From the Principal

Performing on stage is certainly a significant challenge, but it brings with it significant rewards. Performance of any sort in a public environment is a key element of building self confidence and self esteem. These are characteristics which assist greatly in building normal life skills.

Anyone who has ever stood in front of an audience for any sort of performance, whether it be speaking, poetry, singing or playing an instrument will have experienced the nervous jitters and butterflies in the stomach that come with that big stride of stepping up on to the stage. Apparently even Sir Winston Churchill, the great British wartime orator, was extremely nervous before every speech.

At the Winton Poetry Festival, all of our students stepped up on the stage to recite their poems. Regardless of any competition results, the fact of having performed in public has given the students a big boost in confidence and self esteem which will serve them well as they develop their life skills.

The investment of school resources into activities like this will result in valuable returns to the students.

From Mrs Townley

As we approach the end of term, we can reflect on how busy the term has been yet again! The students can be proud of their achievements this term. During Technology this term, Zoe, Brodie and Daniel W planned, designed and created sandwiches for a friend for lunch. These sandwiches as you can see in the photos were not just any ordinary sandwiches! Chefs in the making I am sure! Daniel M and Amelia planned, designed and created bags to carry their lunch or other items. The students needed to follow strict criteria on materials they could use, but the planning was purely up to their creativity. They have done a great job and hopefully will enjoy using their bags.

Yummy

Well done to our stage performers
Drought video

The students have also submitted a video into the “QRRWN who's going to do it for you?” competition. The topic chosen was how they feel about the drought. The students brainstormed what a drought looks like, feels like and sounds like. On the video, they talked about all the ways in which the drought impacts on them. We then worked together to decide how the video should look. The students enjoyed making the video and doing their part. I hope you all have been able to view the video. If not please go to https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHj77ivVkw1Zizb3ojtFuU91OywXmztMS or type into the search engine: QRRWN Who's Going To Do IT For You? and you should be able to view all the finalist entrants including Cameron Downs entry titled 'I wish it would rain down at Cameron Downs'.

Our entry was well-received and we came fourth in the overall state-wide judging. As well, thanks to the wonderful people in our district, we won the competition for the highest number of shares and views! ‘Way to go’ Cameron Downs!

Good luck to the students who will be competing in the Poetry competition at Winton. They have worked hard on practising and polishing their performance. Till next time. Brenda Townley.

Year 3 teacher from Ormiston School visits

Last week, a teacher from Ormiston State School in Brisbane visited the school. Mrs Shirley Leis, a Year 3 teacher and friend of Mrs Crocos, was on leave and travelling north with her husband, Garry. Mrs Leis chose to spend the week with our school.

On Monday and Tuesday Mrs Leis joined the students in class and engaged them in various activities as well as our normal progression with the curriculum. Mrs Leis is a very experienced teacher
and soon gained the confidence of the children and was able to relate to them in a productive fashion. The students quickly became very comfortable with her, thus allowing plenty of friendly educational interaction. Mr & Mrs Leis then accompanied our group on the school camp to Winton.

Mrs Leis left us on Friday afternoon after a very enjoyable and productive week, expressing her delight with the students and with the school. The warm farewell from the students and the parents indicated that they had also enjoyed her visit.

**Winton School Camp**

The main activities for this year’s three-day school camp to Winton were the Winton Bush Poetry Festival and a visit to the Age of Dinosaurs Museum.

Last Wednesday our group, including accompanying parents Amanda & Allan, Stacey, Linda and also Shirley & Garry drove to Winton in a convoy of five vehicles. The children elected to travel together in one vehicle, so Stacey was the one to enjoy their happy chatter and laughter on the trip to Winton.

On arrival at Winton we checked into the famous (for the first public presentation of Waltzing Matilda) North Gregory Hotel, and then proceeded to have an exploratory walk around the town. We looked at several Banjo Patterson/Waltzing Matilda displays, visited the Opal Store, the Cobb & Co Coach, the Pelican Pond and more. Sadly, we passed by the now burnt-out Waltzing Matilda Centre to note how destructive fire can be. Searle’s Store was a real attraction, with mothers being persuaded by children to purchase various items!

**Day 2**

**Winton Poetry Festival**

This year was the 20th year for this festival, and the strong level of support indicated that it will go on for many more years. Students from primary schools all over the region come to the Festival to present their poems and proudly represent their schools. The event is held in the Winton Town Hall so the students present their work from a full-sized stage in front of a relatively large audience.

Our students were remarkable in their confidence and poise, and presented their poems with energy and flair. On arrival at the hall in the morning, our Preps seemed quite daunted by the prospect of getting up on to the stage for their performance, so before any butterflies built up too much, Mrs Crocos quickly took them up on to the stage so they could feel familiar with it, and also arranged a quick chat with Graham Dean, the MC, so he could explain that he would look after the microphone placing. With that bit of familiarisation, when the time came for their recitals, both Zoe and Brodie stepped confidently up on stage and presented their poems beautifully. What an achievement for Prep students!

In the competitive placings, our results were excellent. Cameron Downs came second in the Small Schools group section, Daniel Wearing came third in the Year 2 section, Amelia received a Very Highly Commended in a very competitive Year 5 section, while both Zoe and Brodie received Very Highly Commended in the Prep section.

Congratulations to all the students for their efforts in the preparation and delivery of their poems.
Daniel W delivers his poem

Amelia makes a point in her performance

Daniel W accepting his award

Amelia accepting her award

Zoe on stage performing her poem

School Group Performance on stage

Wow! – “Very Highly Commended” for both Zoe and Brodie
Day 3

Visit to the “Age of Dinosaurs” Museum

On Friday we visited the Age of Dinosaurs Museum, about 20km from Winton. We began with a tour of the history display and the fossil laboratory at the site. Our guide, Steven, quickly built an excellent rapport with the students, so they felt comfortable with asking the questions that improve the learning process. We were made aware of the very different environment, wet forests and swamps, of our region back in the Cretaceous era when dinosaurs lived in our region, and how the bones turned into fossils as the region dried out over time.

We learned about the initial discovery of a dinosaur fossil in a paddock while a farmer was mustering sheep. We then came to understand the process of the self-mulching of our black soil which is an important mechanism to bring fossils to the surface over long periods of time. Even though this laboratory is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere working with dinosaurs, it is possible to find enough new fossils each year with only a three week digging expedition to keep the technicians working all year – and they still have a huge backlog!

The technicians working in the laboratory are mostly volunteers who come from all walks of life for a few weeks to help in the careful chipping and scraping away of the rock and soil surrounding a fossil. It is a very painstaking and slow process, as it is so easy to damage the fossil. We saw a variety of fossils which had already been exposed and cleaned. The next phase was to put them together to discover the species and appearance of the original animal. We were able to observe this lab work at close quarters.

After having morning tea, the students each made plaster casts of a dinosaur claw to take home. Then they were given a bucket of tools, donned a “Junior Palaeontologist” safety vest, and then tramped off down the hill to the “Dinosaur Dig” site. After a bit of digging, the students each found a piece of dinosaur bone and this raised the level of excitement to an even higher level. After yet more digging it became apparent that they were all digging along a very large leg bone set, complete with toes. It must be said that the students were smart enough to engage their parents in the digging activities so as to speed up the excavation rate! Our students are all very interested in dinosaurs so this activity was a real winner.

After the students painted their plaster casts of the dinosaur claw, we had lunch followed by a visit to the main museum and auditorium where we saw the fossilised bones of two significant dinosaur finds. We learned how the palaeontologists fit the fossil bones together, often using computer models, to reconstruct the original animal. The two fossil dinosaurs shown were important as they had around 30% and 40% of the original bones fossilised – this is a large proportion of bones in the dinosaur fossil world.
With their high level of interest in dinosaurs to begin with, our students showed a lot of interest and enthusiasm in learning more about dinosaurs. Again, at the gift shop, mothers were persuaded to purchase dinosaur mementos of various sorts!

Our guide, Steven, explaining about the Lab work

Steven telling us about the tools used to clean the fossils

Zoe lines her plaster cast with Vaseline

Brodie deep in concentration painting his dinosaur claw

The plaster cast activity
Daniel and the dinosaur claw he made in plaster

Off to the Dinosaur Dig site

Dig Site: The first appearance of a dinosaur fossil

Junior palaeontologist Amelia digs up a huge fossil

Junior palaeontologist Zoe discovering a fossil

Daniel W was the first to realise that all the fossils were linked to form a huge set of leg bones
At the Museum

Steve explaining how the scientists fit the fossils together and try to discover what the whole dinosaur looked like

Associated benefits of the camp

Although the two major activities formed the basis of this camp, there were many other valuable facets to the trip.

The behaviour displayed by all the students on the camp was exemplary. It was obvious that they had listened very carefully to Mrs Crocos’ several talks on etiquette and appropriate behaviour for the particular place and time. In the Hotel Dining Room and the breakfast Café, the students dined with the adults and demonstrated their capability for appropriate behaviour in this situation. They ran, chased and shouted in the hotel playground, but not in the hotel corridors. Well done Cameron Downs.

It was a long day at the Poetry Festival, but nonetheless our students remembered to sit and listen to the other performances, and to walk quietly around the hall and to respect others. At the Age of Dinosaurs facility, they showed gleeful excitement and enthusiasm at the finding of dinosaur fossils in the Dinosaur Dig, but were quiet, attentive, and responsive and asked intelligent questions at the Dinosaur Museum.

It is very much an important part of a camp like this for the students to experience and learn how to behave appropriately and enjoy activities in a range of circumstances and among different groups of people. This was certainly the case on the Winton camp, as there were a wide range of activities and situations to provide learning opportunities of various sorts. All members of the group seemed to enjoy the camp.

Many thanks to Linda for her efficient organisation of the documents, bookings and logistics to ensure the smooth running of the camp.

This is “Banjo”, the dinosaur where 40% of the bones have been found
**Playgroup**

After a patchy period when many participants were either away from the district or had been smitten by the ‘flu, Playgroup is again up and running with our future students getting to know each other and the school while having plenty of fun. We missed Chelsea this week as she is in Townsville waiting to have the baby. For this week’s meeting, Chappy Sarah organised a rainbow colours activity which the children took to with enthusiasm.

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**From Chappy Chris**

Integrity is a virtue that everyone should aspire to. It is a foundational value that is highly sought after, whether it be by employers in respect of their employees (or the reverse), or by teachers in their students, or by parents in their teachers, etc. There are countless examples where integrity is the basis of positive working and learning relationships. Unfortunately, there are also countless examples where a lack of integrity is the destructive force behind the breakdown of those same relationships.

Integrity is the distinctive feature that marks a person who demonstrates sound moral and ethical principles at work, at play; indeed in all of life.

A person who demonstrates integrity lives out his or her moral and ethical values in relationship with work colleagues, friends, and family; in fact everyone. Honesty and trust are virtues central to integrity. Acting with honour and truthfulness are also basic tenets in a person with integrity.

People who demonstrate integrity draw others to them because they are trustworthy and dependable. They are principled people and can be counted on to behave in honourable ways even when no one is watching.

So integrity is something we should all desire to possess. In big ways and small ways, in visible or invisible situations, everyone has the opportunity to demonstrate integrity - or a lack of it - each and every day.

Enjoy your holidays

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**A thank you letter from Sue & Gordon**

We have received a lovely letter from Sue & Gordon Knott which they have asked to be published in the Newsletter.

Accordingly, the letter is published in full on the next page.
11 Minehane Street,
Cluden. 4811.
9th September, 2015.

Hello to everyone in the Cameron Downs School Community,

Gordon and I would like to thank you all for the most enjoyable evening we had at the school grounds on 29th July, I cannot believe that it was that long ago - so much has happened in the weeks following!

Firstly, thank-you to everyone involved in organising the evening and for making the effort to come along, all the social events held at the Cameron school are always lots of fun, we certainly had fun that night.

Secondly, thank-you to everyone for your generosity in presenting us with the Gift Cards. We are putting them to good use, there are always things needed when setting up a new home, aren’t there? Gordon is hanging blinds at this moment.

Last but not least, thanks to Amelia & Daniel, Zoe, Daniel & Brodie for making us the lovely card. I have it on my desk. They are very talented kids!

Liz, would you be able to pass on our thanks via the Newsletter please? Thank-you.

We hope that the much anticipated wet season for 2016 is a good one for everyone. Don’t forget to call at the above address for a cuppa if you have time when in Townsville. It is amazing how we keep bumping into people from or associated with someone from Huahenden.