



ACN 063 049 669

Maher Road, P.O. Box 771, Gordonvale, North Queensland 4865
tel. (07) 4043 3777 fax (07) 4056 6111 email admin@djarragun.qld.edu.au

website: <http://www.djarraguncollege.qld.edu.au>

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School Rover

Issue 14, Dec. 01, 2006

Presentation Day

Close to 500 people converged on Djarragun College on Friday, November 17, for the school's annual Presentation Day.

The event attracted parents, students, media representatives and a number of distinguished guests, including Director of the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership, Noel Pearson, and Member for Mulgrave, Warren Pitt.

As well as the awards ceremony, Presentation Day featured traditional and colourful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dances, items by the students and performances by the Djarragun College Band. The primary school students excitedly took part in the annual Christmas play, which this year boasted a record 25 angels.

Presentation Day is a major event on the school calendar and celebrates the year's achievements by its many talented students.





When the bell tolls its last for the school year, anticipation and nostalgia engage each other in a cumbersome bear hug. Hearts take a beating and a sad tune hangs in the air mingled with the strains of Christmas carols and beat box triumphant songs. Those who are stepping into the future finally divest themselves of the trappings of their existence during the previous twelve years. Their zesty lust for independence takes on a daunting aspect. What do they do with the prize?

Congratulations to our Year 12 graduates who proved their steadfastness in the face of ever-present distractions, hurdles and diversions. Congratulations, also, to the rest of the student body which is still in the process of emergence. Each and every one

can still forge along, comfortable with the knowledge that supportive peers are still in a recognizable environs.

The moment of satisfaction for the teachers who have coursed their way alongside their charges (for what probably seemed time immemorial) also bursts bubbles. This is the defining moment when the guiding hand retracts in silent salute.

To all, enter the festive spirit but carry it even further, well beyond the Season.

PRESENTATION DAY

Another spectacular event ran its course on the campus on Friday, November 17. An excited crowd witnessed the presentation of Awards. The Christmas Play with a difference performed by the Primary School held the attention of an enraptured audience. Some of the most spectacularly decked out Roman soldiers thrust visual fanfare on our three faithful ships of the desert. Angels from a Salon in Heaven must have been given Day Leave to relocate a section of the seraphim under the Djarragun roof. Roman tunics bore quite the designer label stamp but the tight-lipped centurions were not about to release classified information about their tailors somewhere along the Appian Way.

In any case, perhaps, we can just throw a few petals of appreciation to the local agents for the Roman armoury - Ms. Sherral Aird and Ms Linda McKeown.

Notable recipient for numerous awards was our Head Girl, Rosemary Tabuai. She practically collected everything on the list except ‘the partridge and a pear tree.’ Congratulations, Rosemary for an outstanding year and the well-deserved accolade to cap it all off.

Proud Mum, Clara Tabuai, captured even grander spoils later when her name was drawn from the raffle as winner of sundry prizes, including a family entertainment package.

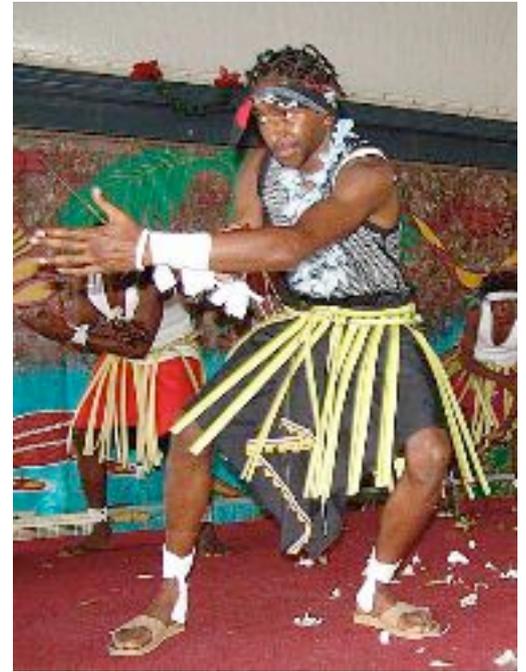
Once the formal section of the Presentation had been effected, the crowd was treated with a sumptuous meal. The customary kup mari food found the light of day once more only to be entombed more securely in appreciative stomachs.

Dance performances and a few numbers from the band kept the audience entertained during the lunch break. These are always crowd-pleasers and the world of impromptu always threatens to overtake the programme. It is difficult to close off an event

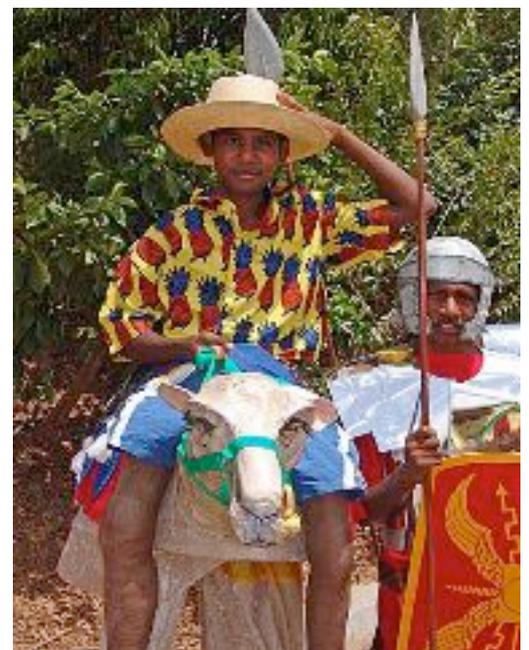


when its own momentum gives it a life of its own. Perhaps as a stylized swan song, Cyril Sakail wipes his hands from the rigours of the classroom and aims forward for his future.

In a matter of moments, the Year 12 students wended their way through the guard of honour out into their respective futures.



However, it was necessary to make a speedy clean-up to allow participants to then prepare for an evening programme.



JAPANESE VISIT

What possibly will be remembered as a formidable aspect to the school agenda this year is the visit recently by huge contingents of Japanese students. Numbering up to one hundred and sixty, the influx deluged the school campus practically outnumbering the local roll. The group was divided into sections which rotated through a series of activities. Djarragun students entertained with music and dance performances and entered into games in the classrooms or on courts. Some strong contests were witnessed, especially in the soccer arena. There was a passion not normally generated within 'friendly games'. Tea and damper found their way into palates that usually harbour sushi and the switch



from pencil to brush and ink mesmerized the local students who perhaps have added another medium for their graffiti.

Volleyball seemed to strike a happy medium on both sides of the net and on either side of the Pacific Rim. Boomerang making, calligraphy, dance, art, spear throwing - all these diverse occupations blended themselves into flavoursome methods of communication.

The magnetism of the Primary School Dance troupe won the day when they captured the spirits and bodies of the Japanese students who, in strong force, crowded the stage and joined in with a forceful and energetic Torres Strait Island routine.

Lane Ingui described the tea ceremony - "We sat in a circle on the floor. The Japanese matron whisked some powder with hot water in a bowl and that bowl was passed to the senior of the group and then along to others. The bowl was recharged and then passed in the opposite direction.

It tasted sour and we had a pinch of sweet stuff like marshmallow to break the sourness. It lasted half an hour. It seemed to be an activity to welcome visitors."



Djarragun College Formal 2006

Djarragun College Year 12 graduates laughed, cried and celebrated at their end-of-year formal on Friday, November 17. More than 400 staff members, students, and their family and friends attended the event, which was held at Cazalys in Cairns.

PowerPoint presentations made by the 38 graduates earlier this year were shown as part of the night's proceedings. Many students thanked parents and the College's teachers for their support.

The reggae-inspired Djarragun College band provided the night's musical entertainment.

Thirty-one of the College's 2006 graduates were from the Torres Strait or have Torres Strait Islander heritage. Djarragun College wishes the graduates success and happiness in their future endeavours.



Long in preparation, the night event held at Cazaly's at Westcourt ended up the gala occasion that only could be dreamed about. This final chance for classmates to promenade before each other and their respective families hauled in the precious moments as treasured memories that will last a lifetime. Israel Graham documented in one of his journals the following :-

"Next week on Friday, we will be having Prize Giving and that night, the Year 12 formal. I get to go to the formal because I'm dancing there. At the formal, we'll do some of our normal dances but we have got a new Cassowary dance also. We have a surprise dance that we are doing to honour Bradley. We are practising the dance behind his back to surprise him for his graduation."



SCIENCE AND ROBOTICS



One of the initiatives thrown into the cauldron during part of the year was this delve into the serious side of Science. Whetting the appetite is just the start and it is hoped that the interest raised will generate stronger passion for discoveries in the future.

As an extension of James Cook University, once each week, the Middle School students were thrown into a hands-on circuit of activities that extended from constructing paper planes to catapulting eggs from a launching device.

An egg had to be insulated and packed in such a way that once hurtled into the air over as far a distance as possible, it did not break on impact with the ground.

As you can imagine, every shape of missile emerged from the workshops and, as it turned out, one of the girls' teams launched their egg to victory.



Ruth Day is figuring it out.
Above - the catapult in action.

STAFF BAND

Very popular amongst the younger set is an adept crew of musos made up of some members of the staff. These are people with an enduring passion and undeniably, a goodly measure of talent to throw a few notes and the odd bars together in the name of old man, Mr. Entertainer.



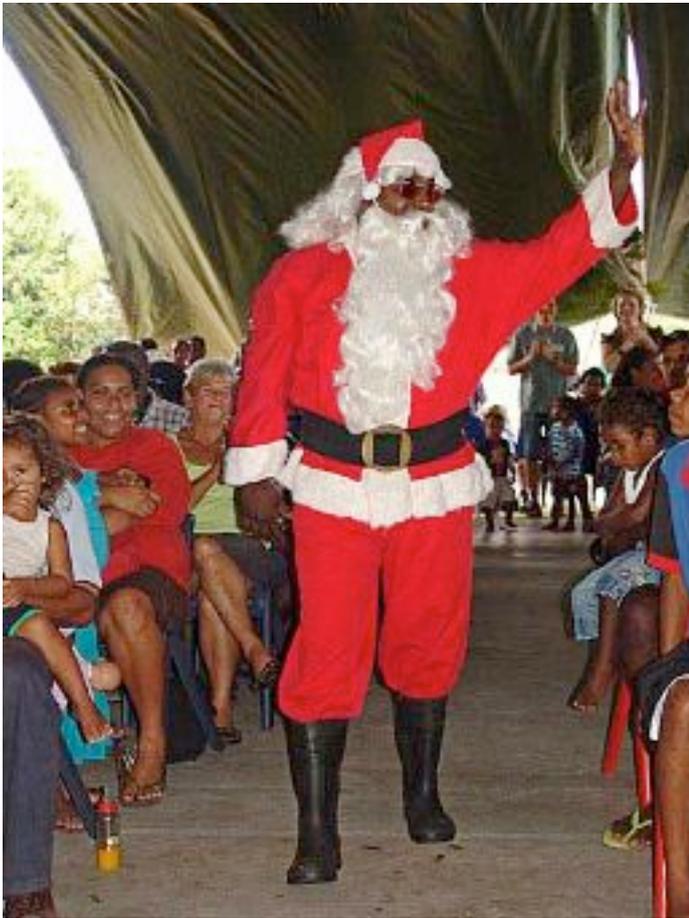
The ANZACs - Mr. Gracey and Mr. Frank (simply because they never grow old) join fetters with serious sound transmitters such as Mr. Aaron and Mr. Dean. Mr. Michael Lee is simply a drum kit with legs. So given this combination, music hit the air with consummate ease.

Times may have changed but the beat goes on. They're not hip hop, they're not reggae and they're not beat box and rap but they still have a few spare chords up their sleeves.



“What’s the Gio?” is the bandied yard call. Ms Linda and Mr. Gio add their chortles. On the left, Ms Miriam and Ms Michelle stick to the sheet music while our answer to the Black and White minstrels cram the music frequencies from AAA to MMM.





CHRISTMAS TIME AGAIN

Traditional figures who customarily feature at the Djarragun Christmas play each year add lustre to a growing Season culture.



End of year news from Djarragun College

Your child will be bringing home the College magazine which is packed full of information about what we have been up to this year. I thought I would fill in some last minute details that did not meet the deadline for the magazine.

Results of year 3, 5 and 7 National literacy and numeracy tests.

We are thrilled to let you know that your child is in good hands if they are in our school. Every year the results that our students achieve have been increasing. This year the results took an amazing leap into the very top results in the country. This means that your child is possibly achieving at above what the average for all Australian students in that age group are achieving. For example have a look at the table below which shows you how well our Primary students have done this year:

Class	Subject	% above Nat'l benchmark 2005	% above Nat'l benchmark 2006	Comments
Yr 3	Numeracy	11%	47%	Great Improvement
	Reading and Viewing	26%	80%	Great Improvement
	Writing	21%	53%	Great Improvement
Yr 5	Numeracy	41%	69%	Great Improvement
	Reading and Viewing	32%	72%	Great Improvement
	Writing	18%	47%	Great Improvement
Yr 7	Numeracy	13%	15%	Slight Improvement
	Reading and Viewing	22%	21%	Slight drop *)
	Writing	44%	86%	Great Improvement

**) The reason for the slight drop is that we have many students in this area who have pulled the percentage down due to poor attendance at school in previous years. However, within this group we have some very bright students who have attended school regularly and have pushed the average up.*



Another building rises from the ground and very soon will be a destination point for our students in their studies.

This building will house the new library and other IT facilities.

SCHOOL STARTS TUESDAY JANUARY 30