

Primary entry #58: Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School Tarro



# TARRO MATTERS



**BLESSING:** School captains Tahlia Howard and Dennis Mackaway with Father Pickin.

## Bidding fond farewell to parish priest

By TIA ARMSTRONG, SAMANTHA HAYES, TAHLIA HOWARD and EMILY MURPHY-WILSON

PARISH priest Father Ron Pickin, affectionately known as "The Bishop of Beresfield", has called it a day, retiring on August 3 after 16 years of service to the parish, students, staff and parents of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School Tarro.

"Father Ron is a nice priest who doesn't just have a boring Mass. He makes going to Mass fun. I will miss his sense of humour," Year 5 student Caprice Skinner said.

Year 4 student Callan Black and Christina Leao, a Year 6 student, described Father Pickin as a fabulous priest and one to make you laugh.

Parent Judith Tynan said Father Pickin had been a good friend and a wonderful priest.

"Father Ron has been a great friend to our school and has been a wonderful inspiration to us all," Year 6 teacher Mr David Treloar said.

"Everyone from regular parishioners to people attending Mass for the very first time, all feel a sense of warmth and belonging."

Father Pickin said he would miss the love and friendship of the staff and students and school Masses.

He hopes to be well enough soon to be able to still visit the school.

# New school on the block

By REBEKAH DONNAN, LAURA MCPHEE and BROOKE TISDELL

OUR Lady of Lourdes Primary School at Tarro has undergone a whole-school rebuild that began with the demolition of most of the existing buildings in September, 2007.

The rebuild included five new classrooms, refurbishment of two classrooms and the administration area, new toilets and bubblers, an extension to the staff room and Pickin Pavilion and construction of a new library with a fully equipped computer laboratory.

Construction was funded by the Federal Government (\$966,099) and the Diocesan Family School Building Levy (\$659,801).

The Parents & Friends and parish have funded the air-conditioning (\$30,000) and blinds (\$10,000) and are currently working on the provision of fixed seating in the playground.

Students said the rebuild had improved their learning environment by making it fun using technology, especially SmartBoards.

"It makes a new era of learning," Year 6 Emily Murphy-Wilson said.

"I like the toilets in the classrooms and the wet areas," another Year 6 student, Rebekah Donnan, said.

Parents said they felt the school had improved enormously and they also think that it's a delight to have their children come to the school



**MODERN:** Part of the new buildings at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School at Tarro.

and be a part of the school community.

Kindergarten teacher Mrs Sharon Low said that new and more modern classrooms were very important, especially for kin-

dergarten, because they are equipped with toilets and wet areas.

Year 4 teacher Mrs Teresa McCosker, said that the extension to the staff room would help teachers feel more comfortable

because it is more spacious.

Year 5 teacher Mrs Lisa Sansom said that with better learning facilities such as SmartBoards, students felt as if they wanted to learn more.



**DREAM WEAVERS:** Nicholas Finney and Callan Verity examine the eco team's silk worms.

## More than one way to become efficient

By JARROD CARVALHO, NICHOLAS FINNEY, DENNIS MACKAWAY, NICI LEE, SARAH CALLAGHAN and BLAKE HARRIS

CHICKENS, puppets and garbage are some of the ways Our Lady of Lourdes' Eco Team is helping to reduce the school's carbon footprint by recycling and monitoring energy consumption.

The Eco Team received four newly hatched chickens for its brooding pen and 15 eggs from Henny Penny to be hatched in an incubator and cared for daily by members of the team.

When the chicken pen is built, environmental awareness will improve because the chickens will be fed daily from the food scraps collected by the Eco Team.

The school has new rain-

water tanks for its gardens and playground, which also saves the school money on its water bill.

Newcastle artist Mr Ken Reagan came to the school to show stage three students how to make puppets from recycled materials.

The school also has electricity monitors and plans to get recycling bins for food scraps and paper, worm farms and chook pens.

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# Fence gives a feeling of safety

## Editorial

By DEAN HOPKINS-JONES, SELINA ULBERG and BROCK LAMB

SOME hate it but we like it. At Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School at Tarro there has been trouble with vandalism, malicious damage and people putting graffiti onto our buildings, sometimes using very bad language.

We know that the fence that borders our school stands tall to keep us safe and protects our school environment because since the fence has gone up we have not had one incident of vandalism or destruction of our property.

In the past we have also had people trespassing through school property during school hours and after school.

The school also had a big problem on weekends when people would come into the school grounds and climb onto the roof and steal the balls and hoops that students were yet to retrieve. They also regularly ripped off the roof sheeting.

Students felt really unsafe when dogs would come onto the school grounds. The dogs would even go to bags and take lunches. Sometimes students had to have a lockdown until the dogs were taken away. The fence has stopped any large or vicious dogs coming onto the playground and no more lunches have been taken.

The school has spent thousands of dollars replacing windows and equipment after weekend break-ins. The financial burden for broken windows each Monday was considerable. This money could have been spent on sports equipment, excursions, classroom facilities or new things for the school.

Glaziers may have liked it but broken glass and damage associated with large rocks being thrown through classroom windows was dangerous, costly and annoying.

Students say that when they would come to school on Monday morning and see the damage, they felt unsafe, disappointed and really upset someone would come into their school and do this.

New playground equipment is safely surrounded by a separate new fence so no one can vandalise it, so students know when they come to school on Monday that their playground equipment will still be there and not vandalised or broken.

The school needs fences to prevent these things from happening. The positive arguments for having a fence far outweigh any negatives associated with fencing a school.

Students don't feel like prisoners but they do feel safe and free to walk and play in the school playground without the many threats that scare children in our society today.

Safety is priority number one. Students happiness comes from feeling safe in a secure environment. Yes to a fence, no to vandalism.



# Mural artist brings life to play area

By JACOB KLUMPP, JACOB WALKER, DYLAN CHEETHAM and SAMUEL MAYNE-RIDLEY

MAYFIELD West artist Kaptain Brian Standley has transformed Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School playground with a giant mural based on an ocean theme with school children running along a beach.

In making the colours of the school stand out, Mr Standley has included a variety of animals and plant life to help students learn to appreciate the environment.

The children of the school are very pleased with the mural and are looking forward to seeing Mr Standley's second mural depicting Our Lady of Lourdes grotto in France, which will be done in a style between realism and impressionism and depict the

school's religious heritage.

Murals create a great place to relax when students are down, sad or angry because they make the school a colourful and peaceful place to be and gives the school a sense of community.

Mr Standley began his artistic career at the age of six but his first love was writing and composing music of many genres.

He also likes to draw, sculpt and do digital design and photography, with a dream of making films which he is on his way to achieving.

His murals can be seen on display in the township of Kurri Kurri and at Holy Spirit infants school at Abermain and St Patrick's Primary School at Cessnock.

Mr Standley advised students that if they want to draw and paint, they need to do it over and over again so it will become second nature. He can be contacted at Really Annoying Productions on 0423 442 877.

FULL OF COLOUR: The mural by local artist Kaptain Brian Standley at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School.

# Saying 'I do' to the use of IT

By ABBY LEE, KATARINA SPIERS and LAURA TYNAN

AFTER the rebuilding of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School at Tarro students from kindergarten to Year 6 enjoy state-of-the-art learning using the latest technology.

All the classrooms have been made safer for the use of technology with new internal wiring and roof-mounted data projectors.

Air-conditioning and blinds, funded by the P & F and the parish, have made the classrooms and library more comfortable learning environments.

The library, which also has an interactive whiteboard, now boasts a fully equipped computer laboratory funded by parents through an information technology levy, enabling all classes to use computer technology and software.

Each class has one library lesson a week with teacher-librarian Mrs Stacey Graham to work on PowerPoints, video editing, emailing, internet research, working on school projects, finishing off work and being able to print work.

Mrs Graham also runs classes in Japanese for infants at lunchtime and the Shaggy Gully Times Book Wrap for the primary students.

The school has created its own webpage with newsletters, events, planners, recent activities and a promotional movie.

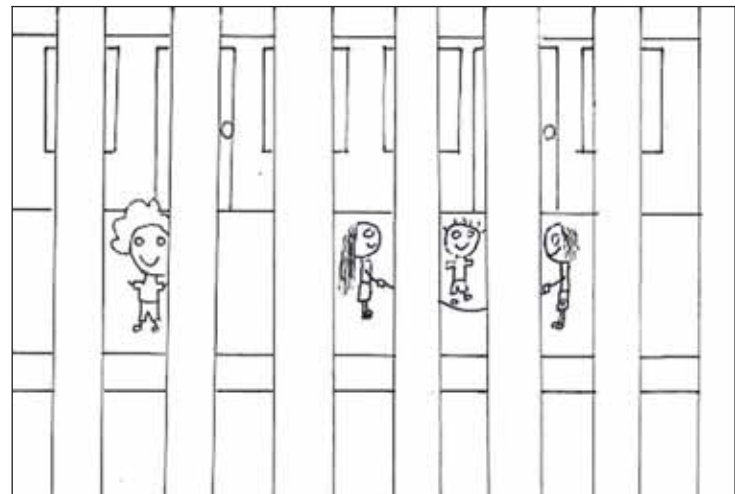


Illustration by Rebekah Donnan

# Rainbow class brings little ray of sunshine

By TYRAN BUNT, HAYDEN GRAINGER and ALEXANDER HILLIER

OUR Lady of Lourdes Primary School at Tarro was the first school outside Sydney to introduce in 2004 a specialist class for infants children and now also provides a specialist class for primary children. The 3-6 Rainbow class for students with autism began in term two this year.

The Rainbow classes now have 13 children at the school who integrate

with and participate in all school activities as well as having special teaching programs.

The classes also have a box for toys and get stars for good work and behaviour like a normal class.

The children do special activities to help their balance and hand-eye coordination and do weekly activities such as swimming, shopping and cooking.

HAPPY DAYS: The Years 3 to 6 Rainbow class.



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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.



Here for learning.



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