

Primary entry #29: Minmi PS



# The Minmi Mail



TAKE CARE: School crossing zones are clearly signposted.

— Picture by Sophie Ramsay

## Getting cross about driver indifference

By SOPHIE RAMSAY and JESSICA MCLEISH

TWO recent incidents outside Minmi Public School have highlighted the problem of pedestrian safety.

Much has been done to make school zones safer, including the introduction of 40 kmh zones and school crossing supervisors for about an hour in the morning as children arrive and in the afternoon when school is out.

But there are still concerns and recently the police had to be called to Minmi Public School over two incidents.

Crossing supervisor Mr Dave Porter alleged that one motorist abused him for stopping him to allow the children to cross and that later the same morning Mr Porter narrowly escaped being hit by a car speeding through the crossing while he was holding the lollipop sign.

Mr Porter, who has more than three years' experience as crossing supervisor, said that on most days cars travel too fast through the crossing zone areas.

Asked why he thought there were sometimes problems at the crossing, Mr Porter said he believed it was due to lack of concentration by motorists who don't always notice the 40 kmh signs.

# Making music in Europe

By ZAC GILRAY, BEN CAMPBELL and JACOB HOWARD

MICHAEL EDSER, the lead vocalist for the band Grayson and music teacher at Minmi Public School, recently returned from a tour of 12 European countries including Italy, England, Germany and Ireland.

Mr Edser had always hoped to follow in the footsteps of his singing role models such as John Mayer, The Killers and Pete Murray.

He decided to broaden his musical knowledge and, after talking to an old friend, was paid to go on tour through 12 European countries.

While overseas, he was filmed live on Balcony TV and at The Zodiac sessions in Ireland and was also signed to a distribution record deal at Clay Castle studios.

As well as playing many concerts, he had songs played on Italian radio. He was paid about 100 to 200 Euros per performance and was also given food and drink.

Mr Edser said that apart from feeling homesick once when he had a cold, he "didn't want to come home".

He also commented on how cold and "freezing" it was in European countries.

As well as being a performer, Mr Edser is also a very competent and



ROLE MODEL: Taylor Slingo, Zac Gilray and Indya Owens with Michael Edser. — Picture by Jacob Howard

skilled music teacher who loves to include his music and singing ability in his teaching.

At Minmi Public School, Mr Edser loves giving children an opportunity to learn the guitar.

This year he is taking a guitar group and hopes to share his knowledge and skill of the guitar

with a group of students.

They will learn a number of songs to perform at a variety of significant school events.

Mr Edser thinks it is very important for children to have a good idea of how to sing properly, so he conducts a senior and junior choir every Monday.

Although Mr Edser has a love of and enjoyment for teaching, he would choose singing and music over teaching any time.

He believes that he furthered his career greatly while overseas for four months but is now happily back teaching at Minmi Public School.

## Winning artwork remembers war veterans

By TONY LEGOVICH and THOMAS NEWBY

YEAR 6 Minmi Public School student Josh Ryan has won an Anzac Day art competition.

With the encouragement and help of kindergarten teacher Mrs Nancy Blanch, Josh produced his winning work, called "We Will Remember Them", of two soldiers hanging a wreath on the grave of a dead soldier.

Josh used a variety of materials

to make his artwork including newspaper, paint, black paper, scissors, glue and crepe paper.

He received his award during Anzac Day celebrations at Newcastle Civic Theatre on Tuesday, April 29.

Apart from winning the award, Josh also received \$50, a book and a tour of the Newcastle City Council chambers.

"I was surprised to win and I was happy to win," Josh said.

"The excitement was too much.

It was a great feeling."

Minmi Public School principal Mr John Theissen said the staff and students were very proud of Josh.

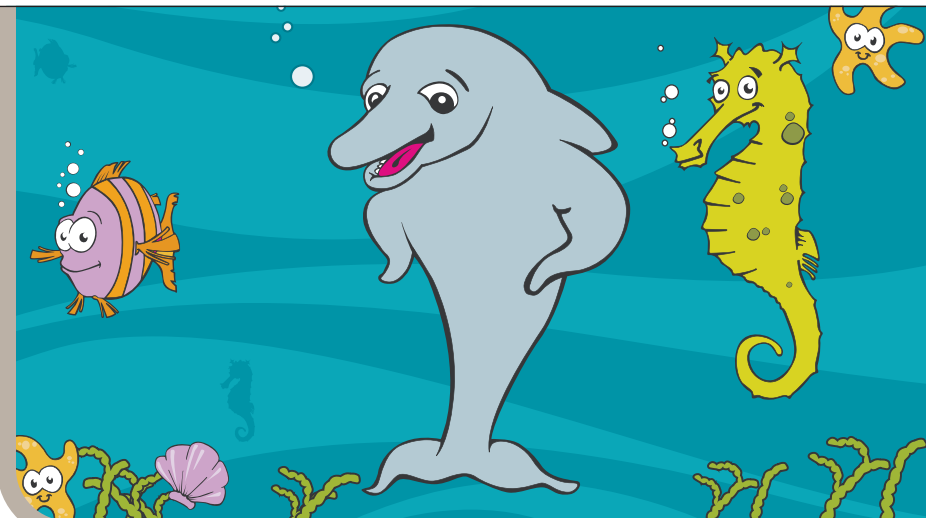
"We hope that this is the beginning of something," Mr Theissen said.

Other Minmi students who entered were Thomas Newby, Sean Griffiths and Ryan McClure.

Josh's classmates have encouraged him to enter more art competitions in the future.



TALENT: Josh Ryan with his winning artwork. — Picture by Tony Legovich



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# It's time to stop mindless vandals

## Editorial

By **THOMAS NEWBY** and **TONY LEGOVICH**

FOR many years Australia has benefited from being environmentally friendly, including the creation of national and regional parks.

One such park is the Blue Gum Hills Regional Park near Minmi, which is currently under construction. It is being created to provide an area for animals to shelter and as a site for the general public to enjoy.

The land was previously used for open-cut coal mining and the area's significant heritage is also being preserved and protected.

Unfortunately, the Blue Gum Hills Regional Park was badly vandalised between April 20 and 24 this year. The vandals smashed part of the maze and cubbyhouse in the children's playground, drew graffiti on the maze and toilets and damaged construction vehicles by smashing the glass windows. The vandals also spoiled the barbeque area and picnic facilities that residents have enjoyed since the park was opened.

The park rangers also continue to find dumped rubbish in several parts of the park. This includes household rubbish. The last clean-up netted five tonnes of rubbish.

The park has also recently experienced problems with motorbikes which have damaged the area through soil erosion and air and water pollution.

There are easy-grade walking tracks in the park near the historic Minmi cemetery and the Minmi Heritage Garden. These areas are suitable for the general public but not for trail bikes or motorbikes.

Many bikes have entered the park, damaging the walking tracks and vegetation including native plants which are abundant in the area. Native plants can only live in certain areas and regional parks provide some of these areas and we must do our best to protect them.

The gases from the trail bikes can also poison native animals by causing pollution. Sadly, some of our native animals are dying because they no longer have a safe place to live.

If this vandalism continues then park rangers will have no choice but to install security devices and make more patrols.

The general public are encouraged to report any suspicious activities in the regional park to the rangers, Newcastle City Council or the police in an attempt to eliminate the vandalism and protect our wonderful environment.

Regional parks are places of natural beauty and should be places for people to relax, have picnics and enjoy time with their families and friends. We must stop the vandalism before it's too late.



**HIGH TIME:** Rebecca Fuller, Zac Gilray, Sean Griffiths and Sarah O'Neill on a tower above an old mine tunnel.

# Playground is growing great

By **JOSHUA RYAN, SEAN GRIFFITHS** and **JORDAN TSELEMBIS**

BLUE Gum Hills Regional Park is becoming bigger and better with continual improvements being made around the park.

Stage 1C of the park is now nearing completion with a new car park providing more parking spaces for buses and a turning circle to allow easy access for buses.

The new parking area provides an opportunity for groups on bus trips to use the park for morning tea, lunch breaks or toilet stops.

New paths have been laid to the picnic and barbecue shelters and kerbing and guttering also completed.

There are some other additions also planned for the park.

The senior play area for seven to 10 year olds will be extended with a more challenging climbing structure. It will be moved away from the picnic areas and closer to the creek.

An infants playground for two to four year olds with an Aboriginal theme is being planned. It will include interactive totems, painted motifs, a billabong, cave and native animal sculptures.

A cycleway loop is being installed to allow children to ride close to adult supervision and an amphitheatre, with seating beside the embankment of the existing creek, will be used for performances.

# Winning becomes art form

By **MATTHEW GARDINER** and **CALEB FIELD**

ALL over the country there are great teachers working hard to make school interesting for students and Minmi Public School has a very special teacher in kindergarten's Mrs Nancy Blanch.

Mrs Blanch is not only a great teacher, she is also a great teacher of art.

She uses her skills to develop students' artistic ability and to help them enter a variety of art competitions.

Mrs Blanch said that her favourite piece of work was the "Emu" sculpture made from waste paper, which she helped the 2002 Year 6 students design and construct.

After winning that competition, Mrs Blanch took 15 of those students to Sydney to claim first prize, which included a one-night stay at Taronga Park Zoo, a flatscreen computer, art materials and \$500.

Mrs Blanch's students have also won second prize for a Christmas tree made entirely of plastic bags which she says was "one of our best pieces of artwork".

The most recent first prize of \$1000 was for an environmental message painted on the school's recycling bin.

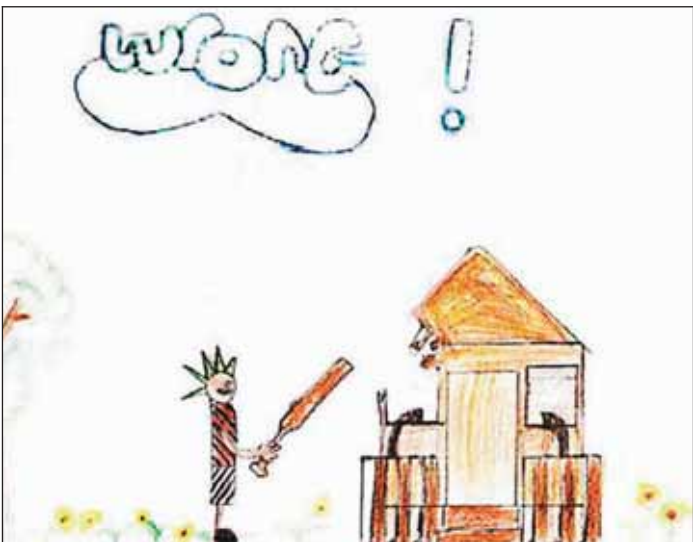


Illustration by **Joshua Ryan**

# Ty chases dream of making the big time

By **INDYA OWENS, TAYLOR SLINGO** and **SARAH O'NEILL**

PEOPLE in the world of A-League Football have heard of the Central Coast Mariners' number 12 Greg Owens but now there is another Owens about to make his debut.

Ty Owens is a 17-year-old who is trying to follow in his big brother's footsteps by playing for the Central Coast Mariners.

Ty, the uncle of Minmi student Indya Owens, has liked soccer all his life but once Greg gained success, it encouraged Ty to do more to reach his dream, and now he is set to become the Central Coast Mariners' latest signing. Ty trains every day to get to where he

wants to be. He is determined to do what ever it takes to become a star.

At the Mariners he will fill the vacant under-20s spot left by Bradley Porter.

Ty celebrated his debut in the yellow and navy with the final goal of his first match with only four minutes to spare.

**HERE HE GOES:** Ty Owens has been signed by the Central Coast Mariners.

— Picture by Indya Owens



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## Answer:

The \$100 note features world-renowned soprano, Dame Nellie Melba (1861 - 1931), and the distinguished soldier, engineer and administrator, General Sir John Monash (1865 - 1931).



Here for learning.



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