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School Rover

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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

We do not inherit the earth from our parents. We borrow it from our children. -Native American proverb

This year Djarragun cannot close its doors. Owing to the influx of over two hundred new enrolments, the buildings are set to burst at the seams. Whilst this is a remarkable achievement, it does pose logistical challenges to programmes, timetables and staff arrangements.

It's an amazing line-up of new faces on both sides of the spectrum. Materializing after an enforced absence of sick leave for six months, I am amazed by the fresh sparkles that gleam in the eyes of both new and old.

The explosion of buildings on the property is staggering; activity in every part is inspiring. The grounds and environs are stunning and the sounds of familiar voices somehow throws one into intriguing episodes of *deja vu*.

SAVED BY THE BELLE



At a recent accident involving a car and a train, one of four young observers emerged from the periphery of the railway track to exercise an incredible sequence of personal initiatives.

Miraculously, this particular vehicle and the sole occupant, had just been pushed some three hundred metres along the railway line before managing to come to an inexorable halt.

Djarragun College Year 11 student, **Layla Dodd** witnessed the harrowing experience and, forsaking any personal inhibitions, stepped up to the unusual challenge. Despite the acrid smell of ground metal, petrol fumes and burnt rubber, Layla assisted the hysterical driver from the wreckage and proffered words of encouragement to placate the bewildered survivor.

With her mobile phone, she contacted the Police and Emergency Services on Triple-0 and then offered solace to a stranger with the only thing she had left, her company.

Eventually, others converged onto the scene and the unassuming heroine withdrew and returned to anonymity.

Retaining an air of casualness in her recount, Layla recalled :-

"Around 7:30 p.m., after we had been playing basketball near the highway, we heard the train coming. We approached the track and saw the train pushing along a blue car with a lady in it screaming.

We could hear the screeching of the brakes. At first, there were only four of us teenagers at the scene. It looked like something from a movie. We slowed down running because of the smell of gas and the sparks. We could feel the heat from the grinding metal.

The train and the crushed car was a frightening sight. We could see the lady in the car screaming. It looked freaky.

We ran after the front of the train for about 100 metres and when it stopped, the lady got out by herself and asked for help. We took her to sit beneath a tree to calm her down. Her name was Michelle.

We asked her the obvious questions whether she was hurt and if anybody else was in the car. She was hyperventilating.

I got my phone and called the police. Another lady came over and she told us to go away. By that time, there were heaps of people around but we stayed around to make sure that Michelle was all right. The paramedics arrived and there appeared nothing wrong with her - only shock.

The lady who arrived after us told the paramedics that she was the first on the scene and was the one who helped Michelle. The paramedics told us to leave and we left."

Words of public congratulation at the College assembly were directed to Layla for her display of exemplary levelheadedness, compassion, initiative and directed application of human values.

SORRY DAY 2009



Aunty Harriet Tapim introduced to the school assembly the theme of this year's ceremony to commemorate the historic event in 2008 which saw the national acknowledgement by the Prime Minister, Mr. Kevin Rudd concerning past sufferings by Australian indigenous peoples.

"Today, we acknowledge the past and promote a future which embraces all Australians. We apply the ANZAC sentiment "Lest we forget" to the fallen members of our own indigenous races who suffered injustices of the past which must never happen again.

We engage in a future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to bring equity to life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

We endorse a future which embraces the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed. This future must be based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

Nelson Mandela once stated,

'If you speak to a man in your language, you speak to his head; if you speak to a man in his own language, you speak to his heart.'

Let us preserve the dignity of each other and speak accordingly."

The assembly also included a filming crew from the Malaysian Media which was collecting material for a documentary on Indigenous peoples in Australia.

(above) Israel Sales on didgeridoo and the Aboriginal girls perform.

(right) Isaac Tabo stylishly presents form to a traditional Murray Island 'kabkar'



(Top) Laurianna Baira & Esther Asai break the front line of Boigu Island dancers Solomon Charlie & Adrian Dau

(2nd) Balas Solomon & Alfred Ropeyarn show what a synchronised performance is meant to look like.

(3rd) Naomi Cooktown leads the Aboriginal girls in a routine depicting the 'Creation scene'. Kangaroo (Alan Tranby) was the only fauna witness to the event.

(Bottom) A spectacular display of rap dance performed by Titus Tamwoy in something that can only be described as riprorting, flailing arms and legs in fast forward mode captured in a hologram frenzy.

KOBYA



Our visiting musician from Mozambique engaged some of our students in practice sessions in the auditorium and also an icebreaker gig in the College Undercover area. His ready turn to different modes of music and performance gave some of our budding singers the enthusiasm to follow his lead and enter into some of his passion. His life story is an amazing event in itself.

KOBYA grew up in the African township in Maputo, the capital city of Mozambique, a country gripped by war for many years. He became the youngest member of Xingombela youth dance troupe at age of 7, thanks to his elder's brother wedding anniversary where his talent was discovered. He took the entertainment business seriously. After playing professional soccer as a teenager, he packed his bags and headed to Gauteng, also known as Johannesburg or city of gold, in South Africa, to join



his other family members. As he had damaged his knees playing soccer, he joined the fashion world and studied photography. He then worked as a freelance photojournalist and reporter. He was forced to flee as a political refugee. Luckily, music remained loyal to him through out the journey. He is a gifted performer singer song writer and versatile multi-instrumentalist, He mixes roots (Marrabenta Mozambique Popular dance Music) & reggae occasionally throwing in some lovers rock to create his own original blend.



WANGETTI STUDENTS TAKE RESIDENCE

Mr. Simon (Spike) Cotton made a brief but historic few words of leave at the morning assembly on February 09, as he and the Wangetti contingent prepared to wend their way to the small hideaway campus on the Marlin Coast.



The revamped campus is now named Wangetti TAVEC (Technical and Vocational Education College). Boys are engaged in a course of Construction and Numbers on the campus for Years 10, 11, 12 and older presently stand at 33.

FALLING INTO GOOD HANDS

Pre-Prep student, **Josiah Kyle** decided to prove Newton's Law all over again from one of the trees near the school library. Fortunately, after the fall, he was witnessed by promising Neighbourhood Watch monitor, **Neils Anderson**.

Teacher, **Ms Nikki** was impressed with the demeanour of **Neils** who immediately took charge of the situation by comforting Josiah and offering to whisk him off to the Medical Centre to see **Ms Sue**. Congratulations, **Neils**, for your practical, good sense, compassion and ready service to someone in need.

FOND FAREWELLS



Mr. Chris Chigeza - has finally broken ranks but though our remaining Zimbabwean presence has been reduced, it still presents a formidable triad. **Mr. Chris** has edged into the heady world of accountancy at the Cairns Post.

Ms Kerry Dobson has gone to do more study at University. Thanks for the terrific effort to kick-start the life of the new Library facility.



Ms Andrea Watters: Special thanks for a busy workload with students in the Senior School, particularly with the Health Worker course.

Ms Riona Delargy: Finally, cutting the apron strings from her beloved 'little people' but hopefully taking away fond memories of the DC corral. Best of luck for the future.



Dr Chrystelle Anthony is now able to exercise her role and fully utilize her use of the stethoscope each Monday and Friday. The Health Centre which only opened its doors last year is a hive of activity which promptly attends to the needs of the sick and infirm. It's such an invitingly antiseptic atmosphere that upon entry, a Medicare card would be the last thought to cross the mind.

WARMEST WELCOMES

Ms Jan Clothier : "I'm the new librarian at Djarragun College. Originally from Victoria and then Darwin, for the past few years I have been living on Magnetic Island. Cairns is now home, but home-home is the island. John, my partner, is also a new teacher at Djarragun. Our only daughter, Katie is studying at JCU in Townsville."

Mr. Mirko Brokamp : Though with a background as thoroughly German as the Volkswagen, thanks to the wanderlust of his parents across Slavic borders in their youth, Mr. Mirko was endowed with his first name. He has entered into the region of computer conundrums and has thrown his swag in the midst of Mr. Ludo, Mr. Frank and the rest of the IT crew.

Ms Paula Burns Born in Singapore, Ms Paula spent much of her childhood in Malaysia, Indonesia and PNG. She has enjoyed a 25 year career in Education, including work in Thailand and Vanuatu. Now, Ms Paula (apart from her daily safari tour down and back to Yungaburra) is lapsing into study mode with the 11B and 12B classes.

Uncle Aurie Marou : Uncle Aurie is often seen trundling across the various courtyards with a stream of the younger set hot on his tail. Once settled into the lesson mode, he teaches the children some of the cultural aspects of Murray Island tradition, including the language.

Mr. Ken Duncan : I have been happily married for more than 3 life sentences. I have two grandchildren, a patient wife called Pam and a staffy dog called Beau. What more could a man want? In 2008 I spent a pleasant year on Groote Eylandt in the NT as an Executive Teacher at Aylangula Area School.

From 2005 to 2007 I was Principal at Woorabinda Community School. From 2002 to 2007 I was Head of Department Senior Schooling at Cairns State High School. In 2001, I was Principal at Pormpuraaw and 2000 I was Deputy principal at Aurukun. In 1999 I was an Advisory Teacher Special Education for Cape and Gulf Schools. I have taught in most schools in the remote Cape but I have never been to the Torres Straits. What I like most about Djarragun is the friendly students who work and try so hard in my Year 11 and 12 Maths classes. I am impressed with the way Djarragun has embraced VET and the obvious skills and enjoyment the students gain from studying varied VET subjects.

Ms Laura Steel : I am the new Learning Support Co-ordinator at the college. Previously, I was travelling to 8 remote communities in the NT as a "Practitioner In Residence" assisting teachers and their students with best practices in literacy and numeracy. Prior to the NT experience, I was co-ordinating a gifted program for a boys' school on the Gold Coast.

I have a son who is travelling the world on a working holiday. He is currently in Canada where I lived for 11 years. While living there, I taught Canadian adult Indians to read and write. My most memorable student was Andy Natrall, a Squamish Indian, who was famous for his carvings. He was 85 years old. He was a war veteran and had one wooden leg and a glass eye. Once he learned to write his name, he was able to sign his carvings. I have welcomed the opportunity to join the Djarragun community and would like to thank people for their kindness and support.

Ms Radhika Wagh : Switching her Science and Maths skills to advantage in the Health Assistant to Nurse programme at Djarragun with Ms **Barbara Deewy** and a goodly-sized group of 15 students. Ms Radhika hails from southern India and grew up in Mumbai. She adds her observation :-

"Students were quite enthusiastic about the course and were enquiring about their prospect for future. They also enjoyed their first lesson and it was good to see male students enrolling in this course as there are lot of job opportunities out there for them."

Mr. Alan Kroll : I've been here in Cairns now for nearly 15 months, after living and working in Mt Isa for 5 years. Just about every holiday, I'd come to Cairns to spend some time here. During one of these occasions, we bought a piece of land and eventually had a home built there. I really love Cairns and ever since I was here in Dec 1980 - playing in a band - I have yearned to come back and live here.

When I did my teacher training, there were three things about being a teacher that stuck with me: to be firm, fair and flexible. I'd like to add optimism, creativity, having a sense of humour, caring and compassion, and being a good listener, to these three things.

In my spare time, I like to compose music, write, develop web pages, and explore multimedia applications like animation, video and drawing. Well, enough about me. Tell me about yourself. Make sure you come up to me and introduce yourself so that I can meet you. Meanwhile, I'm going back to my really cool Stars and Satellite class...they're the best!

We say good bye to **Marilyn** and **Graham Patterson** as they have moved to work at Wangetti campus. Thank you for your time and services here at Djarragun and we look forward to seeing you at joint campus events.



SHARLENE CAMPBELL

Sharlene has been with Djarragun for longer than any other staff member and is the backbone behind many things that people don't even know about. When a job needs to be done right away or when flights need booking and accommodation needs to be arranged, Sharlene is the one behind it all. She not only works incredibly hard but she is always kind and considerate. She is the backbone of admin and no job is too lowly for Sharlene. She is obliging and always happy to make tea and coffee for visitors (and often for staff as well). She even sends pictures of cups of coffee to Jean when she goes away! Sharlene is an honest, hardworking and reliable worker but more importantly she is a thoroughly lovely person. Thank you Sharlene for everything that you do and for your lovely approach to everyone.



Dr. Chrystelle & Mr. Mike Tupper have not had the opportunity of an official welcome to the school though both are almost veterans to the Djarragun scene. Last year's formal seems to have struck a happy chord as an interim induction to the school.

Dr Chrystelle has endless skills and a vast store of knowledge in the Medical field.

Mr. Mike is one of our IT specialists based in the Mac Lab where he solves all our problems.

Congratulations to **Mr. Warren** and **Chika** after the recent arrival of son, **Reuben Eyre**

Mr. Warren is firmly entrenched in the Creative Arts section of the school where he has joined forces with **Mr. Aaron Agius** and this is an early reminder that a really good issue of the Rover will soon be featuring all of their finesse.

