Principal’s Report

2010 has seen a lot of changes within the school. The office area refurbishment was completed and now includes a waiting area for parents, where they can sit and watch highlights of school events. Students have been enjoying the new Australian Standard Kitchen and the official opening was an opportunity for visitors to see our Hospitality students in action. The refurbishment of the Science laboratories and preparation room now allows our students to experience up to date learning environments. The new Language building will take our Year 7 students on an exciting new journey, using video conferencing and interactive whiteboards, as they learn and experience the language and culture of Italy, China and the Middle East. There have also been changes within faculty areas, a new Aboriginal garden, a Sensory Room in Special Education and additional new security cameras.

Our staff and students have once again shown their talents in music, dance, drama, sport and visual arts. Highlights have included an exhibition of student artwork in At The Vanishing Point gallery in Newtown, Polyfest, Cabaret Night, a drumming performance at the South Western Sydney Regional Principal’s Conference and Nikolina Radmanovic’s ‘Sporting Blue’

(Continued on page 5)

Achievements on show at Annual Presentation

Our Annual Presentation acknowledged a wide variety of student achievements in sports, academic studies, commitment and leadership. Top left and bottom left, Nancy Sankari and Adriana Taumata receive academic awards. Top right, Jarrod Frances received an award for Commitment. Bottom right, Inangaro Maraeara, Anthony Veilo and Nikolina Radmanovic were presented with Long Tan Awards for leadership and teamwork by a representative of the Australian Defence Forces.

Aboriginal garden

Months of planning by Darcey Brown (Aboriginal Education Officer), and Mr Lally our Science Faculty Head have resulted in the completion of an Indigenous garden outside the front office. Students, community members and teachers gathered on Thursday 9 December for the dedication of the garden.

Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Ivan Wellington conducted a traditional smoking ceremony and spoke of the importance of maintaining a strong awareness and respect for Aboriginal heritage in our community. Indigenous students performed dances under the guidance of Ms Potter and Ms Dennis.
School bell times are changing for 2011!
Note: Later start and finish times each day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>START</td>
<td>FINISH</td>
<td>START</td>
<td>FINISH</td>
<td>START</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll Call</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 1</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>9:55</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>9:50</td>
<td>9.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 2</td>
<td>9:55</td>
<td>10:50</td>
<td>9:50</td>
<td>10:40</td>
<td>10:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:40</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 4</td>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>12:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>1:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 5</td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>2:20</td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>2:20</td>
<td>1:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School uniform - our dress code

James Meehan High School’s uniform is simple and affordable. Students are expected to be in full uniform every day. Uniform items are available from GT Fashions in Glenquarie Town Centre.

- School polo top - junior or senior versions available
- Plain navy trousers or tailored shorts; or navy skirt
- Plain white socks and all black shoes (sports shoes or leather)
- School jacket.

Special Education is now Djurali

Dharawal community elder, Aunty Fran Bodkin officially renamed our Special Education Unit ‘Djurali’ at a special ceremony on Tuesday 14 December.

The new Indigenous name means ‘a place where hopes and dreams come true’ and provides a positive message for students within the Support Unit.

The new name is in keeping with our ED unit, Wingara which means ‘a place to think’.

Student safety is our number one concern

The bus bay outside the school on Harold Street is now a designated KISS & RIDE ZONE, where students can be dropped off safely in the morning and picked up in the afternoon.

Please do not drive into the staff carpark to drop off and pick up students at the start and finish of the school day. The carpark is busy and dangerous at these times.

For your student’s safety use the KISS & RIDE ZONE.
Support Unit Camp

On the 4th of November, staff and students from the Support Unit set off on their annual school camp trek to the Wedderburn Christian Camp.

With all happy campers packed and the vehicles loaded we set off at 9am for what would be an eventful 2 days of fun filled thrill seeking activities.

The first of many activities planned was archery. Students quickly learnt the ropes and Josh Channell proved a natural at this event.

Then it was on to the flying fox event. The students harnessed up and Tony Singh, an old hand at this activity from the previous year bit the bullet and volunteered for first run. Then Josh, Patience, Travis, Austin and Jade who joined us for her final camp ever with us stepped up waiting for their run with the final student flier, Mr Brenden Lustenhouwer. Harnessed up and helmet securely in place he nervously awaited his turn to step up for the ride of his life.

After lunch Andrew to the campers for a bush walk and introduced them to bush foods the campers took a liking to bush currants the equivalent to modern day warhead lollies.

Next morning we headed off to experience mountain bike riding. The campers made their way around the track at lightning speed eagerly demonstrating their expertise.

Then it was onto our last and final activity: rock climbing. The campers were eager to have a go and each camper who participated gave a hundred percent effort and persevered despite the outcome. I am so proud of each of the students for never giving up.

This year’s camp had finally come to a close the staff and students will carry with them so many wonderful memories for many years to come.

Miss Potter

Junior careers Program at Curran Public School

In its first year, the junior careers program for the primary school has met the goal of establishing middle school links that initiate and develop engagement between James Meehan and feeder schools based on improving support for literacy.

Over 3 days in early November, the junior program with a heavy emphasis on literacy (Career) activities, sought to engage and to implant early career thoughts into thirty Year 6 students at Curran Public School. Although initially shy and puzzled by the new subject, the students warmed up rapidly and tackled the literacy component with gusto. The core of the program’s intention was to start the Year 6 journey into early self reflection with the view to understanding themselves, their abilities, likes, dislikes and the concept of values – personally and socially.

Numeracy was addressed with the inclusion of a budgeting exercise for the high school. All their calculations had to be done without a calculator. They had to use a real catalogue, spend close to $400 and budget for a sibling as well. They never thought shopping for high school could be so hard! Students were rewarded with prizes and certificates of participation for their tremendous efforts.

With a guiding principle of establishing leadership amongst our seniors, four very motivated and talented Year 11 Work Studies students led the Year 6 group: congratulations to Paige Hall, Brittany Arrandale, Jim Jay Aloese and Phillip Fidow.

Leva Nguyen
Careers Advisor

Top: Junior Careers Program at Curran
Bottom: Mr Giles and the Year 11 Music class give Year 6 students a taste of high school life as the prepare for Year 7.
Special room is a delight for the senses!

Over the past months, a very special ‘sensory room’ has been taking shape in the Special Education building.

The room is fitted with custom furniture, special lighting and a variety of equipment that allows our Support Unit students, especially students with autism, a place to retreat and relax.

Sensory rooms are usually only found in specialist schools, and ours is one of the first to be built in a mainstream school.

Staff who inspected the room at its official opening last week found the facilities very enticing, particularly the comfy chairs, mood lighting and surprisingly, the punching bag!

Curtains and soft furnishing for the room were made by a dedicated team of community volunteers.

The room was an initiative of Margaret Downey and Karen Wright, who provide regional support for autism students. They have been working with our Support Unit students and their teachers since the start of this year and identified a clear need for such a facility. Margaret and Karen have worked tirelessly throughout the year to secure funding and make the room a reality.

Recycling provides a chess challenge

This chess set is a combined Year 7 project created by students from 7S and 7R. The aim was to use recyclable materials, such as an old piece of timber for the board and toilet paper rolls for the chess men. The photograph shows the christening of the board with Year 7 boys concentrating hard on their next move in a group chess game.

Drumming at James Meehan High - 2010

Annalise Friend and Claudia Chambers worked at Curran Public School on a drumming project during 2009 and 2010. This year, James Meehan High decided to continue the drumming program at the High School, working with many of the students who had graduated into Year 7 in 2010.

Highlights have been weekly workshops with the awesome Mars Drummers, combined Curran and James Meehan High School Performance group (who performed for the Rugby Half Time match earlier in the year, as well as at the Principals’ Conference) and the across school drumming group.

Mr Hayak has been a key part of the program, sharing his natural musical talent, and wonderful enthusiasm with us all.

Thank you to all the staff and students who made the program a success, and hope we can all continue learning, creating, playing and performing together.

Claudia :)

James Meehan High School 4 December 2010 - January 2011
Award for Volleyball, the highest sporting award in the Sydney South Western Region.

The end of the year also brings with it sadness as we farewell staff who have made such a positive contribution to James Meehan High School. As a school we have a small drawing area from which our students come. Changes within the housing estate have led to a further decrease in the number of students. This has resulted in a loss of more staff. Mr Sims will be travelling to South America to teach and we thank him for all his hard work in the Special Education faculty. Mr Snow is retiring from teaching after a career spanning over 50 years. We wish him the very best in his life after teaching and hope that he enjoys his new experiences. Ms Langley will take up a new position and we thank her for her tireless efforts as Student Representative Council Coordinator, editor of the community newsletter and art teacher extraordinary. We wish her the very best in her new position.

Not only have we lost teaching staff but also a Deputy Principal. Mr Robertson will be taking up a position at Penrith Selective High School. In the four years that he has been at James Meehan High he has been the driving force behind the many new facilities that we now enjoy. He wrote the submissions that got us the new language building, dance and drama rooms, new reception area and solar panels. He has been in charge of the following refurbishments – Science, Art, Wingara, PE, HSIE and the Well Being area. He is responsible for such things as the security cameras, flag pole, new drinking fountains and Kiss and Drop area on Harold Street. These are just some of the physical changes that we can all see. He has also worked tirelessly for the benefit of staff, students and parents. He re-established the P and C and has built up strong partnerships with government and non government agencies. On behalf of the school I would like to acknowledge the strong position he leaves the school in, and wish him the very best at his new school.

On behalf of the staff I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year.

Mrs Gail Taylor

Cabaret 2010 lived up to its title of ‘Musical Mayhem’, with a diverse selection of items taken from musicals over the past hundred and fifty years. From Gilbert and Sullivan to Oliver and beyond, the performances highlighted the amazing talents of our performing arts students. Congratulations to all the students for their dedication and months of hard work, and to Ms Dennis and Ms Benjamin for their vision and commitment in nurturing and promoting our performing artists.

(Continued from page 1)

Polyfest success

December 6th saw another successful Polyfest celebrating Polynesian culture in the school and community. Daniel Pesa, our Pacific Islander Liaison Officer, coordinated the event, which included performers from James Meehan High as well as Guise and Curran Public Schools.

Community members provided an abundance of traditional foods to audience members as part of the festivities.

Performances showcased a range of talented young singers, dancers and musicians.
Year 12 & Year 10 celebrate achievements

Year 12 were glamorous, stylish and ready to party at their final school function, a formal held at Wollongong City Beach on 25 November.

Year 10 students proudly hold their School Certificate portfolios as they celebrate the end of their junior secondary education, and prepare for the senior years ahead.