



Waratah Extra



FUN CHOICES: Schoolyard games.
— Picture by Simona Gorgievski

Happy, safe playgrounds

By **MONTANA PERRY**
and **BROOKE HEINZ**

RECENTLY parents at Waratah PS were invited to take part in a survey aimed at making the school's playground a happier, safer place to be.

Surveys were also given to staff to identify what was working well and which areas needed to improve.

"The program's goals are to help children feel happy and safe at school," said the assistant principal of Waratah PS, Denise Magennis.

"The program looks at giving students skills and it gives students choices of activity at recess and lunch times."

Survey sheets were also given to all students. Students were asked to talk about what they liked and disliked about the playground.

A new program has recently started with new areas created for students during breaks to encourage conversation and passive play skills. "The program does not only involve parents and children of the school, it also involves visitors and staff," said Mrs Magennis.

Part of the program is called Passive Play.

In Passive Play, students from kindergarten to year 6 have a choice of where to go at lunch, whether to play board games, read or talk with friends.

"It is a great area for you to be in if you want a relaxing environment," Mrs Magennis said. "Students can choose to spend time in this part of the playground if they wish to."

Together in harmony

By **SIMONA GORGIEVSKI**

WARATAH PS recently celebrated Harmony Day, with most of the school's students and staff dressing in orange clothes and playing games from all over the world.

"The goal of Harmony Day was to show students that they could be friends with children from different countries no matter where they are from," said co-ordinator Adrienne Haddow.

"Students might talk or act differently, but we are all the same inside."

"Harmony Day is a time to stand up against racism and to show that we can live together in harmony."

The children and parents experienced games from different cultures such as Colombia, New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia, Afghanistan and Africa.

There was also percussion music and drums from different cultures including Africa and the Middle East.

"The games are different but have elements similar to the games we play," Mrs Haddow said.

When the children had tried all

the games, they had a special lunch with food from different parts of the world including Italy and China.

Parents were also invited to have a picnic lunch with their children.

The day began with a special assembly where an orange ribbon was passed around to link each class. This was a symbol of Harmony Day.

Some students then performed songs and modern tribal dances.

While the children were going to the games, Mrs Berrigan gave a drumming performance and conducted workshops with students.

Children from kindergarten to year 6 thought the games were great.

Some children even tried to play the games again at lunch.

Harmony Day celebrates Australia's success as a diverse society united by a common set of values.

Since 1945 more than 6 million people have settled in Australia and in 60 years of post-war migration Australia's population has jumped from 6 million to more than 20 million.



RHYTHM OF A NATION: A Harmony Day drummer at Waratah PS.
— Picture by Simona Gorgievski



INSPIRED: Waratah PS principal Penny Shepherd.
— Picture by Antoni Pazeski

New principal for Waratah Public

By **ANTONI PAZESKI**
and **JEDIDIAH CURRY**

WARATAH PS was originally known as Hanbury School.

It was established in 1864 with an enrolment of 83 pupils under headmaster William Mathews.

Waratah PS is now an inner-city school, located at Lambton Road, Waratah.

Every year, like every school, Waratah starts a fresh school year, offering a perfect start for

new staff members.

Students at Waratah PS recently met the school's new principal, Penny Shepherd, who has been a principal in other Hunter Schools for the past 12 years.

She was inspired to become a principal because she wants to make schools a better place for everyone.

Mrs Shepherd's first impressions of Waratah were the great kids, staff and wonder-

ful learning environment.

Before working at Waratah she was a principal at Telarah for two terms and she worked at Cessnock PS for seven years.

The move to Waratah was a promotion for her and she wants kids to think of her as a great role model.

"I like the honesty and the hard work," she said. "I like how the kids like to learn."

Mrs Shepherd sees the kids as Waratah's greatest strength.



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Are we setting a good example?

Editorial

By TAMARA WOODMAN and GEORGIA HICKS-JONES

PARENTS are meant to be good role models for their kids. They need to do whatever they want their kids to do, such as wearing sunglasses, protective clothing and lathering on the sun block.

Children watch their friends, parents and relatives and, most of the time, copy things they see their friends, parents and relatives doing. Especially if they think it is "cool".

Think of the facts: More than 8800 Australians are diagnosed with melanoma each year and almost 1000 people die each year.

Many of you may be asking: "What is melanoma?"

Melanoma is a disease of the body's skin cells caused by overexposure to ultra violet (UV) radiation from the sun's rays or other sources such as solariums or sun beds.

Most cases of skin cancer among Australians are the result of too much sun exposure when they were children.

But there is some good news. Survival rates have risen significantly since the 1980s as a result of early detection of melanoma and improved treatment.

To reduce the risk of skin cancer here are some great tips to follow: Wear a wide-brimmed hat

and clothing that offers good coverage; use water-resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen; seek shade whenever possible, and wear sunglasses.

Schools also have a role to play. Waratah PS has a sun smart policy which states: "No hat, no play!" The school is trying to get children to wear their hats if they want to play in the playground.

This is a great rule. It also encourages kids who don't have a hat to play in the shade or read in the library.

All these things help reduce the risk of the deadly disease, melanoma.

But what happens during the holidays? Weekends? During the summer?

Parents, the next time you go out for a lovely picnic, allow yourself to look as goofy as the kids. Put on a hat, make yourself white by using SPF 30+ sun block and don't forget to find a cool spot under a tree.

Parents need to place as much importance on their health as they do on their children's. Healthy people in hats look better than people with spotty skin.

SIGNS TO LOOK FOR

- A crusty, non-healing sore
- A small lump that is red, pale or pearly in colour
- A new spot, freckle or mole that changes in colour, thickness or shape in a period of several weeks to months.
- Particular attention should be paid to spots that are dark brown to black, red or blue-black.



SYMBOLIC: A section of the Waratah PS water trail. — Picture by Alex Bult

Wells for water

By ALEX BULT

EVEN though most of Australia is in drought, have you ever thought how easy it is to still get a drink of water? We just turn on the tap and water pours out.

Some people in Cambodia have to walk more than a kilometre to fetch water for their families. Children mainly do this chore, sometimes twice a day.

Many of these children have no time to go to school because while they are getting water from the river, school is operating. By the time they get back, school is over.

The Tabitha Foundation is a charity helping these people. In the last weeks of March, Waratah PS held a

fund-raiser where students purchased water bottles and the money from their sale went to the charity.

Students placed the bottles end to end to make a water trail in a symbol of support.

"Out of all the families in Cambodia, only 1 per cent of them have access to clean water," said Mrs Haddow, the school-based organiser.

Janne Ritskes has been working with the Tabitha Foundation for 20 years and is the founder of the Water Wells program. Five families benefit from each well that is placed.

"We are going to try and buy two wells, maybe even three, each costing \$200," Mrs Haddow said. "This will help some families a lot."

Let us not forget

By MACKENZIE HARWOOD

ANZAC Day is a day when Australians and New Zealanders come together to celebrate and remember those who went to war and fought and died for their friends, families and countries.

People of all ages come together and show respect.

On April 5, 2007, Waratah PS went to Mayfield Returned Services (RSL) Club to look at artefacts and talk with veterans about their war experiences.

The visit was to help students gain greater understanding before commemorating this year's Anzac Day.

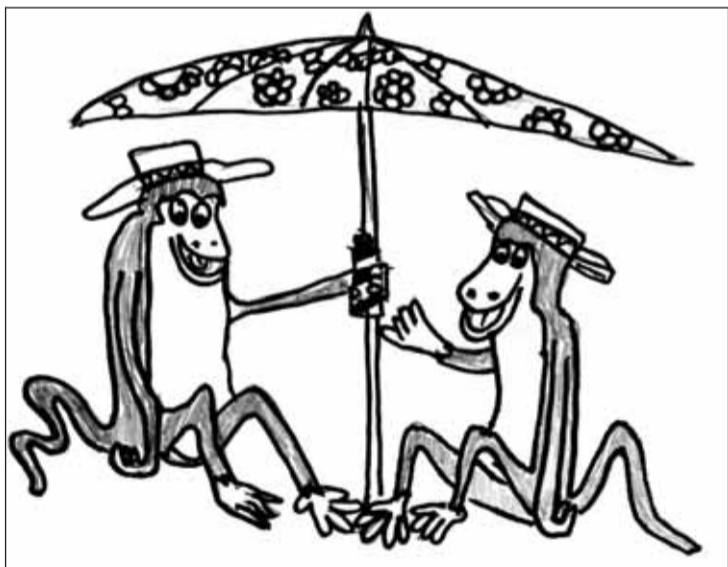
When students arrived they had a tour of the RSL and looked at old army uniforms and guns from past wars.

They were split into groups and servicemen from the Royal Australian Air Force, the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Navy told students about their experiences in past wars.

Students were then able to ask questions.

"This was a good opportunity for students to get a greater understanding of what Anzac Day is all about," said organising teacher Dave Mathieson. "Students found it very interesting learning about the war."

The trip will become a regular event for students at Waratah PS.



MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO: — Illustration by Leana Peterson

Former student among top 30 cricket stars

By OLIVIA DILLON

GARY Gilmour is a former Waratah PS student and member of the school's Hall of Fame.

Mr Gilmour was recently named as one of the best 30 players to have played one-day cricket for Australia.

Out of 163 players who have played one-day cricket for Australia, a final short-list of 30 were chosen for the all-time team.

Mr Gilmour made the top 30 but missed out on the final 12. He and the other 162 players went down to a special dinner at Luna Park.

Australia and NSW

were Mr Gilmour's major teams and he was a great all-rounder.

He played five one-day matches for Australia and in the 1975 World Cup semi-final against England he took six wickets for 14 runs. This was rated the greatest one-day bowling performance ever.

Mr Gilmour is now 55 years old. He has been very sick but just over a year ago he had a liver transplant which helped save his life.

Mr Gilmour was one of Australia's greatest all-rounders. He is a proud member of Waratah PS's Hall of Fame and an inspiration to students at Waratah PS.



SPORTING GREAT: Olivia Dillon with the Hall of Fame.

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