

# AICS NEWS

Issue 7

Aboriginal Independent Community Schools

November 2006

## 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN ABORIGINAL PARENT DIRECTED SCHOOLS

Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, 19 to 21 November saw the celebration of some very special events for all those involved with the Christian Aboriginal Parent Directed Schools (CAPS) at Coolgardie and Kurrawang. First and foremost was the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the establishing of CAPS Coolgardie.

CAPS Coolgardie first opened its doors on 23 February 1981 with two voluntary teachers, fifteen primary and seven secondary school students.

Over the last 25 years a lot of work has been done, by many people, to carry through the aims and wishes of the founding group of concerned parents to offer Indigenous children an opportunity to develop their talents to their fullest capacity.

On Monday 20 November Minister for Education, Science and Training—the Hon Julie Bishop performed the official opening of the Schools' new buildings which coincided with the Anniversary celebrations.

A wonderful job was done by all involved with the organising of the Anniversary celebrations. The various events were attended and enjoyed by many friends and visitors alike from all levels of interaction with the Schools.

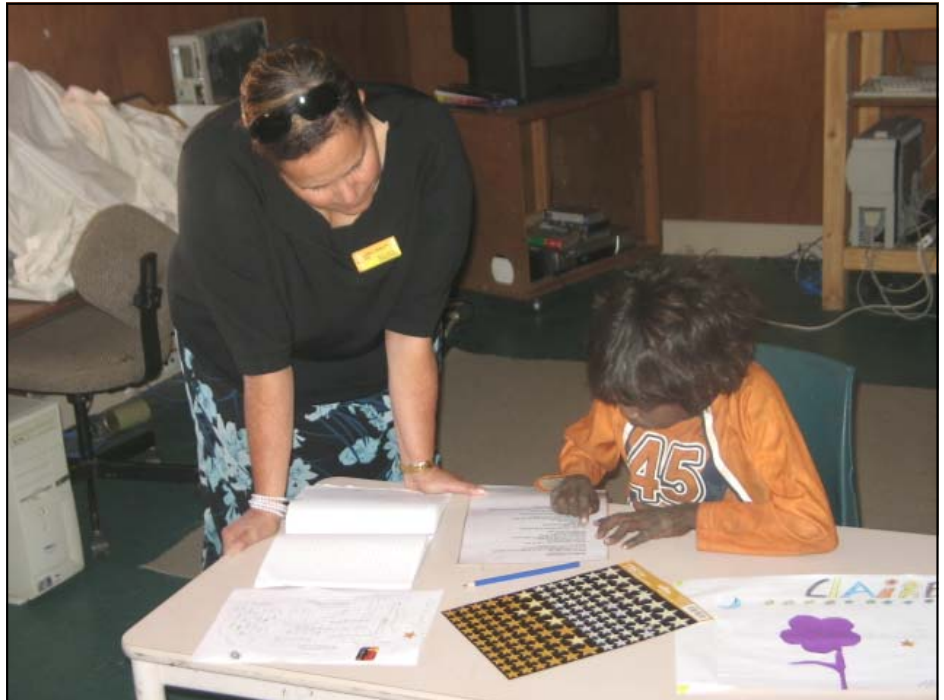


*Above: Minister Bishop with Mrs Jenna Nettle and Mr Les Tucker. Above right: CAPS Chairperson Mr Billy Vincent and John Hill. Right: Minister Bishop, Mr Barry Haase MP and CAPS Kurrawang Principal Grant Little.*

## AETC CHAIRPERSON VISITS PURNULULU COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Following her address to delegates at the AICS 2006 Conference Mrs Carol Garlett, Chairperson of the Aboriginal Education and Training Council, accepted an invitation to visit an AIC School and travelled to Purnululu Community School at Frog Hollow during June of this year.

During her visit Mrs Garlett spoke with students and staff alike, viewed the work they had been doing and sat in on some classes. Pictures from Mrs Garlett's visit are included on this page.



*Busy times for Purnululu Community School Chairperson Shirley Drill, staff and students alike as AETC Chairperson Mrs Carol Garlett visits during*



## Writers' Camp for Senior Students at Strelley Community School

Western Australian author Mark Greenwood travelled to Strelley Community School during November of this year to work with senior students, sharing his craft with writing camp participants.

Mark's books, *Magic Boomerang*, *Outback Adventure* and *Our Big Island*, were prompted by an interest in multicultural literature and the unique way illustrated books can assist children to develop an understanding of other cultures and perspectives.

The *Legend of Moondyne Joe* and *The Legend of Lasseter's Reef* aim to encourage an appreciation of Australia's unique myths and legends and won the West Australian Premier's Award for children's books in 2002 and 2003.

Mark's new book, *Fortuyn's Ghost* will be released in 2006. He is currently writing his first young adult novel.

The following is Mark's reflection on his visit to Strelley:

*"On 14th-16th of November 2006 I was delighted to be invited as Author in Residence for the Strelley Community School Writer's Camp. Upper primary and secondary Strelley students were joined by students from two other schools, Warralong and Woodstock, for 3 days of books, writing and art. My aim was to develop pride and self belief in students through the work they produced and to show that writing and making books is great fun.*

*Ron Gorman and Kate Mullin from AISWA were keen for the students to have access to work with a professional author. The aim was for each child to understand the process of writing and illustrating a book. I explained to students how the imagination is a catalyst for stories and that writing is more than putting words on paper - it's the final stage in the complex process of communicating that begins with "thinking." I aimed at getting students to begin working from rough drafts through to a piece of creative writing. I conducted one-on-one editing sessions with each student and talked about how to read their work with a critical eye.*

*Using my book 'The Legend of Lasseter's Reef' as an example I discussed the origins and inspirations for this uniquely Australian story, the development of a storyline through the stages involved in preparing for publication.*

*With a wealth of background material and a wonderful range of art materials, workshop participants created their own page spread of the legend. Student's writing was inspired by viewing old maps, archival documents and old photos which they hand coloured and assembled with their written work and art.*

*I am very grateful to Ron Gorman for inviting me to participate in a celebration such as the Strelley Writers' Camp. The event offered encouragement to students to continue to develop written and artistic concepts and ideas. This literacy residency highlighted the many ways children can experience, enjoy and study literature and in turn benefit from a lifetime love of books and the joy in creating them."*

Mark Greenwood



## Wulungarra Students Participate in International Children's Painting Project

*Carolyn Pickett, Principal Wulungarra Community School*

We visited Melbourne as part of an international children's painting project, "Roots & Wings", which involved our school, a school from India and a school from Melbourne. The resulting exhibition opened on November 9th and saw over 200 people very keen to buy the children's paintings as well as viewing and studying the different art styles from different countries and different cultures.

This was followed up by a fresh exhibition of our children's work in Broome on our way back from Melbourne. Again the children's art work was a sellout affair.

The Luna Park trip was donated by Southbound Australia. Other corporate sponsorship that we attracted included Silvers Circus who provided free ringside seats for us all and Circus Oz who provided a half price workshop. Many individuals also sprang to help us with picnic lunches, BBQ dinners, tennis lessons, and accommodation. NAIDOC funding helped significantly and the Hurstbridge Learning Co-operative school, who initiated the program were friendly hosts. Children from the Co-op visited Wulungarra Community School earlier in the year as part of the project.



**Above:** Quanas Laurel at Luna Park. Note the two great big smiles from the horse and the rider.

## 'The Big Pig of Yakanarra'

*Mary Hearn, Teacher Yakanarra Community School*

The Early class at Yakanarra did "The Bear's Lunch" for the Accelerated Literacy text in Term 3.

Students then decided to write a locally relevant book, based on their understanding and recollection of the structure of "The Bear's Lunch". The student's book was called, "The Big Pig of Yakanarra".

Students wrote the story and helped compose the photos. The photo at right depicts the part in the story when the Big Pig is chasing the students around the school Toyota.



## Politician Visits Wongutha CAPS Shayne Power, Teacher Wongutha CAPS

During June of this year Wongutha CAPS had a visit from Brendon Grylls MLA, the leader of the Western Australian National Party.

Mr Grylls was able to have a look around the school and see how things are done. He was so pleased with what he saw that he used the end of his speaking time in Parliament during the budget right-of-reply to bring the School's work to the attention of his parliamentary colleagues.



An excerpt of his speech is recounted below, the entire speech is available on Hansard (<http://tinyurl.com/hka2w>)

*"We talk about Indigenous education, and the Wongutha CAPS is a wonderful model ... It is an absolutely wonderful example of educating Indigenous kids and getting it right ... (The students) are absolutely loving it .... It beats me why kids in the north have to travel all the way to Esperance to access a boarding school education. Why we do not have schools like Wongutha CAPS in Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and Karratha defies me. It is working fantastically well."*

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## Rawa Community School Mentioned in Prime Minister John Howard's Address to Reconciliation Australia

During his address to Reconciliation Australia on 25 July this year Prime Minister John Howard spoke of education outcomes for Indigenous students and made specific reference to the work being done at Rawa Community School. The following is an excerpt from the Prime Minister's address:

*"Many individual schools are themselves doing innovative things to improve education outcomes. The Rawa Community School, an independent Aboriginal Community School in outback Western Australia, has 80 students spread over two campuses, one at Lake Dora (600km southeast of Port Hedland) and the other 180 km east at Well 33 on the Canning Stock Route.*

*The range of activities in such a remote location is just astounding: healthy eating programmes; skills education; outreach courses; farming initiatives; linkages with TAFE; and preschool sessions for parents and carers of children as young as two.*

*These sessions recognise that the education challenge for Indigenous children begins well before school."*

## New Coordinator Appointed to AICS Support Unit Broome Office

The Support Unit is pleased to welcome Shana Gelin as Coordinator in the Broome Office. Shana comes to us with a wealth of cross-cultural experience, and is very excited about the prospect of working in the remote AICS of Western Australia.

Shana has a particular interest in traditional languages, as well as a Graduate Diploma in TESOL. She is also nearly finished a Masters in Education. Her skills and experience will undoubtedly prove very useful to our schools

## New Son for Josh and Madeleine Bell

Congratulations to Josh and Madeleine on the safe arrival of son Mather born on 23 August last. Big brother Hudson is very pleased with the arrival of his baby brother and future playmate.



## Farewell to Some Old Friends

As in life, nothing ever stays the same and the end of this year sees the departure of a number of AIC School principals, some of whom have been a part of the AICS Community for many years.

We say farewell to Peter McLennan from Rawa Community School, Chris and Ingrid Walkley from Strelley Community School, Grant Little from CAPS Kurrawang, Jim Heslop from CAPS Coolgardie and William Toms from Yakanarra Community School.

All the aforementioned (and partners) leave with the best wishes of the entire AICS group for good health and happiness in their future endeavours.

## AICS 2007 Calendar of Events

Information from the 2007 Calendar of Events for Semester 1 has not been included in this newsletter as it has not been possible to accurately ascertain several dates before publication of this issue. However it is expected that the complete Calendar of Events will be forwarded to schools well before the commencement of Term 1 next year. Apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

### *IMPORTANT REMINDER TO PRINCIPALS ABOUT JANUARY PD*

You would all be aware that next year the first Scaffolding professional development will take place in two locations—Perth and Fitzroy Crossing.

The Fitzroy Crossing PD will take place at the Fitzroy River Lodge between the dates of 29 January and 1 February, participants to arrive and depart in time for attendance during those dates.

The Perth PD will take place at the All Seasons Perth Hotel between the dates of 24 and 27 January, participants to arrive and depart in time for attendance during those dates.

It is expected that Schools will have already arranged accommodation for staff members attending the professional development in the relevant location. The cost of accommodation and meals for staff staying at the PD venues will be included with the event cost charged to the Support Unit. The cost of accommodation for staff attending the Perth PD and not staying at the All Seasons should be paid by the relevant school and then claimed for reimbursement (up to \$115 per night) via a School tax invoice. Similarly meal costs can be claimed for reimbursement on the same School tax invoice at the rate of \$18.40 for Breakfast, \$20.55 for Lunch and \$35.40 for dinner. NB: Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea will be provided during the professional development.

To assist with the organisation of catering it would be appreciated if Schools could notify the Perth Support Unit as to how many of their staff will be attending the professional development, along with the names of the attendees.



*Best Wishes to all  
for a joyous  
Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year*

*May your holiday be enjoyable,  
safe and relaxing*

