

Primary entry #48: Belmont North Public School



Belmont North Buzz



LOOK AT ME: Billy Haslam and Blake Scadden show off the painted faces. — Picture by Rachel Whatley and Sarah Willmott

Faces on the wall light up dull building

By MITCHELL NICHOLS and KRYSTAL GILBERT

BELMONT North Public School class of 2008 will remain part of the school history as long as the present canteen is part of the school.

The demountable used as a canteen was looking bare and quite sad until school learning officer and resident artist Mrs Janine Cato and her band of merry painters changed the face of the building.

Mrs Cato and her helpers invited children from the school to paint a portrait of their face on the canteen.

As each day passed, more faces appeared on the canteen wall and children and their families came to inspect them and make comments.

Some parents didn't recognise their child immediately but with a little prompting from their child, they were able to pick them out.

The 'face pictures', as some young students have named them, are a constant source of conversation and joy.

Younger brothers and sisters point excitedly to their sibling's face and sometimes give them a quick kiss on the 'cheek'.

Mrs Cato said that she had a lot of fun seeing the children happily working together and said the results they achieved were amazing.

As each class's work on the faces progressed so did the extra details, like eyelashes, dimples and freckles, ribbons, hair clips and hair styles.

Mini games' big impact

By SARAH WILLMOTT, JESSICA SKINNER, MITCHELL NICHOLS and KRYSTAL GILBERT

WHILE how Australia was performing and how many medals it was winning at the Beijing Olympics were the topics of many people's conversations for two weeks, students have competed in their own mini-games on the school oval.

The young competitors' families provided encouragement as spectators while children dressed in the five colours of the Olympic rings.

Unlike at Beijing, everyone was able to march in the opening ceremony before the Olympic oath was read out by Year 4 student Jack Fisher.

Competitors' skills were stretched by the variety of events in which they had to perform.

Events included the egg-and-spoon relay, the frisbee flop, the waiters' relay, a gymnastics circuit and the thong-throw.

A gold medal effort in the thong-throw meant having a "good throwing technique and a loud and long groan", student Shannon Nelson said.

Competitors were interviewed after events to find out if they had done a personal best or broken a record.



All the children received a medal at the end of the games for showing determination, sportsmanship and true Olympic spirit.

AUSSIE TRADITION: Students take part in a thong-throwing contest. — Picture by Shelby Nightingale



SAFETY FIRST: Year 2's Jacinta Magnall and Dennis Clarke learnt about the use and storage of medicines. — Picture by Callum Roberts

Community visit the right medicine

By JOEL CHENSEE and JACK MCKEW

CHILDREN from Belmont North Public School are seeing a different side of their local community pharmacy and the people behind the counter as part of a unit of work on the safe use and storage of medicines.

Part of the combined out-comes groups (COGs) Get-

ting Along unit, the work has created an opportunity for stage-one children to visit the local pharmacy and receive a first-hand look at how it works.

The visit has also led to children from Belmont North Public School making friends with Jewell's pharmacist Mr David Bell.

A walking excursion to the pharmacy at the local community shopping centre

proved to be a real hit with the children and Mr Bell.

Year 2's Liam Lucas found out that "you have to take your own medicine not other people's".

Another Year 2 student Jade Newby said that "you need an adult around when you take medicine" while Maddy Schumacher, from Year 2, said "you need a special note from the doctor to get medicines".

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Learning to swim a vital Aussie skill

Editorial

By **CALLUM ROBERTS, ANASTASIA TUDOR and MATTHEW CARR-KIRWAN**

EVERYBODY in Australia should learn to swim because we live in a country surrounded by water. The number of people who cannot swim has become a huge safety issue and needs to be addressed now.

In our local area, we are surrounded on one side by the Pacific Ocean and on the other by Lake Macquarie, and also have a number of local swimming pools, the Hunter River and many backyard pools.

Summer, in particular, is when large numbers of people enjoy these areas for many different forms of water sports such as sailing, water-skiing, surfing and fishing. But are all the people involved in these activities able to swim?

So many people have a backyard pool these days. It is fantastic to be able to jump into deliciously cool water on a hot summer's day but how many children and adults can swim or save themselves if they are in danger? A survey of how many children have backyard pools versus how many can actually swim is amazing.

For further proof of this fact people need only to go to a school swimming carnival to realise that a large proportion of the children cannot swim. In an attempt to

address this issue, our school offers intensive learn-to-swim lessons, but unfortunately not all are able to take up the offer. Those who are able to take advantage of these sessions learn water safety, confidence in the water and, if followed up, become competent swimmers.

We have beautiful beaches, great surf and are lucky to be able to take advantage of living close to the sea to go swimming as often as possible. Most beaches are patrolled by surf lifesavers who watch over us in the water. Just imagine how much easier it would be for them if the majority of us could swim or at the very least save ourselves in the water.

Each year more people drown in our waters. The Royal Lifesaving Service reported that last year 277 Australians drowned because they either could not swim or were not being properly supervised. Sadly, those drowned were mostly aged between five and 14.

What can be done to change this worrying fact? People need to learn how to swim for their own safety and safety of others but to achieve this is easier said than done.

There are lots of reasons why so many people can't swim. Perhaps one of the simplest is that many can't afford expensive lessons. If this is so then maybe the government should fund a program to allow all Australians the opportunity to learn to swim. At the very least, free programs should be compulsory in all primary schools so children from kindergarten to Year 6 have the opportunity to learn to swim.

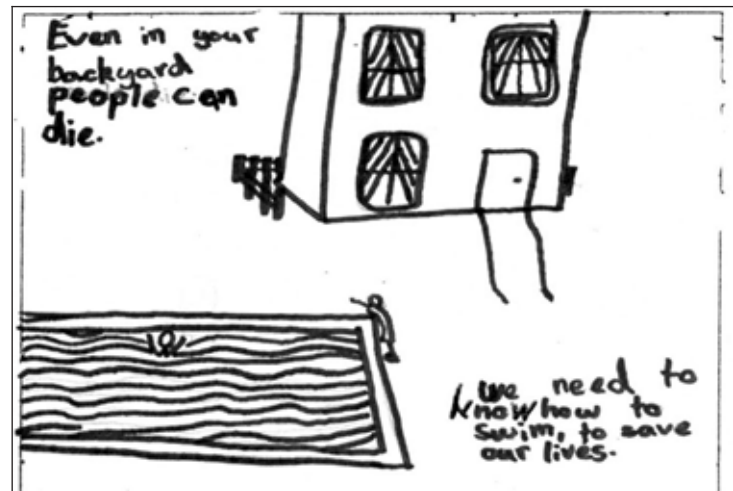


Illustration by Lloyd Jones



BIG LOSS: Mrs Harrison, Mrs Nolan and Mrs Hird.

End of an era for teachers

By **REBEKAH MALONE, SHELBY NIGHTINGALE, EMILY HASLAM and ELIZABETH STEPHENS**

THE teaching careers of three amazing women have almost come to a close.

Mrs Rita Harrison, Mrs Marilyn Hird and Mrs Judy Nolan have clocked up 90 years of teaching between them.

The school and community have already said goodbye to Mrs Harrison and Mrs Nolan and will farewell Mrs Hird later this year.

Mrs Harrison started her teaching career in Sydney then moved to the Newcastle area and finally to Belmont North for the past 24 years, teaching German and working four days a week as librarian.

Mrs Nolan began her teaching career at Caves Beach before coming to Belmont North where

she taught for more than 20 years, with sport and computer technology her areas of expertise.

Mrs Hird started at Pretty Beach on the Central Coast. After a year she moved to Wye then to Belmont North, where she has been for 33 years.

The kindergarten teacher said she had taught some of the current parents and their children because of her long connection with the school.

The two already retired teachers are enjoying their new lives and Mrs Hird is looking forward to retirement.

They all said the thing they will miss most are the children, their friends on staff and the supportive parents from the school.

Travel, catching up with family and friends and learning to play golf are on the agenda for the trio.

Running our way around Australia

By **BEN AEILLO, GUY HORWOOD and BRANDON AYRES**

CHILDREN at Belmont North Public School know it is a long way 'around Australia' from a weekly sporting activity.

As part of physical development studies, once a week the school's children try to increase their stamina, endurance and physical fitness by doing laps of a circuit marked out on the school oval.

Children collect a counter each time they pass the teachers and at the end they count and record how many laps they have done.

Senior children then collect the number of laps each class has completed and plot it on a map of Australia as part of a maths activity.

Although it is a fitness activity, children are also learning much about their country as they 'run' from town to town and through each state.

The program started last year and so far the students have 'made it' to Roebuck Bay in Western Australia.

Children are encouraged to do laps with the offer of a free iceblock when they 'reach' a fairly large town.

The benefits of the activity are increased stamina, a raised level of fitness throughout the school and improvement in the children's general knowledge of the geography of Australia.

Getting a snapshot of life, language in China

By **EMILEE HASLAM and RACHEL WHATLEY**

CHINA is a long way from Belmont North Public School but children at the school have been given a snapshot of some Chinese traditions, language and the meaning behind the mascots for the Beijing Olympics.

Mrs Jian Barclay is originally from Shanghai but has been living in Australia for 10 years, working with children at various schools around the Newcastle area. She is trained in music

and dance and teaches the Mandarin language and Chinese culture at various schools.

The children learned how to write their names in Chinese characters, say their names in Chinese and say welcome and goodbye.

Mrs Barclay showed the children the mascots seen on television during the Olympics and told students about the meaning of their names: Bei Bei (the fish), Jing Jing (the panda), Huan Huan (the flame), Ying Ying (the antelope) and Ni Ni (the bird).



EXOTIC: Jian Barclay gives students an insight into Chinese culture. — Picture by Brandon Ayres

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Answer:

The \$50 note features David Unaipon (1872–1967), Aboriginal writer and inventor, and Edith Cowan (1861–1932), Australia's first female parliamentarian.



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