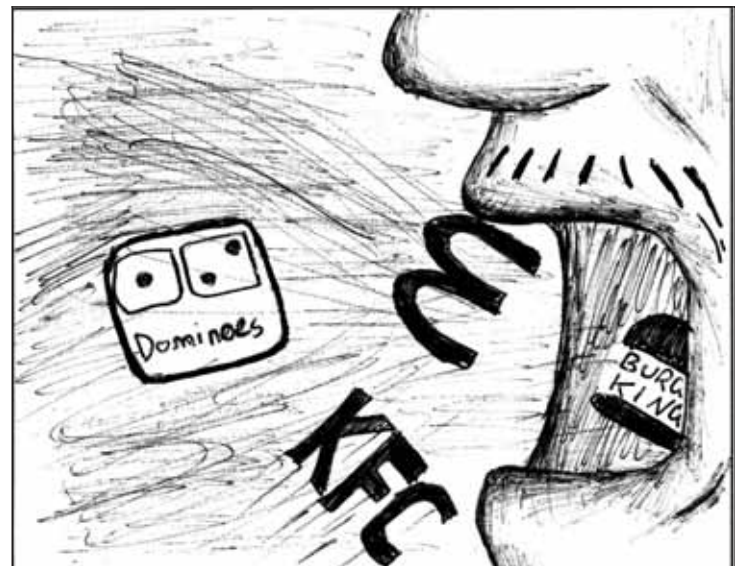


Illustration by Joshua Chapman

# Very big night out showcases great talent

By LAUREN BATTERHAM

BELMONT High School has hosted its inaugural Big Night Out of music and drama at Belmont 16-Foot Sailing Club.

The night consisted of music solos, a rock band, concert bands, vocal and jazz ensembles and dance performances.

The more than \$3000 raised will go towards the school's performance space refurbishment project.

"This was not the only

thing we set out to achieve," drama teacher and one of the creative arts production team Ms Renee Berger said.

"Belmont High wants to demonstrate to the community its talents in the performing arts."

A great amount of effort was put into the night by teachers and more than 150 students.

The event was a big success and the audience of more than 200 people was astounded by Belmont High's talent.



BIG: The cast and crew of the Big Night Out on stage at the Belmont club.

Opinions expressed in this newspaper are not necessarily those of the competition sponsors.

# A platypus!

The platypus is found on the banks of waterways on the east of Australia. It has webbed feet, rich brown fur and uses its duck-like bill to hunt for food along the bottom of streams and rivers.



Here for learning.

Reading.  
A vital piece of every life.

Advertisement created by Joshua Chapman of Belmont High School

